



OIC/43-CFM/2016/DECLARATION

THE TASHKENT DECLARATION
OF
THE 43RD SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
«EDUCATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT - PATH TO PEACE AND
CREATIVITY»

TASHKENT, THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN
OCTOBER 18-19, 2016
(17-18 MUHARRAM 1438 AH)

The Tashkent Declaration
of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation
«Education and Enlightenment - Path to Peace and Creativity»

Tashkent, the Republic of Uzbekistan
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(17-18 Muharram 1438 AH)

We, the Foreign Ministers and heads of delegations of member-states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), participants of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC in Tashkent, held on October 18-19, 2016,

Recognizing the leading role of the OIC in joining efforts to strengthen the mutually beneficial cooperation between the Member States in political, economic, security, social, cultural, educational, scientific and other vital areas,

Welcoming the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan on holding the 43rd Session of the CFM under the motto: «Education and Enlightenment - Path to Peace and Creativity»,

Recognizing whereas in the conditions of growing tensions and instability in various regions of the world, aggravation of ongoing conflicts, manifestations of deliberate attempts to tarnish the sacred religion of Islam and countering the Islamic world with other cultures and religions, there is a growing need to convey to the entire world community the true humanistic essence and tolerance of Islam, its spiritual enlightening beginning,

Taking into account and deeply appreciating the historical scientific heritage of outstanding scholars and thinkers of the Islamic world, their invaluable role and place in the history of modern civilization and the entire humanity in general, their invaluable contribution to the development of the world science, thought, culture and socio-economic progress,

Highly appreciating the enormous attention paid by the Leadership of the Republic of Uzbekistan to preservation and enhancement of historical scientific and cultural-spiritual heritage, as well as the true values of Islam, such as aspiration for peaceful and tranquil life, tolerance in interethnic and interreligious relations, sense of mutual respect and accord, as well as development and improvement of education system, upbringing of the younger generation in the spirit of mastering the universal and Islamic values and peaks of modern science,

Reaffirming the full commitment to the goals and principles of the OIC in the

interests of Member States and support for peace, stability, sustainable socio-economic development, advancement of science, education and enlightenment in the OIC countries in the framework of Islamic solidarity and coordination of joint actions, we hereby make the following declaration:

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the entire Islamic world deeply mourn the recent untimely passing of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a prominent politician of modernity and the great son of the Uzbek nation, His Excellency Mr. Islam Karimov.

We highly appreciate the enormous contribution made by President Islam Karimov during his lifetime to the cause of ensuring the unity of the Islamic Ummah, maintaining and strengthening security and stability in Central Asia and the world as a whole, care for the heritage of outstanding scientists and thinkers of the Islamic world, protection of Islam in the international arena as a religion of peace and creativity, sustainable progressive socio-economic development of member-states of the OIC, formation of the younger generation in the spirit of respect for the true values of the Sacred religion of Islam, improving the system of cadres training, upbringing of highly-educated, intellectually and harmoniously developed youth, strengthening of mutual understanding and respect among the OIC countries by enhancing cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

We emphasize that since its establishment the OIC has secured a rightful place among the prestigious and influential international organizations, becoming a key dialogue platform for maintaining international peace and countering modern challenges and threats across the OIC space. In this context, we urge the Secretary-General to intensify the efforts on improving the activities of the Organization in order to ensure the unity of the Muslim Ummah, establishing lasting peace and security, promoting sustainable socio-economic development in member-states.

We once again place emphasis on the importance of ensuring security, sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and respect for the legitimate rights of member-states, as well as the need to resolve ongoing or emerging problems and conflicts through peaceful negotiations, with the use of political, diplomatic and international legal mechanisms based on the universally recognized principles and norms of international law. In this regard, we support the new OIC Peace and Security architecture and the efforts of the Secretary-General.

We note that in the conditions of the 21st century, which reputedly is the age of globalization, information-communication technologies, the Internet, and growing competition in the world space, as well as the world market, a priority attention must be paid to increasing investments and inputs in human capital,

training an educated and intellectually developed generation which is the most important value and a decisive power in achieving the objectives of democratic development, modernization and renewal.

In the context of the motto of the Session: «Education and Enlightenment - Path to Peace and Creativity», we call upon member-states and relevant OIC institutions to continue and further expand the programs and activities in the field of higher education, in particular in the framework of Educational exchange program, put efforts to improve the training programs and courses, strengthen the links between higher educational institutions, promote the joint scientific and research projects, establish scholarships and programs of vocational training.

We note the need for dissemination of knowledge about enlightened Islam as an important tool to combat the ideology of terrorism, violent extremism and religious fanaticism. We highly appreciate the comprehensive efforts to combat radicalization and extremism using the true values of Islam and establishment of a broad educational process, inducting in the religious sphere. In this regard we note the positive role of the activities of the Tashkent Islamic University, which has become one of the leading educational institutions in Central Asia in training the qualified theologians and religious scholars.

We emphasize that a profound respect for its own history and intellectual heritage makes up the basis of both material and spiritual progress of any state. In this regard, we highly appreciate the work carried out in the member-states on studying and preserving the rich historical, scientific, cultural and spiritual heritage for future generations.

Recognizing the need to deeply comprehend the works of eminent Islamic scholars and thinkers, assess their role and place in the history of the modern civilization, we believe it is important to give a new powerful impetus to further comprehensive research and promotion of their invaluable scientific heritage, providing insight to the urgency and relevance of discoveries made by them for contemporary science and progress. We welcome the efforts of the member-states, including Uzbekistan, on creating a modern infrastructure for a comprehensive study and popularization of the invaluable scientific heritage and we highly appreciate the construction of new building of the library of the «Center of Oriental Manuscripts at the Tashkent Institute of Oriental Studies» being established with the assistance of the Sultanate of Oman.

We reiterate our full support for Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Shareef, the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and return to their ancestral places of residence. In this context, we express support to the Arab Peace Initiative for the Middle East, as

well as to fair and coordinated solution of the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and international law.

We welcome the recent adoption of a resolution by UNESCO's Executive Board, aimed at preserving the historical, religious and heritage sites in Palestine, including in particular East Jerusalem. In this regard, the Ministers express their regret that some countries and UN officials chose to appease the bullying tactics and media spin orchestrated by Israel, which aims to shift the focus from Israel's illegal and colonial actions in Occupied East Jerusalem to issues irrelevant to the content and objectives of the resolutions adopted by UNESCO's Executive Board.

We underline the need for earliest stabilization of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa and other parts of the continent by way of urgent political resolution of crises in accordance with the principles of the UN and OIC Charters and universally recognized international norms in order to bring to an end the sufferings of the people and the resultant migration and displacement of affected population.

We note that the earliest achievement of peace and stability in Afghanistan is an important factor in maintaining and strengthening security not only in the vast Asian continent, but also around the world. Reiterating the absence of a military solution to the Afghan problem, we support the settlement of the Afghan conflict through promotion of an inclusive process of national reconciliation and proceed from the fact that these efforts should be undertaken under the leadership of the Afghans and by the Afghans themselves, without putting any preconditions and under the central coordinating role of the UN in the process of international cooperation on Afghanistan. We welcome the OIC efforts to convene an International Ulema Conference aimed at political reconciliation and restoring peace, security and stability in Afghanistan.

We reiterate that the struggle against terrorism and violent extremism in all forms and their manifestations, illicit production and trafficking of drugs, illegal trafficking of humans and arms, ammunition and explosives substances, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery should remain a priority of the OIC. We are convinced that these dangerous phenomena can be defeated and eliminated only through a joint action, elaborating the measures of influence both to the symptoms and the roots of these problems. We highly appreciate the launch of an OIC Messaging Centre to counter the sham narratives of radical and extremist groups. We are continuing to advocate for further close cooperation in the fight against terrorism, spread of extremist ideology, especially among youth.

We welcome the entry into force on March 21, 2009 of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, which was initiated by the President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan His Excellency Mr. Islam Karimov on September 28, 1993 at the 48th session of the UN General Assembly and which has become the first such zone entirely formed from member-countries of the OIC. In this connection, we call on other parts of the world to use this positive experience to establish similar zones in their regions, including the Middle East.

We believe that the earliest entry into force for each Party of the Protocol on negative security assurances to Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty will contribute significantly to strengthening the global non-proliferation regime, ensuring regional and international peace and stability.

We highly appreciate the adoption of the new «Ten-Year Program of Actions: OIC - 2025» and are confident that its implementation will contribute to further development of trade and investment, transfer of high technologies, promotion of private sector, industrialization, scientific spheres and education in Muslim countries in the 21st century.

We reaffirm the leading role of the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) in joining the efforts of the member-states in the development of science, innovation and technologies, promoting research and joint programs and call upon the member states to actively participate in the next OIC Summit on Science and Technology in 2017.

We underline the importance of sharing experience among OIC Member States in addressing the issues of economic slowdown, introducing the innovative technologies, forming a favorable investment and business climate, implementing the long term mutually beneficial projects in priority areas of cooperation and infrastructure development. In this regard we commend the role played by COMSEC and other OIC Institutions in promoting intra OIC trade and exchange.

We support the efforts of the OIC member-states on implementation of national programs for renewable energy and creation of an innovative economy, and call to continue studying international best practices in this area.

We note that in the conditions of depletion of natural resources and exacerbation of problems in the field of protection and preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, there is a need for undertaking the large-scale scientific research and experiments on a wide range of directions of exploring the world around us.

We affirm the special importance of development of tourism, as one of the sectors of economy, which contributes to a long-term sustainable growth, socio-economic development, and as consequently, enhancement of mutual understanding and promotion of tolerance among peoples and nations.

We welcome the election of the cities of Al-Madinah Al-Munawarah (Saudi Arabia) and Tabriz (Iran) as the OIC tourism capitals in 2017 and 2018, respectively, at the 9th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers of the OIC member-states, which took place on December 21-23, 2015 in Niamey, the Republic of Niger.

We underline the key importance of healthcare in ensuring high living standards and prosperity of society as a whole, and in this context, call for the effective and full implementation of the «OIC Strategic Health Program of Action 2014-2023», as well as welcome the strengthening of cooperation of the OIC with relevant international partners in the sphere of health care.

We support the «Program of capitals of Islamic culture» developed by the Organization for the Islamic Education, Science and Culture (ISESCO) as an important factor in preserving and restoring the cultural heritage and exchanging best practices in learning and teaching languages, history and culture of the Islamic countries. In this regard, we welcome the announcement of the city of Bukhara in Uzbekistan as the «Capital of Islamic culture» in 2020.

We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General to further deepen the cooperation and interaction of the OIC with regional and international organizations, especially the UN and its institutions.

We welcome signing of memoranda on obligations of India and Pakistan with the purpose of seeking the status of a SCO member-state at the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on June 24, 2016 in Tashkent, which means the beginning of the process of joining of these countries the ranks of full members of the SCO, and express hope that this process will contribute to strengthening confidence between Pakistan and India, maintaining a constructive dialogue and effective multifaceted cooperation, ensuring security and stability in the regions of South and Central Asia.

We express our appreciation of the efforts made by the State Kuwait as the Chair of the 42nd session of CFM to promote Islamic solidarity and advance partnership among the OIC member-states. We congratulate His Highness the Emir of the State of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, on having been designated the title of Humanitarian Leader by the UN in September 2014 in recognition of His Highness' significant role in the humanitarian domain, as well as designating the State of Kuwait as a global humanitarian center.

We welcome the proposal made by Côte d'Ivoire to hold the 44th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC in Abidjan in June 2017.

We express our gratitude to the Secretary General of the OIC His Excellency Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani for his role in promoting the interests of the Muslim Ummah and Joint Islamic Action in achieving the goals set in political, socio-economic and humanitarian spheres.

In conclusion of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, we express our deep appreciation to the people and the Government of Uzbekistan for a warm hospitality and excellent organization of this conference, which ensured the success of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers titled «Education and Enlightenment – Path to Peace and Creativity».
