

OIC/ACM-08/FC/FINAL

**FINAL COMMUNIQUE
OF THE ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING OF
MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE OIC MEMBER STATES
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK**

26 SEPTEMBER 2008

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The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC Member States held their Annual Coordination Meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 26 September 2008, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Hon. Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda. The Representative of the UN Secretary General attended the Meeting. The Meeting, after deliberation, adopted the following:

1. The Meeting emphasized its strong conviction about the central role that the United Nations, as the only universal multilateral organization, can and should play in strengthening global coordination and cooperation in dealing with global challenges and threats, and reaffirmed the determination of the OIC Member States to actively work with the United Nations along this line in accordance with its Charter. In this regard, the Meeting also reiterated that the United Nations remains an indispensable global mechanism for the promotion of a shared vision of a more secure and prosperous world. It, further, underscored that multilateralism and collective approaches, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, are essential tools in addressing the common threats and challenges.
2. The Meeting commended the efforts of the Secretary General, in strengthening cooperation between the OIC and other regional and international organizations, particularly with the United Nations organs and bodies. It also expressed its gratitude for his role in promoting and defending the cause of Islam, pioneering international best practices in the organization's service delivery and in raising the profile of the OIC as a significant player in the global scene.
3. The Meeting reiterated adherence to the purposes, objectives and principles of the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and once again reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the OIC Summit and Ministerial Conferences. The Meeting also reaffirmed the resolutions, Final Communiqué and Kampala Declaration adopted by the 35th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in June 2008 in Kampala, Uganda, as well as the resolutions and documents adopted by the 11th Session of the Islamic Summit conference held in Dakar, Senegal in March 2008.
4. The Meeting reiterated devotion to the noble ideas of peace, humanism and tolerance to aptly respond to the challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. It further emphasized that recent defiances confronting Islam compel Member States to further unite around the values of Islam and display solidarity.
5. The Meeting supported the continuation of reforms in the economic, social and cultural areas, as well as in the spheres of democratization, transparency and strengthening the role of civil society in the OIC Member States and considered it important to protect cultural and religious

diversity. It stressed that this diversity must not be a source of conflict but rather a source of mutual enrichment and dialogue among religions, cultures and civilizations.

6. The Meeting condemned the growing trend of Islamophobia and systematic discrimination against Muslims. It called upon the international community to prevent incitement to hatred and discrimination against Muslims and take effective measures to combat defamation of religions and acts of negative stereotyping of people based on religion, belief or ethnicity. The Meeting requested the Secretary General to continue the OIC initiatives to effectively counter Islamophobia through discussion and debates at various international fora and stressed the importance that Member States continue their support to the organization's observatory on Islamophobia.

7. The Meeting expressed its support to the Alliance of Civilizations initiative which is co-sponsored by Turkey and Spain under the aegis of the UN Secretary-General, aiming at facilitating harmony and dialogue by emphasizing the common values of different cultures and religions and urges all members of the international community to support the initiative.

8. The Meeting urged the Secretary General to continue with his positive efforts in engaging with the West in raising the true and correct image of Islam and reaching historical reconciliation among civilizations through a process of dialogue. It urged the Secretary General to work closely with the UN Secretary General towards the success of the UN Alliance of Civilizations. The Meeting also expressed its satisfaction on the decision of the Government of Kazakhstan to organize the Forum of Foreign Ministers of Muslim and Western Countries – “Common World: Progress through Diversity” on 17 October 2008 and urged the Member States to give their support and cooperation for its successful outcome.

9. The Meeting noted that Uganda's assumption of Chairmanship of the Council of Foreign Ministers at a time when the Chairmanship of the Summit was held by the Republic of Senegal provided an unprecedented opportunity to highlight the important role that African States play within the OIC.

10. The Meeting welcomed the initiative of Indonesia and Norway in convening the Third Global Inter-Media Dialogue in Bali on 7-8 May 2008, attended by media representatives from 61 western and eastern countries. The Dialogue, with the theme *Ethical Journalism in Extreme Conditions: The Challenge of Diversity*, underscored the important role of the international mass media in promoting greater freedom of expression and increasing tolerance and mutual understanding among people of different cultural and religious backgrounds, as well as in advancing peace.

11. The Meeting, while considering the importance of dialogue among civilizations and expansion of relations between the Islamic world and other cultures and civilizations, reiterated its commitment to broader contacts and exchanges and to the harmony of peace, freedom, rights and justice. In this regard, the Meeting recalled the following initiatives from the Islamic World: Dialogue among Civilizations-Iran; Religious and Cultural Understanding, Harmony and Cooperation-Pakistan; International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010-Bangladesh; Seminar on Islam and the West-Qatar; OIC-EU

Joint Forum “Civilization and Harmony; The Political Dimension”-Turkey; Declaration of the Second Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions-Kazakhstan, Alliance of Civilizations-co-sponsored by Turkey and the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations to be held in Istanbul on 2-3 April 2009, the International Conference on Islamic-Christian Dialogue in 2008 (Senegal), “the Third International Conference on the Muslim World and the West: Bridging the Gap” on 9-10 June 2008 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the “11th International Cultural Exchange and Civilization Acquaintance Meeting” in Sana’a, Yemen on 15-25 August 2008 and the World Conference on Dialogue which was held in Madrid, Spain on 16-18 July 2008 under the auspices of King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, King of Saudi Arabia and King Juan Carlos of Spain.

12. The Meeting took note with interest of the Third International Conference of Islamic Scholars (ICIS), held in Jakarta on 30 July – 1 August 2008 and attended by 360 *ulama* and scholars from 64 countries to discuss the issues commonly faced by the *Ummah* around the world. The Conference issued *the Jakarta Message on Upholding Islam as Rahmatan Lil’ Alamiin: Peace Building and Conflict Prevention in the Muslim World (the Jakarta Message)* and established “*Ulama Sans Frontiers*”, comprising professionals and specialists who will use their good offices in peace building and the prevention of conflicts in the Muslim World.

13. The Meeting reiterated the need to counter religious and sectarian extremism, refrain from accusing Islamic schools of jurisprudence of heresy, emphasize dialogue among them, strengthen balance, moderation, and tolerance, and ensure adherence to the fundamental methodology of fatwa whereby only those determined by their schools of Islamic jurisprudence to be eligible for such issuance may do so. The Meeting also welcomed the ongoing efforts in this regard, including the Amman Message, and the International Islamic Conference held in Amman in late July 2005.

14. The Meeting recognized the merit of celebrating the 40th anniversary of the OIC in 2009 in order to make its successes and achievements more visible in the international arena as well as to project it as an effective partner in promoting international peace, security and development. In this connection, the ACM invited Member States to mark the event through, preferably, organizing national and international programs on different aspects of the OIC, highlighting its activities, evolution and reform through the four decades of its existence.

15. The Meeting while appreciating the efforts of the Secretary General in restructuring the OIC in accordance with the Islamic Summit and Council of Foreign Ministers Resolutions, called for its early completion to help equip the Organization to better meet the challenges facing the *Ummah* in the 21st Century as envisaged by the Ten Year Program of Action.

16. The Meeting recalled that many resolutions issued by the Council of Foreign Ministers pertaining to the rationalization, efficiency, effectiveness and the avoidance of duplication and overlapping of the work of the OIC, including Resolution No. 2/30-ORG of the Thirtieth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers. The Meeting reiterated that the OIC shall remain the primary framework for cooperation, collaboration and consultation among Member States and recalled that the Council of Foreign Ministers is mandated with the establishment of any new Organ or Committee of the OIC.

17. The Meeting recalled Resolution No. 2/35-ORG on the Harmonization of the work of Organizations and Institutions of Inter-Islamic Cooperation, issued by the Council of Foreign Ministers in its Thirty-Fifth Session, held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda in June 2008.

18. The Meeting took note of the initiatives of some Member States to create new entities, pertaining to inter-Islamic cooperation, which are related to the OIC. The Meeting affirmed the necessity that any new entities or organizations created for the purpose of cooperation between the OIC Member States should act within the framework of the OIC and should include a mechanism for cooperation and consultation with the OIC and its General Secretariat to avoid duplication and overlapping in inter-Islamic cooperation and that all sectoral and Ministerial meetings will be held with the prior consent from the Council of Foreign Ministers and with the support and coordination of the General Secretariat and that such meetings shall submit their reports to the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign Ministers.

19. The Meeting recalled the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the "Prevention of Armed Conflict" which reaffirmed the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the need to bring an end to situations of foreign occupation as a commitment by the international community to promote the culture of conflict prevention.

20. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the centrality of the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif for the whole Islamic Ummah. It affirmed the Arab nature of Occupied East Jerusalem and the need to defend the sanctity of Islamic and Christian holy places. It *reiterated* its strong condemnation of Israel, the occupying Power, for its persistent aggression on Islamic and Christian holy places in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, for its illegal excavations beneath the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and for its illegal measures intending to change the Holy City's status, character, and demographic composition, in particular its illegal colonization practices, including its settlement activities and its construction of the Wall in and around the City as well as its demolition of Palestinian homes and revocation of Palestinian residency rights in the City, and its imposition of severe movement restrictions that have isolated the city and cut it off from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

21. The Meeting *condemned* the ongoing Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people by which Israel, the occupying Power, has continued to commit grave human rights violations and war crimes, including the killing and injuring of Palestinian civilians by use of excessive, indiscriminate force, as well as the continued practice of extrajudicial executions; the vast and widespread destruction of Palestinian properties, infrastructure, agricultural lands and other sources of livelihood; and the detention and imprisonment of thousands of Palestinians, including women and children . It *demande*d that Israel immediately cease all such violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law.

22. The Meeting *condemned* Israel's continued imposition of collective punishment upon the Palestinian people, including in particular the severe restrictions on the movement of persons and

goods via prolonged closures and hundreds of checkpoints. It *stressed* that such illegal Israeli practices are destroying the Palestinian economy and causing severe socio-economic and humanitarian hardships for the Palestinian civilian population, with the continuing siege and closure of the Gaza Strip in particular adversely affecting all aspects of life and causing extreme humanitarian hardship. The Meeting demanded that Israel immediately cease its illegal and inhumane collective punishment of the Palestinian people and that it lift completely its closure of the Gaza Strip's border crossings. The Meeting also called upon the international community to provide urgent assistance to alleviate the Palestinian hardships in this critical period.

23. The Meeting reiterated its grave concern and strong condemnation regarding Israel's continuing intensive campaign of settler colonialism, including vast land confiscations and the construction and expansion of illegal settlements and the construction of the Wall throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, in flagrant violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and in total disrespect for the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 July 2004 and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004. The Meeting emphasized that both the illegal settlements and the Wall are destroying the territorial contiguity and integrity of the Palestinian Territory and jeopardizing the future prospects for the establishment of a sovereign, viable, and independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. The Meeting demanded that Israel immediately cease all settlement activities and its construction of the Wall and that it dismantle the illegal settlements and the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem.

24. The Meeting strongly condemned the acceleration of Israeli illegal settlement activities in the recent period in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. In this regard, the Meeting expressed its deep regret that the Security Council was unable to act in order to adopt the Arab draft Resolution aiming at halting all the Israeli illegal settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem, due to the position of certain members in the Security Council, which in the same vein hindered the Council from shouldering its responsibilities in accordance with the UN Charter, with a view of taking necessary measures to compel Israel to immediately and completely cease all settlement planning, construction and expansion in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

25. The Meeting *called* for the urgent intensification of efforts by the international community, including the Quartet and particularly by the Security Council, to address the continuing political and humanitarian crisis and to lend crucial support to the peace process negotiations between the two sides and the full implementation of the Road Map towards ending the occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 1967 and thus realizing the two-state solution for peace in accordance with relevant U.N. resolutions. In this regard, the Meeting noted efforts to follow up the Annapolis Conference and the Arab Peace Initiative, which calls for a comprehensive, just and permanent solution to the entire Arab-Israeli conflict, including via convening of a proposed international conference in Moscow before the end of 2008.

26. The Meeting demanded that the situation on the ground in the Gaza Strip be restituted to that which existed prior to the events of June 2007, to allow for the maintenance and preservation of

the unity of the Palestinian people and land. In this connection, the Meeting stressed the need for national dialogue among Palestinians to achieve national reconciliation and reaffirmed its support to the Yemeni Initiative and called for its implementation. It reaffirmed also its full support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian Authority, under the leadership of President Mahmoud Abbas, and its support for all democratically-elected Palestinian institutions.

27. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine until it is resolved in all of its aspects. It *called upon* the United Nations to increase its efforts towards the achievement of a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003) as well as agreed principles, which call for Israel's complete withdrawal from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and all other Arab territories occupied since 1967, the realization by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights, including their right to exercise self-determination and sovereignty in their independent and viable State of Palestine, on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and a just resolution to the plight of the Palestine refugees in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194(III) of 11 December 1948.

28. The Meeting expressed its support for the continuous regional and international contacts of His Majesty King MOHAMMED VI, King of Morocco, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, and the Committee's ongoing efforts to advance the peace process in order to reach a comprehensive, lasting and just peace in the Middle East, to support the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people, and to preserve the Holy Land of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and its particular spiritual dimension.

29. The Meeting commended the Jordanian role in preserving the Islamic holy sites and Hashemite architecture and in protecting them from plans that aim at altering the status quo in East Jerusalem and safeguarding its historical and civilizational character. It also commended the role His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein in projecting the cause of Jerusalem at international fora.

30. The Meeting welcomed the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) Ministerial Conference on Capacity Building for Palestine held in Jakarta on 14 July 2008, attended by representatives from 56 Asian and African countries, as well as three countries from Latin America and several International Organizations, at which participating countries pledged to assist Palestinians with capacity programs, to provide the prerequisite factors in enabling the Palestinian people to acquire the necessary capability in ensuring the smooth running of government and public services to promote economic development.

31. The Meeting strongly condemned Israel's policy of refusing to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981) concerning the occupied Syrian Golan and its policies of annexation, building of colonial settlements, confiscation of land, diversion of water sources and imposition of Israel nationality upon Syrian citizens. It also demanded Israel to completely withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan to the June 4th 1967 lines in accordance with Security Council

resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the principle of land for peace, the Madrid Peace Conference terms of reference and the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the Beirut Arab Summit on 28 March 2002. The Meeting also demanded Israel to release all Syrian detainees citizens of the Syrian occupied Golan, taking into consideration that some of them have been detained for more than 23 years.

32. The Meeting condemned the decisions of the United States Administration to impose unilateral economic sanctions against Syria, expressed its rejection to the so-called “Syria Accountability Act” and considered it null and void, and constituting a flagrant violation of the principles of international law, the resolutions of the United Nations and its Charter as well as the resolutions of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and blatantly taking sides of Israel. The Meeting expressed its solidarity with the Syrian Arab Republic; and its appreciation of the Syrian position that calls to favor dialogue and diplomacy in international relations in order to solve all disputes and requested the United States of America to revisit its position with regard to this act as soon as possible and to abolish all decisions related to this matter.

33. The Meeting congratulated the people and leaders of Lebanon and welcomed and strongly supported the agreement reached in Doha on 21st May 2008 under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, The Emir of Qatar, pursuant to the efforts of the Ministerial Committee of the Arab League, chaired by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Qatar His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al-Thani, and the Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Musa, which constituted an essential step towards the resolution of the current crisis, the return to the normal functioning of Lebanese democratic institutions, and the complete restoration of Lebanon’s unity and stability.

34. The Meeting welcomed the election of the new President of the Republic, and the establishment of a national unity government and the agreement to address Lebanon’s electoral law, in accordance with the Arab League Initiative. They also welcomed the decision to continue the national dialogue on ways to reinforce the authority of the State over all its territories, in such a way to guarantee the sovereignty and the security of the State and the people of Lebanon. The Meeting also welcomed the agreement to ban the use of weapons and violence as means to settle disputes, irrespective of their nature and under any circumstances in such a way that would guarantee the parties will not depart from the national partnership contract based on the determination of the Lebanese to live together within a democratic regime, and to limit the military and security authority over the Lebanese and those residing in Lebanon exclusively in the hands of the State which constitutes an assurance for the continuation of the national coexistence formula and civil peace among the Lebanese.

35. The Meeting reiterated its support for Lebanon in its efforts to complete the liberation of all its territories up to the internationally recognized borders, and welcomes the recent exchange of detainees and prisoners through the efforts of the UN Secretary General.

36. The Meeting strongly condemned Israel’s continuing violation of Lebanon’s territorial integrity and demanded the UN Security Council to act towards preventing the repeated Israeli violations of Lebanon’s sovereignty in land, air and sea, and to force Israel to pay damages for

all the losses sustained by the Lebanese territories as a result of its continuous aggressions against Lebanon. It supported Lebanon in its demands for the removal of the mines and cluster munitions left behind by the Israeli occupation and aggression, as Israel is responsible for laying and removing these mines and cluster munitions, and for the need to hand over full mines and cluster munitions location maps.

37. The Meeting called for a strict implementation of UNSCR 1701(2006), and in this respect called for a permanent cease fire, and for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon with full respect for the Blue Line. It also expressed gratitude for the Troop Contributors Countries to the UNIFIL, and condemned strongly the terrorist attacks against them.

38. The Meeting emphasized the importance of the contribution of the United Nations in settling the issue of the Sheba'a Farms occupied by Israel in accordance with the Seven-Point Plan presented by the Lebanese Government and with UNSCR 1701(2006), and called upon all relevant parties to cooperate with the United Nations to reach a solution to this issue. It also supported the inalienable rights of Lebanon to utilize its waters in accordance with the international law, condemned Israel's designs on these waters.

39. The Meeting condemned also in the strongest terms any attempt to destabilize Lebanon and its national unity, and supported the Lebanese Government in its efforts to bring to justice the criminals in the terrorist assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his companions, and all subsequent terrorist acts, in order to put an end to impunity.

40. The Meeting called for the finalization of the necessary procedures for the establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, after its adoption by the United Nations Security Council, to reveal the truth on the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his convoy, and called for providing the necessary conditions for the early commencement of the Tribunal away from any revenge or politicization such as to ensure justice and the protection of the Lebanese people from aggressions, and to reinforce security in Lebanon

41. The Meeting expressed its support to the Government of Lebanon in finding solutions to the problems raised by the presence of the armed Palestinian groups outside the Palestinian camps.

42. The Meeting encouraged further assistance to Lebanon in order to prevent any illegal movements of arms and terrorists into Lebanon.

43. The Meeting reaffirmed all resolutions adopted by OIC Meetings of Foreign Ministers particularly: Res. 1/31-P adopted in Istanbul – June 2004. Res. 1/32- P adopted in Sana'a June 2005, Res. 1/33- P adopted in Baku June 2006, Res.1/34-P adopted in Islamabad, May 2007 and Res. 1/35- P adopted in Kampala in June 2008.

44. The Meeting also reaffirmed Res. 4/11-P adopted by the 11th Session of OIC Summit Conference held in Dakar in March 2008.

45. The Meeting reaffirmed the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. The meeting also strongly reiterated that all Member States should respect that, and stressed the Iraqi people's right to decide freely on their political future and to have full control over their natural resources.
46. The Meeting acknowledged that a democratically elected and constitutionally based government of Iraq is now in place.
47. The Meeting stressed the need for non-interference in Iraqi affairs and the necessity of coordination with the representatives of the Iraqi people and its elected government.
48. The Meeting welcomed the improvements in the security situation in Iraq achieved through concerted political and security efforts led by the government of Iraq.
49. The Meeting emphasized the importance of the stability and security of Iraq for the people of Iraq, the region, and the international community.
50. The Meeting welcomed the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for another year in resolution 1830 (2008) to pursue its work in supporting the efforts of the Iraqi people and government in accordance with specific mechanisms and with the prior approval of the government of Iraq. The meeting also encouraged a more effective role for UNAMI with the return to work in Iraq of the UN specialized agencies, funds and programs and their direct and valuable contribution to its reconstruction.
51. The Meeting reaffirmed its continued support for the Iraqi people and government as they rebuilt their country and reiterated the need to promote national dialogue, reconciliation and broad political participation to ensure unity, peace, security and stability.
52. The Meeting expressed its support to the Iraqi government's efforts to fight the terrorists of Al-Qaida members as well as militias and outlaws. The meeting also welcomed the steps taken by the Government of Iraq in implementing its plan to enforce laws as well as the positive results achieved thereby to hunt down and root out pockets of violence and terrorism and threats to the security of Iraqi citizens.
53. The Meeting expressed its full support for the efforts of the government of Iraq through its reconciliation plan which is designed to offer an opportunity to the different political religious and ethnic components of the Iraqi society to peacefully participate in the political process and to start building and reconstructing their country.
54. The Meeting welcomed the announcement by the government of Iraq to maintain good relations with its neighbors and the steps already taken in this regard, based on mutual respect and the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as to abide by the existing treaties and agreements particularly those relevant to the internationally recognized borders, and invited Iraq and its neighboring countries to actively cooperate to promote peace and stability in the region.

55. The Meeting welcomed the outcome of all expanded conferences of Iraq's neighboring countries held in Kuwait on 22nd April 2008 and its working groups and ad-hoc support mechanism. The meeting urged Iraq's neighboring countries to keep up their cooperation with the Iraqi government in this regard.

56. The Meeting also welcomed the Communiqué adopted by the expanded meeting of Iraq's neighboring countries and Egypt, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Oman, in addition to the permanent members of the UN Security Council and the G8 Group, which was held in Kuwait, on 22nd April 2008 with the participation of the UN, the OIC, the League of Arab States, the Gulf Countries Cooperation Council (GCCC) and the European Union.

57. The Meeting expressed support for the Government's efforts to control Iraq's borders and security so as to preserve independence and security in Iraq and the entire region. The Meeting stressed the importance of regional and international support for security and stability in Iraq.

58. The Meeting strongly condemned the terrorist acts that were carried out and continue to be carried out against the Iraqi people, government officials, journalists, professionals, sacred religious sites and public institutions. The Meeting also condemned and deplored all acts of targeting, kidnapping and assassination directed against Iraqis and nationals of other countries. The Meeting called for support to end the violence and dry out the sources of terrorism.

59. The Meeting reaffirmed the urgent necessity of eliminating all terrorist and other armed groups present and those emanating from Iraqi territory, which constitute a danger to the security and stability of Iraq and its neighboring states. The meeting welcomed and encouraged the efforts of the government of Iraq in this regard.

60. The Meeting also condemned all calls based on sectarianism which cause discord among the Iraqi people.

61. The Meeting welcomed the important role played by the United Nations and the government of Iraq in the First Anniversary Ministerial Review of the International Compact with Iraq, held in Stockholm on 29th May 2008.

62. The Meeting supported the Iraqi government's efforts aimed at full control of all Iraqi resources for the betterment of the people's living conditions and the reconstruction of the State's institutions and national economy.

63. The Meeting reaffirmed its call upon the Member States and international financial institutes to provide all forms of support and assistance to meet Iraq's needs and facilitate contributions and efforts designed to reactivate its organizational bodies, economic institutions and infrastructure.

64. The Meeting welcomed the positive steps taken by more than (30) governments, members and non-members of the Paris Club, to forgive 80% and more of Iraq's sovereign debt and urged the remaining creditors to take similar decisions.

65. The Meeting extended its appreciation to the OIC Member States that have continued their diplomatic presence in Iraq in the past several years despite all the difficulties involved and invited all other OIC Member States to open or reopen their embassies in Iraq, in view of the decisive impact of such a step on restoring normalcy in Iraq. The meeting recalled in this regard Resolution 375–(19) dated 29th March 2007 adopted by Arab Summit in Riyadh. The Meeting welcomed the announcement of several Arab countries, namely Bahrain, Jordan, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait to appoint their Ambassadors to Iraq, and urged other Member States to take similar steps.

66. The Meeting reaffirmed the relevant Security Council resolutions and welcomed the Iraqi Government's continued fulfilling of all its obligations including the compensation. The meeting also recognized the appeal of the Iraqi government to review the compensation issue. It welcomed the willingness of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait to commence consultations under the auspices of the United Nations Compensation Commission.

67. The Meeting also welcomed the official invitation extended by the Government of Iraq to Ambassador Gennady Tarasov, the high level coordinator for missing Kuwaitis and properties, to visit Iraq to pursue the dialogue on the outstanding issues which would help cement the existing friendly relations between Iraq and Kuwait.

68. The Meeting condemned the mass killings of innocent Iraqis by the former regime and considered these as crimes against humanity. The meeting demanded the trial of those responsible and called upon Member States and the international community not to provide refuge to officials of the former regime who have committed such crimes against Iraqis and others.

69. The Meeting also underlined the necessity for all parties, including the multinational forces to respect the civil and religious rights of all Iraqi people as well as the preservation of the religious sites and the cultural and historical heritage of Iraq.

70. The Meeting welcomed the efforts of the Iraqi Government and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to reconstruct the Holy Shrines attacked by terrorist acts in Iraq.

71. The Meeting called upon all Member States to cooperate and to coordinate their efforts to combat the illegal trade and trafficking of Iraqi antiquities and help return those recovered to the Iraqi museums.

72. The Meeting requested the OIC Secretary General to visit Iraq as soon as possible, recalling in this regard the recommendation of the first ministerial meeting of the executive committee of the OIC troikas in Jeddah – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 15th March 2006 and Resolution 1/35-P adopted in Kampala in June 2008.

73. The Meeting welcomed the appointment of Ambassador Hamid Altiny as the director of the office of the OIC in Baghdad and the opening of the office on 6th July 2008. The meeting also

welcomed the appointment of the new representative of the Secretary General of the Arab League in Baghdad.

74. The Meeting called for the development of positive initiatives to support national dialogue among Iraqis and to contain division and sectarian violence and reaffirmed the call that (spilling Muslim blood is forbidden).

75. The Meeting recalled the successful precedent by the OIC in adopting the Makkah Al – Mukarramah Declaration on the Iraqi Situation on 20th October 2006. The meeting also stressed the need to continue to follow up the implementation of this important document.

76. The Meeting condemned the aggression and war crimes of the former regime of Iraq against peoples in the Republic of Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Kuwait, condemned the killing of Kuwaiti and Iranian war-prisoners and nationals of other countries at the hands of the former regime in Iraq, and the former Iraqi regime's coverage of these crimes for over ten years, which is considered a violation of international humanitarian law; it welcomed the steps being taken by Iraq to take the perpetrators of these crimes to courts, and also welcomed the appointment of Ambassador Gennady Tarasov as the UN High-Level Coordinator and commended the efforts of his predecessor, the late Ambassador Yuli Vortontsov and his achievements during his work in this humanitarian issue; it invited all concerned parties to continue their cooperation with the International Red Cross Committee to uncover the fate of the rest of the missing Kuwaiti citizens and others.

77. The Meeting welcomed the progresses achieved by Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in all areas including the establishment of representative political institutions, free media, building of security sectors institutions, improvements in the health and education sectors, human rights and urged the Member States and the International Community to continue their vigorous support and assistance to the People and Government of Afghanistan in fighting terrorism, counter the drugs problem, achieve security, stability and comprehensive and sustainable development.

78. The Meeting appreciated the assistance of Member States to Afghanistan and requested for more assistance for the development of this country through the established Assistance Fund for the Afghan People and appealed to the international community to speedily provide the assistance it pledged to Afghanistan during the Tokyo 2002, Berlin 2004, London 2006 and Paris International Conference in Support of Afghanistan 2008.

79. The Meeting welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the 34th ICFM (15-17 May 2007 in Islamabad) to holding an International Conference of the Ulema and the Muslim Scholars in Kabul, by winter 2008, to discuss the noble principals of Islam and its role in the fight against Terrorism under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

80. The Meeting urged the international community to enhance its assistance to the Government and people of Afghanistan in their efforts towards peace, security, reconstruction and development.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

81. The Meeting reaffirmed its principled support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for the realization of their legitimate right to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. It emphasized the need for full respect of human rights as well as importance of taking all requisite steps to provide relief and comfort to the Kashmiris. It noted with concern the deteriorating situation in Kashmir ensuing from Amarnath Shrine Board issue and condemned the excessive use of force which led to the shahadat of several Kashmiris including Sheikh Abdul Aziz, a prominent Hurriyat leader. It called for steps to ensure the security of life and property of the Kashmiri Muslims. The Meeting once again urged India to allow the visit of an OIC fact-finding mission to the Indian occupied Kashmir. It further urged India to allow an impartial international inquiry into the issue of unidentified graves discovered in Uri district of Indian occupied Kashmir.

82. The Meeting 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. The Meeting called for the full implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the OIC Mission led by the Secretary General's Special Representative on Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan and Azad Kashmir.

83. The Meeting expressed its strong support for the peace process between Pakistan and India and welcomed the decision by the elected government of Pakistan to carry forward the Composite Dialogue process with India in a comprehensive manner. The Meeting commended the constructive efforts of Pakistan and its readiness to engage with India for resolving all outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir dispute and expressed the hope that the Composite dialogue will yield positive results. It emphasized that the international community should support the Composite Dialogue process which should be pursued by both sides with a view to making substantive progress on all issues and for the overall improvement of relations between Pakistan and India.

84. The Meeting reiterated its condemnation of the continuing aggression by the Republic of Armenia against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which constitutes a blatant violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. It called for total, unconditional, and immediate withdrawal of the Armenian forces from all occupied Azerbaijani territories.

85. The Meeting reiterated its determination to support the efforts of the Government of Azerbaijan aimed at removing the obstacles to the peace process, such as the transfer of settlers of Armenian nationality, practices of artificial geographic, cultural, and demographic alterations, unlawful economic activity, and exploitation of natural resources in those occupied territories. The Meeting condemned Armenia and demanded to stop these activities, as well as the continued destruction of Azerbaijani cultural and historical heritage, including Islamic monuments. The Meeting urged all Member States to further strengthen their solidarity with Azerbaijan and to

extend their full support to its endeavors to achieve soon the restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

86. The Meeting highly valued the support of the Member States rendered to the UN GA Resolution (A/RES/62/243) entitled “The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan” and encouraged them to further promote the implementation of this resolution and provide contributions to the UN Secretariat for preparation of the Secretary General’s report on the matter.

87. The Meeting expressed its firm support for the just cause of the Muslim Turkish people of Cyprus and, within the context of the call made by the-then UN Secretary-General in his Report of 28 May 2004, as reaffirmed by the UN Secretary-General in his reports of 4 June 2007 (S/2007/328) and 3 December 2007 (S/2007/699) and of the previous OIC resolutions, reiterated its decision to put an end to the unjust isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. It strongly called on the international community to take, without further delay, concrete steps to end this isolation and requested, once again, the Member States to closely associate with the Turkish Cypriots and to expand their relations in all fields. The Meeting welcomed the commencement of the full-fledged negotiations in Cyprus on September 3, 2008, which aimed at establishing a new state of affairs in Cyprus in the form of a new bi-zonal partnership with two peoples, two politically equal Constituent States, and stated its expectation for a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement to be reached in Cyprus until the end of 2008 under the auspices of the good-offices mission of the UN Secretary-General and on the basis of the well-established UN parameters. The Meeting acknowledged that neither side may claim authority or jurisdiction over the other and that the Greek Cypriots do not represent the Turkish Cypriots. The Meeting expressed its deep disappointment about the unwillingness on the part of the Greek Cypriot side to find a comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus issue on the basis of the UN plan. The Meeting reaffirmed its adherence to the provisions of the Resolution No. 3/11-P(IS) and 5/35-P on the Situation in Cyprus adopted at the Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Dakar on 13-14 March 2008 and the Thirty-Fifth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Kampala on 18-20 June 2008, as well as the provisions of the previous OIC resolutions and the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Cyprus contained in document OIC/CFM-35/2008/POL/SG-REP.7

88. The Meeting reiterated its respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of the Sudan, and called on all sections of the international community to do the same.

89. The Meeting expressed its full solidarity with the Sudan under the leadership of H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir and stated its unflinching support for the various endeavors to achieve genuine national reconciliation, lasting peace and stability within the context of a sovereign and united country. In this regard the Meeting appealed to the Sudanese parties and other stakeholders to recommit themselves to the revival of the peace process in Darfur and deal constructively with various initiatives in this regard.

90. The Meeting considered the recent application by the ICC prosecutor for the indictment of H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, as unwarranted and unacceptable, and expressed its deep concern that this action could seriously undermine the ongoing efforts aimed at facilitating the early resolution of the conflict in Darfur and the promotion of long lasting peace and reconciliation in the Sudan. The Meeting also expressed its deep concern that this action could further lead to greater destabilization for the country and the entire region.

91. The Meeting urged the Security Council to suspend indefinitely the move by the Prosecutor directed against President Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir, and in this respect decided that the OIC should coordinate its efforts with the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Non-Aligned Movement and other political groupings to support steps in the UN and elsewhere aimed at defusing dangerous situation and preventing its recurrence. In this context, the Meeting instructed the OIC Group in New York to evolve the best ways and means of tackling the issue during the 63rd Session of the UNGA.

92. The Meeting reaffirmed that any kind of selectivity and double standards in the application of the principles of criminal justice and putting an end to impunity for crimes of genocide against humanity and war crimes will undermine vitality and will negatively affect the creditability of the ICC.

93. The Meeting stressed that, in accordance with the Rome Statute, the ICC can only be complementary to national legal systems, which have the primary responsibility of investigating and prosecuting cases over which they have jurisdiction.

94. The Meeting strongly condemned the destructive terrorist aggression carried out by the rebellious Justice and Equality Movement, with external support, against the national capital, Khartoum, on 10th May 2008, which targeted civilians, public and private property, undermined the Sudanese constitutional system, and resulted in heavy losses in life and property.

95. The Meeting pledged its firm support for the newly appointed joint UN/AU Chief Mediator on Darfur conflict, His Excellency Djibril Bassole, and urged the parties to extend full cooperation for the success of his mission, and called the armed movement that are yet to accede to the Abuja Peace Agreement to refrain from military escalation and to join, as a matter of urgency, the ongoing negotiations to bring total peace to Darfur, and specifically called on all Member States to impose strict measures on rebellious movements that refuse to accede to the peace negotiations under the auspices of the African Union and the United Nations, particularly the rebellious Justice and Equality Movement, and called for refraining from providing any form of facilities to those movements.

96. The Meeting affirmed its full solidarity with the Sudan in confronting the plots against it and in defending its unity, territorial integrity and stability, and declared its rejection of all forms of foreign intervention in Sudan's affairs, especially the unjust unilateral sanctions, such as the Darfur Accountability Act and other similar laws passed by the American Congress and regarded them as violation of international law, the resolutions of the United Nations and the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

97. The Meeting expressed its continued support to the Contact Group in charge of implementing the Dakar Agreement between Chad and Sudan signed on 13 March 2008 in Dakar on the sidelines of the Islamic Summit Conference, it requested the OIC Member States to contribute to the establishment of the Peace and Security Force which will monitor the borders between the two countries by providing financial contributions as well as the equipment needed for the establishment of its mandate.

98. The Meeting reaffirmed its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia, consistent with the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

99. The Meeting welcomed the outcome of the recently concluded and signed Reconciliation Agreement between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia and the Opposition Alliance in the Republic of Djibouti. The Meeting further welcomed the initial steps taken to implement the Agreement by the institution of the various Committees envisaged under the Agreement.

100. The Meeting underlined its appreciation for the efforts of AMISOM Forces currently deployed in Mogadishu and the invaluable contribution to peace and stability in Somalia, and strongly condemned any hostilities towards AMISOM. The Meeting called upon Member States of the African Union to contribute troops for AMISOM, and on other States and partners to provide financial, technical and logistical support for this effort.

101. The Meeting also urged OIC Member States to provide troops and other assistance to the possible deployment of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Somalia in order to substantially improve the security situation in the country.

102. The Meeting expressed its grave concern regarding the continued pattern of violent attacks, targeted assassinations by extremist terrorist elements in Somalia, including the use of explosive devices, and condemned all attempts to use violence to undermine the TFG, peace and stability in the country. In this context the Meeting urged all United Nations Member States to render unequivocal all-round assistance to the TFG to meet the basic security challenges.

103. The Meeting expressed its gratitude to all those donors who have supported the peace process in Somalia and encouraged donor countries, regional and sub-regional organizations to contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Somalia by contributing especially to the strengthening of the security sector.

104. The Meeting welcomed the Somali Government's continued commitment to the implementation of the road-map for the remainder of the transitional period leading to multiparty, free and fair elections in 2009 as set out in the Transitional Federal Charter.

105. The Meeting fully recognized the critical security, reconciliation and humanitarian situation of Somalia and urged the United Nations Security Council to move forward and boldly to authorize the fielding of a United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Somalia in order to end

destructive 17 years of conflict and to enable the Somali Government and people to embark on the much needed stabilization, rehabilitation and reconstruction of Somalia.

106. The Meeting called upon OIC Member States to provide more assistance to the people of Somalia.

107. Recalling Resolution No. 10/35-P on providing assistance to the Union of Comoros, adopted by the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Kampala, the Meeting called upon Member States to actively help the Union of Comoros by providing it with needed material, economic, human, and financial resources, to effectively achieve its economic and social development programs. It strongly urged the different Islamic financial institutions and Member States to cancel or reschedule the debts of the Union of Comoros in order to enable it to dedicate itself to the sustainable reconstruction of its economy.

108. Noting the declaration of independence by the Assembly of Kosovo on February 17, 2008, and other developments, including the UN Secretary General's reconfiguration of the civil international presence in Kosovo, the Meeting reaffirmed the continued interests of the OIC and its solidarity with the Kosovar people.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

109. The Meeting affirmed its commitment to preserve the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders and welcomed the arrest of the fugitive war criminal Radovan Karadzic.

110. The Meeting invited the OIC General Secretariat to pursue its humanitarian action in the Member States and to give increasing attention to protecting the most vulnerable social groups. In order to do so, the Meeting invited the OIC General Secretariat to strengthen its partnership relations with United Nations organs and agencies working in the humanitarian field in addition to the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) of the Member States.

111. The Meeting welcomed the establishment within the OIC General Secretariat a Department of Humanitarian Affairs in accordance with Resolution 11/35-C adopted by the 35th Council of Foreign Ministers held in Kampala, Uganda, and called upon the OIC Member States to extend all possible support to the new department in the successful implementation of its mandate, including through the provision of advice.

112. The Meeting exhorted all participants to the Niger International Donors Conference held in Doha in June 2007 to work for the concrete realization of their pledges and commitments made in order to enable the program aimed at consolidating food security in the Republic of Niger to be implemented as soon as possible. It also appealed to Member States to come to the rescue of the Sahelian countries and curb the recurrence of humanitarian disasters in the region.

113. The Meeting expressed its satisfaction with the remarkable success achieved by the OIC Alliance for the Safeguard of the Children Victims of Tsunami in Indonesia and appealed to all

Member States as well as the civil society to continue lending their support to this important humanitarian project.

114. The Meeting welcomed the joint efforts of the Government of the Sudan, the OIC Secretary General and the IDB President to organize and OIC Donors' Conference, which indicates serious commitment of the Government of the Sudan towards achieving peace and development in Darfur, and called upon Member States to participate effectively and contribute generously at the Conference.

115. The Meeting commended the appreciable support of the Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques towards holding a conference on reconstruction and development of Darfur at the Headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah.

116. The Meeting noted with concern the negative impact of rising food and energy prices in some parts of the world and welcomed the praise worthy initiative of H.H. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait in setting up the Fund for Dignified Life to help OIC countries respond to this challenge.

117. The Meeting reaffirmed the need for the reconstruction of war-ravaged Cote d'Ivoire, and more particularly the need for the rehabilitation of its economy.

118. The Meeting called upon OIC Member States to extend humanitarian assistance to the refugees and displaced persons in Chad as well as rehabilitation of the affected areas.

UNILATERAL MEASURES

119. The Meeting reiterated its rejection of unilateral economic measures and attempts to impose unilateral economic sanctions on Member States. It expressed solidarity with Member States that are affected by such unilateral sanctions and requested that they be lifted immediately.

120. The Meeting welcomed the lifting of the unilateral sanctions which were imposed on the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and recognized Libya's right to compensation for the damages suffered as a result of those sanctions. It reaffirmed the OIC's previous positions, reiterating its deep deploration of the ruling against the Libyan citizen Abdul Basit Al-Megrahi and calling for his immediate release, as his condemnation was based on political motives and had no legal justification, as was affirmed by the United Nations Observers and a number of International Legal Experts. In this connection, the Conference called on the International Community and Human Rights Organizations to put pressure on the governments concerned in order to ensure his release.

DISARMAMENT, NON-PROLIFERATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY

121. The Meeting expressed its concern over the current impasse on issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation and called for a renewed determination towards achieving a balanced consensus on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. The

Meeting also emphasized the imperative of promoting multilateral diplomacy in resolving disarmament and non-proliferation concerns, and, in this context, underlined that treaty-based multilateral institutions established under the auspices of the United Nations are the sole legitimate bodies to verify and ensure compliance with relevant international agreements.

122. The Meeting reiterated the proposal on the convening of a special session of the United Nations General Assembly as soon as possible with a view to reaffirming guidelines, principles and the priority of nuclear disarmament set out in the First Special Session devoted to Disarmament, assessing its implementation and evolving additional guidelines and practical measures, taking into account the existing and emerging challenges in the area of Disarmament and non-Proliferation.

123. The Meeting noted with concern the growing trend among some States to seek bilateral deals in the area of civil nuclear cooperation, with States that do not have a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA. This is a manifestation of double standards and discrimination and is in contravention to the commitments and obligations under the NPT. The Meeting cautioned that such selective approaches, based on narrow commercial and strategic interests, would undermine the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

124. The Meeting, while noting the adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1540 of 28 April 2004, 1673 of 27 April 2006 and 1810 of 25 April 2008, the scope of which remains limited to preventing the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors, reaffirmed that adoption of these resolutions represents a temporary arrangement to fill a gap in international rules. It also reiterated that the Security Council cannot assume legislative responsibilities in matters pertaining to non-proliferation and disarmament issues, since those States which seek to perpetuate the monopoly of nuclear weapons also wield the power of the veto in the Council. In this regard, the Meeting renewed its call for concluding a non-discriminatory and universally negotiated international treaty on the elimination of WMDs which should replace the temporary arrangements assumed by the Security Council under resolutions 1540, 1673 and 1810.

125. The Meeting while noting the on-going talks between Pakistan and India over conventional and nuclear confidence building measures welcomed the proposal by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for a Strategic Restraint Regime in South Asia to promote strategic stability and security.

126. The Meeting believed that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) on the basis of arrangements arrived at freely by the governments and taking into account, inter-alia, provisions of the First UNGA session devoted to disarmament (SSOD 1), are positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the signing of the Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia in Semipalatinsk on 8 September 2006 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and considered this effort by five Central Asian Countries, which are all Member States of the OIC, as an effective contribution to strengthening regional and global peace and security.)

127. The Meeting urged all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking practical and urgent steps required for implementing the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and warned against the dire consequences of the continuing rejection of Israel to accede to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the full scope of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this regard, the Meeting supported the draft resolution submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Security Council on 29 December 2003 regarding the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and called upon the Security Council to act positively on the draft to achieve that lofty goal in the region.

128. The Meeting called upon Israel to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) full scope safeguards. In this regard, it reiterated the importance of establishing a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East at the earliest possible stage to retain peace and security in the region. The Meeting expressed its support to the Arab Initiative submitted to the Security Council on 29 December 2003 in this regard.

129. The Meeting reiterated its support for the efforts of the Arab Group in Vienna to incorporate the Item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities" on the agenda of the 52nd session of the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to exert all efforts for the adoption of a resolution in this regard, during the forthcoming conference of the IAEA under the same title.

130. The Meeting reaffirmed the need for total nuclear disarmament and for the elimination of nuclear weapons and other 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 violation of all international agreements on nuclear proliferation.

131. The Meeting strongly condemned the statement made by the Prime Minister of Israel on 11 December 2006, in his interview with a German TV channel, in which he publicly admitted the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel.

132. The Meeting, while reaffirming the inalienable rights of Member States, including Iran, without discrimination, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as enshrined in the NPT and the Statute of the IAEA, supported firmly the settlement of all issues exclusively by peaceful means and through negotiations, without preconditions and in the framework of the IAEA and in accordance with the NPT and the statute of the IAEA. It expressed concern over the pressure being mounted on Iran and its potential consequences for peace and security in and outside the region, and expressed its support and solidarity with that country. The Meeting also appreciated the cooperation of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the IAEA. The meeting also welcomed the agreed work-plan between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the IAEA that resulted in resolving of all remaining outstanding issues, as provided for in the latest reports of the Director General of the Agency on the Nuclear Program of the Islamic

Republic of Iran and in this context, reaffirmed that the safeguard implementation in Iran should be conducted in a routine manner, and expressed its hope that the issue of nuclear activity of the Islamic Republic of Iran be referred from the United Nations Security Council to the Agency as soon as possible.

133. The Meeting reaffirmed the inalienable right of all states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses. It encouraged cooperation among the OIC Member States on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the auspices of the IAEA.

134. The Meeting strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomsoever and wherever, and reaffirmed its commitment to strengthen mutual cooperation in the fight against terrorism through inter alia, evolving an appropriate definition of terrorism, mutual exchange of information, capacity building and by addressing the root causes of terrorism such as unresolved conflicts, continued suppression and marginalization of peoples and denial of the rights of peoples to their self-determination in situations of foreign occupation.

135. Recalling Section VI of the Ten Year Program of Action adopted at the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Makkah Al Mukarramah in December 2005, and Resolution 12/33-P adopted at the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Baku in June 2006, the Meeting emphasized that terrorism completely contradicts the peaceful nature of the teachings of Islam, which urge tolerance, mercy and non-violence. It also condemned any connection between terrorism and any race, religion and culture. It renewed the call for an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations to define terrorism and to distinguish it from the legitimate struggle of people under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation for self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. It also called for a high-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on terrorism. It reiterated its welcome and support for the resolution issued by the International Conference on Combating Terrorism, which was held in Riyadh on 5-8 February 2005, relating to the establishment of an International Counter-Terrorism Center under the aegis of the United Nations, with a view to enhance the exchange of information as well as for cooperation and coordination among Member States in order to strengthen efforts to combat this dangerous phenomenon.

136. The Meeting emphasized that terrorism continues to pose a threat to international peace, security and stability. It does not have any justification and should be condemned unreservedly. Terrorism has no particular religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality or a geographic region. In this vein, any attempt to associate terrorism with any religion, especially with Islam would serve the interests of terrorists. It is not possible to combat terrorism effectively without international solidarity and cooperation. The international community should therefore agree to a common and consistent approach in identifying, defining, condemning, isolating and punishing all terrorists and their supports. Due to the transnational nature of terrorism, the efforts to fight against it should be carried out on a global scale. United Nations is the main forum to promote international cooperation against terrorism. Full compliance with the provisions of the UN Security Council resolutions and international conventions on the fight against terrorism is

vitality important. Moreover, the Meeting rejected politically motivated attempts to unjustly associate Islam or any Islamic country with terrorism.

137. The Meeting took note of the adoption of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and called for a review mechanism to provide a comprehensive Strategy which duly takes into account the root causes of terrorism and draw distinction between terrorism and the struggle for the right of self determination by the people under foreign occupation and colonial or alien domination. The Meeting recognized that foreign occupation, state terrorism, political and economic injustice and denial of right of self-determination to people are the main root causes of terrorism. The Meeting recognized that a time-structured approach, envisaging short, medium, and long term objectives, to the implementation of the strategy could best accommodate the contentious issues related to the strategy.

138. The Meeting also reaffirmed its determination to make every effort to reach an agreement on and conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, including by resolving the outstanding issues related to the legal definition of terrorism and scope of the acts covered by the convention, so that it can serve as an effective instrument to counter terrorism.

139. The Meeting also took note of the Statements of the President of the Security Council S/PRST/2007/45 and S/PRST/2008/31, condemning the terrorist attacks that took place in Algeria in December 2007 and August 2008 respectively, and expresses its deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims of these attacks and their families, and to the people and Government of Algeria.

140. The Meeting took note of the Security Council Press Statements SC/9313/AFG/315 of April 2008 and SC/9386/AFG/319 of July 2008, strongly condemning the terrorist activities and attacks in Afghanistan and expressing its deepest sympathy and condolences to the all victims of these attacks, their families and to the people and Government of Afghanistan, and called on the International Community and OIC Member States to cooperate with Afghanistan in fighting against this phenomenon.

141-. The Meeting took note of the Security Council Press Statement SC/9389 of 8 July 2008 and the Statement of the President of the Security Council S/PRST/2008/32 of 21 August 2008 condemning the terrorist attacks that took place in Pakistan and expressed deep sympathies and condolences to victims of these heinous attacks and the Government of Pakistan.

142. The Meeting took note of the Security Council Press Statement SC/9446 of 17 September 2008, strongly condemning the terrorist attack that took place in Yemen and expressed its deep sympathies and condolences to victims of this heinous attack and their families and the People and the Government of the Republic of Yemen.

143. The Meeting emphasized the importance to address the use of internet by terrorists and cyber-terrorism and requested all countries to take the necessary measures to combat such use.

144. The Meeting welcomed with appreciation the initiative of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, calling for an international conference under the

auspices of the United Nations, to devise an international strategy to combat terrorism, address its causes and to prepare a code of conduct in this regard, drawing upon the content of the final communiqué of the international conference on terrorism: dimensions, threats and counter-measures, held in Tunisia from 15 to 17 November, 2007.

UN REFORM

145. The Meeting supported a comprehensive reform of the United Nations Organization to respond to the challenges facing humanity. The Meeting reiterated the need for evolving common perceptions and agreed approaches to address both the new and existing threats to international peace and security in the context of multilateralism. The Meeting also reiterated the OIC's stance in support of the principle of the United Nations reform, including the expansion of the Security Council's membership, in accordance with the relevant UNGA resolutions, and taking into consideration the principles of sovereign equality of all States and the need to ensure equitable geographic distribution.

146. The Meeting emphasized that the question of reform and expansion of the UN Security Council continues to be the primary preoccupation of the UN membership, including all OIC Member States for whom this is a matter of direct and vital interest. It, therefore, called on its Member States to actively and constructively take part in the UN reform process in accordance with the relevant declarations, statements and resolutions issued by the OIC. It emphasized the importance of a comprehensive reform enhancing the transparency, accountability, representativeness and democratization of the Security Council through the improvement of its working methods and legitimacy and effectiveness of its decision-making process. The Meeting reaffirmed its principled position that any reform of the Security Council must ensure adequate representation of the OIC Member States in any category of membership of the expanded Security Council.

147. The Meeting highlighted that in the current era of regional blocks, the OIC is the largest institution after the United Nations, which brings together one-fifth of the world population. The OIC's demand for adequate representation in the Security Council is in keeping with the significant demographic and political weight of the OIC Member States, which bears particular importance, not only from the perspective of increased efficiency, but also to ensure the representation of the main forms of civilization in the Security Council. It therefore reaffirmed its decision that any reform proposal which neglects the adequate representation of the Islamic Ummah in any category of membership in an expanded Security Council will not be acceptable to the Islamic World.

148. The Meeting also stressed an increased role of regional groups in determining their representation on the Council. It also recognized that there was wide support for increasing the number of non-permanent members in the Security Council.

149. The Meeting took note of the progress made in the discussions on Security Council reform during the 62nd Session of the General Assembly, guided by the President of the Assembly. The Meeting underlined that the reform of the Security Council must be achieved with the broadest possible agreement. In this context, and keeping in view the continuing divergent positions

among UN Member States on important aspects of Security Council reform, the Meeting stressed the importance of further constructive consultations between all UN Member States to agree on a common basis and framework for further progress without imposing any time limits or pushing divisive votes. In that regard, it called for building upon the points of convergence such as the need to enlarge the Council, to increase the representation of developing countries, and to improve the working methods and transparency of the Council's work.

150. The Meeting rejected any efforts to abuse the Security Council as a tool to pursue certain political and national agendas and stressed on the importance of non-selectivity and impartiality in the work of the Council.

151. The Meeting, by rejecting the interventionist tendencies and unilateral preemptive action in international relations as a real threat to the world community, stressed that the UNSC should act in full transparency and accountability and expressed grave concern over the policies which have prevented this body from performing its main duty based on justice and thus undermined its credibility. It stressed that the UNSC should be accountable for its unlawful decisions as well as its repeated failures with regard to issues related to the Muslim Ummah.

152. The Meeting expressed its profound appreciation for the active and constructive participation of the OIC Member States that have served and are currently serving as members of the United Nations Peace Building Commission. It welcomed the invitation to the Organization of the Islamic Conference to participate in all Meetings of the Commission and expressed the continued engagement and support of the Organization to the work of the Commission. The Meeting appreciated the OIC General Secretariat's contribution of US \$20,000 to the Peace-building Fund in 2007, and in this regard, it requested the OIC Member States to consider providing financial contributions to the OIC Secretary General such that they may be transferred as the Organization's contribution to the Fund.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

153. The Meeting expressed deep concern over the growing phenomenon of intolerance and discrimination against Muslim communities in non-OIC Member States, particularly in the West, including the promulgation and oppressive application of restrictive laws and other measures. It emphasized that all Islamophobic practices constitute an infringement of human dignity and contradict the provisions of the international human rights documents.

154. The Meeting emphasized the need to develop, at the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, a legally binding international instrument to promote respect for all religions and cultural values and prevent intolerance, discrimination and the instigation of hatred against any group or followers of any religion.

155. The Meeting expressed appreciation and full satisfaction for the laudable collective efforts of the OIC Group in Geneva to coordinate and harmonize the positions of the OIC Member States within the Human Rights Council; to deploy collective and intensive efforts to enable the HRC to take concrete measures for the respect and protection of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and in Lebanon; to place two crucial issues for

the OIC namely the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the issue of incitement to racial and religious hatred and the promotion of tolerance at the top of the permanent agenda of the Human Rights Council.

156. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the active participation of Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Tunisia in decision-making and institutional building process of the United Nations Human Rights Council and valuable efforts of the OIC Group in Geneva in taking a common position within the Council on matters of special interest to the OIC Member States.

157. The Meeting expressed opposition to the practice of submitting country specific resolutions on human rights situations which are selectively targeting developing and Islamic countries. It reaffirmed that this practice is one of the main reasons that transforms the work of human rights bodies into an extremely political exercise rather than contributing to the advancement of the cause of human rights.

158. The Meeting expressed grave concerns over the application of economic and financial sanctions against some OIC members, with all their negative implications for the socio-humanitarian activities and economic and social development of those States, thereby creating additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights by peoples and individuals under their jurisdiction.

159. The Meeting welcomed the progress made in the elaboration of modalities of the Universal Periodic Review within the framework of institutional building of the Human Rights Council, and looks forward to its early functioning as an innovative cooperative mechanism to promote the universality, interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights and to ensure universal coverage and equal treatment of all States.

160. The Meeting welcomed the decision by the 35th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, in its resolution no. 33/35-P, to designate the 5th of August of every year, which is coincident with the adoption of the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, as the “Islamic Human Rights and Human Dignity Day”. In this context, the meeting requested the OIC Member States and the General Secretariat to observe this auspicious day as an opportunity for dialogue, cooperation, education and awareness-raising according to Islamic teaching and values.

161. The Meeting stressed the need to find fair and just solutions to the problems facing Muslim minorities in the world, including in particular denying them the right to exercise their political, civil and cultural rights, the gross human rights violations which at times amount to ethnic cleansing, in addition to religious and sectarian segregation, socio-economic backwardness, and exclusion from effective political activity in their countries.

162. The Meeting agreed that the General Assembly representing universal membership, in accordance with the United Nations Charter must be enabled to exercise its authority in addressing all major issues, including peace and security, development and human rights. The

Meeting further called for halting and reversing the encroachment by the Security Council on the Assembly's prerogatives and functions.

163. The Meeting reiterated concern over the condition of the Muslim minority in India. It urged the Government of India to take effective measures to end violence and discrimination against Muslims. The Meeting also reaffirmed its mandate to the General Secretariat to observe the situation of Muslims in India and to collect further information on the challenges and difficulties that they are facing in political, social and cultural spheres.

164. The Meeting *emphasized* the fact that defamation of religions constitute a form of incitement to religious hatred, hostility and violence against the followers of these religions which in turn leads to the denial of their fundamental rights and freedoms. It *further stressed* that combating religious discrimination in general requires a particular focus on preventing the direct and indirect consequences of defamation of religions, including its role in legitimizing discriminatory discourse and ideological violence.

165. The Meeting *reaffirmed* that the characterization of the issue of "combating defamation of religions" as a human rights issue emanates from its direct impact on the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the followers of any religions or beliefs. It *further stressed* that the rationale of raising it on the international human rights agenda is to tackle it from this specific angle.

166. The Meeting while *acknowledging* that discrimination based on an individual's religion or belief is the consequence of a multiplicity of factors, *emphasized* that the adoption by the elites, politicians and the media of a certain posture that ridicules or otherwise degrades religion or belief plays a significant role in predisposing the general public to discriminate against a particular religious community by creating an ideological environment that favors the existence and ideological legitimization of discrimination.

167. The Meeting *emphasized* the obligation of states to address acts of advocacy of hatred based on religion perpetrated by non-State actors in implementation of their positive obligation under article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to prohibit such acts which constitute incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.

168. The Meeting *attached* utmost importance to the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression, as stipulated in international human rights law instruments. It *further recalled* that international human rights law provides that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities and therefore may be subject to certain restrictions provided by law and necessary for respect of the rights or reputations of others, and for the protection of national security or public order, or public health or morals.

169. The Meeting reiterated the request to the Secretary General to convene a meeting of an Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts for negotiating and finalizing the draft of the legally binding instrument to prevent intolerance, discrimination, prejudice and incitement to hatred on the basis of religion, and defamation of religions and to promote and ensure the respect for all religions, which should be submitted to the Council of Foreign Ministers for adoption.

170. The Meeting *expressed* its firm conviction that continued dialogue between all countries is the best, indeed the only way to overcome existing differences in perception with regards to how best to deal with this important issue. It *stressed* that the continuation and intensification of engagement between all parties, in a constructive and genuine dialogue, based on mutual respect and understanding with a view to overcoming these differences is the optimum path to follow. It *expressed* its sincere intention to approach this issue with a cooperative spirit and an open mind aimed at addressing it adequately and with due consideration to the various rights sought to be upheld and protected without sacrificing one for the other. The Meeting *further expressed* its hope that all parties concerned will likewise approach it with a similar spirit aimed at dealing with this matter effectively on a consensual basis.

171. The Meeting strongly condemned the publication of offensive, provocative, irresponsible and blasphemous caricatures of the Prophet (PBUH) in the print and electronic media of some Western countries under the pretext of freedom of expression and press freedom. It stressed that the right to freedom of expression should be exercised with responsibility and in accordance with the law.

172. The Meeting condemned the growing trend of Islamophobia and systematic discrimination against the adherents of Islam. It called upon the international community to prevent incitement to hatred and discrimination against Muslims and take effective measures to combat defamation of religions and acts of negative stereotyping of people based on religion, belief or ethnicity. The Meeting requested the Secretary General to continue the OIC initiatives to effectively counter Islamophobia through discussion and debates at various international fora.

173. The Meeting reaffirmed the responsibility of the Islamic world in reviewing the condition of Muslim communities and minorities in Non-OIC countries to ensure promotion and protection of their basic rights including cultural and religious freedom.

DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

174. The Meeting noted the recent decline in food prices. It was emphasized however that the international community should remain vigilant as analysis have indicated that global food security continues to be vulnerable. To that end it called for the strengthening of global partnerships to achieve global food security. The Meeting called on the Member States to unite their efforts in order to tackle the crisis engendered by the increase in prices of basic food commodities and urged them to coordinate their actions so as to exchange expertise, experiences and information on the measures taken by each Member State at the national level in order to face this crisis.

175. The Meeting expressed concern over the repercussions of the International food crisis on the developing countries and Least Developing Countries (LCDs) and their ability to secure the basic food requirement of their citizens as well as the possible ramifications of the crisis in terms of precipitating future famine, in different areas and regions worldwide.

176. The Meeting called on International Institutions and developed countries to double their offered assistance and technical support to the agricultural sectors of developing countries in such a way as to hold increased agricultural production in these countries.

177. The Meeting emphasized the need to ensure energy security through the diversification of energy supply by developing advanced, cleaner, more efficient, affordable and cost-effective energy technologies, including fossil fuel technologies and renewable energy technologies. To that end it called on the relevant United Nations bodies, other international organizations and donors to strengthen their support to developing countries in building a strong, productive and efficient energy sector.

178. The Meeting reiterated that the pursuance of sustainable development should be the priority of all countries through the implementation of all internationally agreed development goals and objectives at all levels, including those contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Declaration, and the Brussels Programme of Action for LDCs, and the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries. The Meeting also stressed that the multilateral trading and financial systems should be open, equitable, rule-based, non-discriminatory and sensitive to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) situation. In this context, it urged the international community to facilitate the accession of those OIC Member States that seek to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) on fair terms, irrespective of political considerations.

179. The Meeting expressed serious concern over the breakdown in the WTO Doha Trade Negotiations and called for an early resumption and successful conclusion of the Doha Round of Trade Negotiations adhering to the development mandate of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the decision of 1 August 2004 of the General Council of the World Trade Organization and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, which places development at the heart of the multilateral trading system. The Meeting called upon developed countries to show the necessary political will and flexibility to bring the negotiation to a successful development outcome.

180. The Meeting welcomed the follow up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, scheduled to be held in Doha on November 29 – December 2, 2008. The Meeting stressed that the Review Conference should assess progress made, reaffirm goals and commitments, share best practices and lessons learned, and identify obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for further implementation, as well as new challenges and emerging issues.

181. The Meeting welcomed the decisions adopted during the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3-15 December 2007. The Meeting took note of the ongoing deliberations at the UNFCCC led Ad Hoc Working Group on the Long Term Cooperative Action in pursuance of the Bali Plan of Action on Climate Change to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at its fifteenth session in 2009 at Copenhagen. The Meeting also took note of the work underway in the open-ended Ad Hoc

Working Group of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC to deliberate and reach an agreement on further commitment for Annex 1 countries on Post 2012 period.

182. The Meeting underlined that while the developed countries are historically responsible, the developing countries are most severely affected from Climate Change. In this regard, the meeting noted that Annex 1 countries have not made enough progress in meeting their reduction target to cut their overall emission by 5.2% below 1990 levels and urged them to fully implement their commitment under the first period of the Kyoto Protocol.

183. The Meeting reaffirmed that measures to combat Climate Change should be in accordance with the provisions of the UNFCCC, and consistent with the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” and respective capabilities.

184. The Meeting underlined the need to establish and operationalize an effective institutional architecture for Technology Development and Transfer under the UNFCCC as contained in relevant articles of the Convention that address the legal, financial and structural barriers to technology transfer to the developing countries.

185. The Meeting also stressed upon the need to establish a multilateral fund, to ensure the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention, in relation to implementation of commitments for the provision of financial resources, mandated under relevant articles of the Framework Convention.

186. The Meeting, recognizing the central role of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in the promotion of socio-economic development, called for strengthening its role as an effective policy dialogue platform and to use its mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. In this context, the Meeting welcomed the convening of the second Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) and the first Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) during the 2008 Substantive Session of ECOSOC to further strengthen the leading role of this UN body on economic policy-making.

187. The Meeting took note of the final documents adopted in the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunisia from 16 through 18 November 2005, following the first phase held in Geneva in December 2003, and emphasized the need for building on the commitments made in Geneva and Tunis by focusing on efforts aimed at bridging the gap between developing countries and industrial countries. It called on the Member States to focus on the follow-up of the Geneva and Tunis decisions, including by participating actively in the Internet Governance Forum.

188. The Meeting reaffirmed the need to strengthen the role and capacity of the United Nations system to assist developing countries' efforts to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals, particularly goal number 8 of the Millennium Development Goals which calls for developing a Global Partnership for Development and substantial increase in development assistance to achieve these goals.

189. Noting the interdependence of nations and the varying levels of human development world-wide, the Meeting reaffirmed the need for a New Global Human Order aimed at reversing growing disparities between rich and poor, both among and within countries including through the promotion of poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work, and social integration. In this context, the Meeting welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 62/213 on the role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order and in particular the request contained therein for a report by the Secretary General assessing the implications of inequality for development.

190. The Meeting called for special attention to African Development issues and stressed the support of the international community to the NEPAD programme.

191. The Meeting urged the developed countries that have not done so, to materialize the target of 0.7% of GNP for official development assistance set for end of 2008, in order to enable the developing countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as set by 2015. In this connection particular attention should be given to the implementation of the Monterrey Declaration.

192. The Meeting welcomed the launch of the OIC Poverty Alleviation Fund with an initial budget of 1.57 billion US Dollars aimed at poverty alleviation in Islamic countries with a particular focus on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

193. The Meeting called on United Nations Member States for the full implementation of the resolutions and the decisions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) concerning the return of cultural properties to the peoples who were or still are under colonial rule or foreign occupation. It also stressed the need for UNESCO to identify the stolen or illegally exported cultural properties in accordance with the relevant conventions on the subject. It emphasized the need to expedite the process of returning these properties to their countries of origin, in compliance with the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. It further emphasized the right of the Islamic countries to maintain and conserve their national heritage, as it constitutes the foundation of the cultural identity of these countries.

194. The Meeting urged the OIC Member States to provide women with better opportunities and allow them to perform a greater role in the development of their societies in various fields. The Meeting welcomed the hosting of the 2nd Ministerial Conference on the Role of Women in the Development of the OIC Member States by the Government of Egypt on 24-25 November 2008.

195. The Meeting expressed its appreciation of the outcome of the Expert Group Meeting on Women's Participation in Decision Making of the OIC held on 21-22 January 2008 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and commended the work of the Working Group to develop the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW) on 6-7 April 2008 in Jeddah and calls for the finalization of the OPAAW that should be submitted to the 2nd Ministerial Conference on the Role of Women in the Development of the OIC Member States.

196. The Meeting expressed its satisfaction with the outcome of the 3rd annual World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) held from 27 to 29 May 2007 in Kuala Lumpur and the 4th WIEF held in Kuwait from 29 April to 1 May 2008 that aims at strengthening business collaboration among Muslim business people throughout the world.

197. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat to ensure an effective presence of the Organization on the international scene, and in international fora in particular in total collaboration and coordination with the Chairmen of the Contact Groups and the OIC Ambassadorial groups in New York, Geneva, Paris (UNESCO) and Vienna.

198. The Meeting encouraged all member states to provide financial support for the implementation of infrastructure development projects in areas such as: transport, energy, ICT, agriculture, food production, education and health to the LDC's.

199. The Meeting stressed the need to identify and support projects for strengthening capacity building for poverty alleviation in the areas of human resource development and infrastructure particularly in the areas of health, education, agriculture, science and technology.

200. The Meeting recognized the significant potential for promoting prosperity and development in the Ummah. It resolved to vigorously pursue prosperity and development in all OIC countries. It called for the promotion of intra-OIC trade and investment. It undertook to step up efforts to establish a Free Trade Area for greater economic integration within the Member States and encouraged Member States to conclude the necessary bilateral and regional arrangements including air links, services, cargo, and ware-housing to enhance intra-OIC trade and commerce.

201. The Meeting recognized the critical role of the private sector in providing impetus to intra-OIC economic, commercial and trade relations, and to that effect, invited Member States to encourage representatives of their respective private sector to assume a pro-active and interactive role. In this regard, it welcomed the successful organization of The 12th Private Sector Meeting - The First OIC Business Forum in Kampala from 16 to 18 June 2008, which adopted the Kampala Economic Declaration. It encouraged Member States to organize similar fora in future and actively participate in the projects of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

202. The Meeting underscored the importance of adding value to the raw materials of Member States on a system-wide basis for the purpose of increased revenue for development purposes and capacity building. In this regard, the meeting emphasized the central role that Member States can play in improving agricultural practices through mechanization, food production, agro-processing, storage facilitation and marketing.

203. The Meeting recognized the critical role that infrastructure plays in enhancing development in the Member States especially in the context of inter-state projects such as port development, railways and trans-boundary highways.

204. The Meeting welcomed the decision to construct the Dakar-Port Sudan Railway Project, commending Sudan for introducing the project and for its offer to host the first Ministerial

meeting of interested states and requested the IDB to continue providing appropriate support to the project and for other infrastructure development projects.

205. The Meeting welcomed the establishment of the Investment Promotion Technical Assistance Programme by the IDB aimed at building capacity, attracting new Foreign Direct Investments as well as facilitating additional investments in Member States.

206. The Meeting called upon Member States to promote intra-OIC tourism by actively participating in tourism fairs, joint tourism ventures and investment and upgrading tourist facilities and absorptive capacities.

207. The Meeting welcomed the creation of the Special Fund for the Development of Africa, the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development and all other established Funds to promote development among the least developed OIC countries.

208. The Meeting decided to establish a Working Group to examine the OIC sponsored resolutions on Defamation of Religion in both New York and Geneva with a view to enhancing support for the two resolutions.

209. The Meeting recognized the importance of revitalizing the OIC Group on UN Reform in New York and decided that the Group should enhance the frequency of its meetings with a view to coordinating unified positions, in accordance with the relevant resolutions at the Summit in Dakar and the CFM in Kampala, during the forthcoming critical phase of the ongoing discourse on the UN Reform

SUPPORT TO OIC MEMBER STATES' CANDIDATES AND PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE OIC:

210. The Meeting reaffirmed the principled position of the OIC that where there are any OIC Member States candidates for senior United Nations positions, or for membership in UN bodies including the Security Council, the OIC will support them.

211. The Meeting expressed appreciation and satisfaction for the performance of the Permanent Observer Mission of the OIC to the United Nations in New York in discharging its duties in conformity with the resolutions of the OIC Summit and Ministerial Conferences.

212. The Meeting noted with deep concern the continued difficulties faced by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to the UN in New York due to the absence of diplomatic status of the Mission. Recognizing the central role of the Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations in New York, the Meeting once again urged the government of the United States of America, as the host country, to extend full diplomatic status to the Mission. The Meeting appreciated the efforts of the outgoing Chair of the OIC Group for taking up the issue on behalf of the Ambassadorial Level Committee in New York and further requested the current Chair of the OIC Group to pursue the issue with the host government.

RATIONALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING

213. The Meeting reiterated the resolve of the 31st Session of the ICFM held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2004 and decided that henceforth the agenda of the Annual Coordination Meeting (ACM) of Foreign Ministers of Member States will be confined to consultation and coordination of positions on recent developments on issues of concern to the OIC Member States that are included in the agenda of the General Assembly and the other main organs of the United Nations. Accordingly, the Final Communiqué of the ACM will henceforth be concise.

214. The Meeting further reiterated the decision to rationalize and improve the work of the Annual Coordination Meeting and make it a truly interactive forum by focusing entirely on thematic issues and doing away with the pre-prepared list of inscriptions.

215. The Meeting adopted the reports issued by:

- I- The OIC Six Member Group on Palestine (Annex-I).
- II- The OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir (Annex-II).
- III- The OIC Contact Group on Somalia (Annex – III).
- IV- The OIC Contact Group on Sierra Leone (Annex-IV).
- V- The OIC Contact Group on Iraq (Annex-V)