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*Report of the  
Secretary General on OIC Humanitarian Activities*

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Report of the Secretary General  
On  
OIC Humanitarian Activities

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I would like to seize the opportunity offered to me by the 40<sup>th</sup> session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC to make an overview presentation of the activities of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (ICHAD) since it started its operations in early 2005 shortly after the Makkah Summit though its legal establishment intervened in June 2008, following the adoption of Resolution No.11/35-C by the 35<sup>th</sup> CFM held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda.

**I/ Emergency interventions**

**1. OIC Alliance Orphans Kafala Programme in Banda Aceh**

Soon after assuming my duties as Secretary General of the OIC in January 2005, I had to face an unexpected humanitarian challenge brought about by the **Tsunami** which hit Indonesia in late December 2004.

Indeed, I hurriedly set up a task force to look after the Orphans in Banda Aceh in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank which had to manage the money raised during the Telethon organized by the Custodian of the Two Holy Places, King Abdullah Bin Abdelaziz.

The results were beyond our expectations because the Department of Humanitarian Affairs which was an embryo at that time rose up to the challenge and put into place several mechanisms to cope with the huge number of orphans who lost their parents due to the Tsunami catastrophe.

An Office was subsequently established in Banda Aceh to cater for the needs of the 25,000 orphans recorded at the time of the Tsunami following the signing, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005, in Sanaa, Republic of Yemen, of a mutual agreement between the Indonesian Government and the OIC. However, prior to that, a coordinating committee was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat on 28 February 2005 involving civil society organizations and media from Member states which decided that they will work under the umbrella of the Alliance.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia renewed its faith in the programme and signed a MoU through its local government with the OIC Alliance for Orphans in Banda Aceh. Furthermore, this pioneering program was meant to address the overall needs of orphans until they grow up and become self reliant and productive to their society while preserving their cultural & Islamic identity. So far, 5,310 orphans have been sponsored and 18,600 of them are waiting for new sponsors who will provide the much needed financial resources to look after them.

To make the project sustainable and more efficient, I have dispatched in cooperation with the IDB, several missions to Banda Aceh to assess how best to devise a joint new governance body which will help run the programme in fulfilling its duties.

A this juncture, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdelaziz Al Saoud; to the Government of Indonesia and to the other donors who have spared no efforts to meet the vital needs of these orphans.

## **2. Padang in Indonesia**

After the Tsunami tidal waves, the OIC had to intervene in Indonesia through its Office in Banda Aceh in Padang in West Sumatra when disaster struck in 2009. The OIC Banda Aceh Office deployed its staff and coordinated OIC NGOs' humanitarian activities during the earthquake.

## **3. Pakistan**

Following a large influx of IDPs in the Swat Valley where thousands of persons fled their homes, a joint OIC-IDB field mission was sent there in 2009. It held high-level talks with Pakistani authorities and Member States were contacted to extend humanitarian assistance. Both the ISF and the IDB provided funding for meaningful projects to help restore capacities and institutions.

In September 2010, the OIC also played a leading role in rallying support to this country when it was struck by a mega disaster in the form of a large scale floods which have not been seen for over 80 years. Several initiatives were taken and appeals were made to increase more awareness among OIC Member States including the convening of an emergency humanitarian conference in Islamabad.

ICHAD held a meeting with the participation of thirty (30) organizations from the Member States. Following the recommendation of the meeting, a coordination unit was established in Islamabad which provided Member States with documented periodical reports on the humanitarian situation on the ground and publicized the aids provided by the Member States and Islamic humanitarian organizations.

Moreover, the OIC funded the construction of 200 housing units in the Punjab and Sindh in cooperation with Pakistan Youth Organization. The first part of 100 houses, a community centre and school have been completed and handed over to their beneficiaries. The second part of 125 houses, a school, community centre and a Mosque, will be completed and handed over by the end of 2013 at the latest. In January, 2011 and I personally attended the opening ceremony of a 600 houses-project which was presided over by H.E. Prime Minister Yusuf Jelani.

#### **4. Yemen**

Yemen has been facing a silent and underfunded complex emergency that includes widespread conflict-driven displacement and a slow-onset crisis in food security, malnutrition and outbreak of communicable diseases.

OIC humanitarian delegations visited the Western border of Yemen where a civil strife forced thousands of people to flee their homes. A field hospital of over 60 beds had since been erected in the Mazrak IDPs camp and several medical activities were undertaken in cooperation with MSF to help alleviate the suffering of needy people in the field of healthcare. It also rendered vital health services to over 60,000 IDPs fleeing from Sa'ada Province over a period of three years in collaboration with MSF and the hospital was eventually handed over to the Ministry of Health on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 on fulfillment of the pledge made by the OIC to the Government of Yemen.

High levels of violence, has severely disrupted the delivery of basic social services, exacerbating widespread malnutrition affecting about ten million people. Furthermore, the influx of nearly one million migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers from the Horn of Africa continues, driven by conflict and famine, imposing an additional burden on the limited national resources of the country. Subsequently, the Government of Yemen in collaboration with OCHA has prepared an emergency humanitarian plan of US\$ 560 million to respond to the situation.

At the initiative of OIC, a joint delegation from the USAID, EU, GCC, LAS, and OCHA visited Yemen in early June 2012 to raise the profile of the country among the international community of donors. The OIC subsequently established a field office in Sanaa to assist the country address the various humanitarian challenges. The OIC wishes to record its gratitude to the GCC countries, headed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for firm and continued support to Yemen both at the political and humanitarian domains.

However it is sad to notice that the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Yemen has been negatively impacting on the political transition underway in the country. I therefore reiterate my call to all humanitarian stakeholders within the OIC and at international level to provide the much needed humanitarian assistance to Yemen at this critical moment of its history.

#### **5. Sudan**

The OIC organized an international donors' conference for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Darfur in Cairo, on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2010 under the joint-chairmanship of Egypt and Turkey. Substantial pledges were subsequently made by several donors. The Conference pledged US\$ 850 million and necessary arrangements were made since for the establishment of the Darfur Development Bank with a capital of US\$ 2 billion. To this end, several meetings have been organized in Khartoum and

Doha, respectively to speed up the process of launching the activities of this important Bank which will play a far reaching role in the development of Darfur Region, since 85% of the pledges have so far been fulfilled.

## **6. Somalia**

Somalia has been going through difficult and testing times since 1991. During the deadly famine of April 2011 which struck Somalia, the OIC established a Humanitarian and Coordination Office which monitored at the height of the crisis, 40 international and local aid agencies nationwide. The major objective was to increase the effectiveness of the aid, and ensure timely response to the emergencies. Furthermore, the Humanitarian Coordination Office has been supporting the IDPs and other people whose livelihoods has been affected by the famine, to pass through the recovery phase and become more resilient to the external shocks, by voluntarily repatriation and providing them with livelihood means of support, which includes the provision of water, primary healthcare services, and income generation opportunities. The Humanitarian Coordination Office has been delivering its programmes through the Coalition of NGOs and has been working closely with all major stakeholders. During the famine period the OIC humanitarian emergency response contributed towards the alleviation of the plight of over 2 million people through distribution of over 95,000MT of food items, an endeavor which was highly commended by the international community, including the UN Security Council.

The OIC Office in Somalia has regularly held several meetings to deal with coordination; sector activities such as health, relief, food, water and sanitation and general update.

In this context, the coordination with different UN agencies was conducted, to effectively share information on the implementation of emergency programmes, and collaborated in response to the identified need. The Voluntary Return Programme of the IDPs in Mogadishu was an initiative that OIC, UNHCR and the Government had been working on closely together. Similarly, the triple partnership has been utilized to create an initiative to relocate the congested IDP camps/settlements to new sites. Moreover, the OIC has launched in coordination with the Saudi National Campaign an ambitious boreholes' programme by monitoring their implementation so as to avoid duplication with other organizations working within the same sector.

Similarly, as part of HRH Prince Al-Waleed Bin Talal Project, the OIC has been coordinating water distribution activities in (10) locations. This project has been very important for the IDPs to ensure that they receive enough water in their places of residence. In this project, 10 elevated water tanks were built and each has a capacity of 50 barrels. The total number of beneficiaries for this project is 39,000 and each day; close to 15,000 families receive 57-60 litres per day for their daily consumption.

In late 2012, the OIC signed with the Saudi National Campaign a three-year Rehabilitation Programme worth 72 million US dollars to cover 5 priority sectors in the fields of education, health, agriculture, livelihood and water projects. The programme will be completed in 2015 with 50% of the financial resources earmarked for the education sector.

## **7. Palestine**

The OIC has also been very active in Gaza mobilizing resources from member states and its civil society for both the relief and recovery phases. Several projects have been implemented with major NGOs and different stakeholders. An eye specialized clinic has been opened and many humanitarian caravans have so far been sent there. It should be noted that the Gaza Assistance Programme started following the Israeli aggression of the Gaza Strip in December 2008. The total value of direct and indirect aids provided to the Strip in the framework of this programme amounts to more than US\$ 50 million. A large number of Member States and a group of civil society organizations contributed to this programme.

## **8. Niger**

Food shortage has always crippled Niger efforts towards sustainable development. In July 2007, a donors' conference was held in Doha, State of Qatar, to assist Niger in resolving this long-standing issue. For instance, in 2010, there was a serious famine which threatened the livelihood of 7 million people representing half of its entire population. The OIC distributed 2,000 tons of cereals (millet) to 5 districts and funded 2 medium scale projects in the field of irrigation and environment. Prior to that, an OIC Development and Coordination Office was established in Niamey in Mid-July, 2009.

I dispatched a high-level delegation led by the ASG for Humanitarian Affairs to Niger in 2012 and 41 projects were signed with the Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs. All these projects are being implemented namely 11 agricultural farms; 30 boreholes and wells. Regarding the remaining five projects dealing with fish farming, it is worth noting that these projects have been fully completed in early 2013 and all beneficiaries were provided with the necessary fishing equipment to carry out their activities. Coming back to the agricultural projects, I would like to inform you that the smallest farm covers 8 hectares and the largest one is 100 hectares.

By mid-December 2013, I hope to officially inaugurate all the remaining 36 projects along with H.E. the President of the Republic of Niger who has expressed his gratitude to the OIC and to all donors who gave such an opportunity to his country in its attempts to break the vicious cycle of recurrent drought and poverty.

## **9. Burkina Faso**

Burkina Faso was hit in September 2009 by massive floods. An OIC delegation was sent to Ouagadougou. It compiled a comprehensive report which was distributed to Member States. A token financial contribution was also availed to the Emergency Committee set up by the Government.

## **10. Union of Comoros**

Several field missions visited the country. OIC Member States were sent reports to assist this country mainly when it was hit by torrential rains which destroyed infrastructures and human dwellings. The OIC joined hand with the Arab League and the Islamic Development Bank to organize an international donors' conference in late 2009 hosted by Qatar for the Union of Comoros.

## **11. Guinea Conakry**

A joint OIC field mission was sent in January 2009 to Conakry following a change of leadership to assess the socioeconomic situation prevailing there. OIC Member States were later on informed about the outcome of the visit and also urged to provide humanitarian assistance.

## **12. Kirghizstan**

The OIC also played a pivotal role in coordinating assistances following civil disturbances which took place in this country by liaising with Islamic NGO's and various stakeholders. Besides, all OIC Member States were contacted so as to provide in-kind and financial assistance to Kirghizstan following an OIC field visit in 2010.

## **13. Philippines**

A joint OIC delegation visited the Philippines in December 2011 after the devastation caused by Cyclone Sendong in Southern Philippines. Field visits were made in Cagayan De Oro and Illigan. Food aid and non food items were distributed to over 21,000 people regardless of their creed and religion.

Recently another joint OIC-OCHA humanitarian mission was sent to Manila, Cotabato and Davao to have a first-hand experience of the humanitarian situation prevailing in Southern Philippines and also assess the best ways and means to develop preparedness and reliance when faced with recurrent natural disasters.

OIC Member Countries from the Gulf area also joined the mission which afforded their diplomats to see by themselves the high level vulnerability of populations living in Southern Philippines.

## **14. Union of Myanmar**

Following the deadly inter-ethnic clashes in Rakhine State which resulted in massive populations' displacements, I requested the OIC ASG for Humanitarian Affairs to visit, in August 2012, the country with a high level delegation including the Former Vice President of Indonesia and several other international stakeholders from the Muslim world. The OIC delegation met with senior Myanmar officials and also with the President of the Republic. They visited IDPs camps and they came to the conclusion that a new OIC humanitarian team has to be sent to Yangon. In early September 2013, a humanitarian team led by the OIC Permanent Representative to the UN in New York went to Myanmar to discuss best ways and means of providing humanitarian assistance to the IDPs. The team members visited Yangon, Sittwe and Nya U U, the new capital of Myanmar. They managed to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Minister of Border Affairs. Two weeks after, I sent another team to the Nya U U to attend a development conference on the future of Rakhine State.

Subsequently two donors' conferences were held later on in Doha and Kuala Lumpur between the OIC and various humanitarian NGOs wishing to operate in Myanmar. 25 million US dollars were raised to cater for the needs of the vulnerable and needy people in the State of Rakhine. Unfortunately, in November 2012, the Central Government in Myanmar decided not to implement the provisions of the MoC signed with the OIC.

To date, I have used all possibilities offered to me to reactivate the MoC so as to enable the OIC to have a field humanitarian presence both in Yangon and Sittwe unfortunately without success. Several official letters have been sent to this end to the President; the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the new Minister of Border Affairs.

However, some OIC NGOs have succeeded in getting into Myanmar where they have been working under very difficult conditions to assist Rohingyas who have been suffering persecution and denied any humanitarian assistance. I therefore call on our Muslim brothers and sisters not to relent in their efforts to provide assistance to the Rohingyas who are left to their own without any substantial assistance in food, NFI, health, education, livelihood, etc.

## **15. Syria**

The first ever joint OIC-UNOCHA humanitarian needs assessment mission was dispatched to Syria in March 2012. The mission lasted about two weeks and was conducted under the supervision of the Syrian Government. The OIC participated in this rewarding experience which afforded members of its mission to gather factual information about the exact number of people suffering from the crisis and their real humanitarian needs by visiting the governorates of Homs, Hama, Tartus, Latakia, Aleppo, Idlib, Rakaa, Deraa, Der Azor and Rural Damascus, respectively.

Furthermore, the joint mission noted that most affected people and their families were having difficulties in procuring food and other non-food items due to the socioeconomic crisis prevailing in the country. Subsequently, I made several pressing calls to OIC Member States and the international community at large to move forward and provide assistance to affected people in Syria. On the sidelines of the mission, members of the OIC delegation met with the Syrian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and other senior officials and sought their cooperation for opening an OIC Humanitarian Office in Damascus. Afterwards Syria was suspended from the OIC and discussions with Syrian authorities were stopped. Nevertheless, the OIC has decided to work from neighboring countries which host large number of refugees. To this end, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Republic of Kazakhstan which donated through the OIC the amount of US dollars 200,000 to cater for the needs of Syrian refugees in Jordan. The same amount has also been donated by Kazakhstan to Syrian refugees living in Lebanon.

The OIC has used the first donation from Kazakhstan to buy 80 caravans for the Syrian refugees in Jordan. The handover ceremony took place in Amman and a delegation will be visiting Lebanon in the near future to liaise with Lebanese authorities on the best ways to spend the money meant for Syrian refugees in that country.

Similarly, the OIC has established a liaison office in Istanbul with some local partners who are also working in Killis which is close to the border with Syria. More importantly, a pilot psychosocial centre has been constructed in Killis region for the Syrian IDPs. It is the first one of its kind in this region and all humanitarian stakeholders have found it very useful to the growing refugees' community in that area.

The OIC also took an active part to the different sessions of the Syria Humanitarian Forum which is monthly held in Geneva to discuss the way forward regarding the worsening humanitarian situation prevailing in Syria.

It is also important to note that the Government of the State of Kuwait organized an international donors' conference on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013 under the auspices of the Emir of the State of Kuwait and a total amount of US dollars 1.6 billion was pledged to come to the rescue of the needy and vulnerable people in and outside Syria. On the same occasion, three Member States pledged individually US dollars 300 million, namely Kuwait, the KSA and the UAE so as to assist Syrian refugees and IDPs.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and deep gratitude to these three countries for their noble gesture and call on other Member States to generously donate to people affected by the Syrian humanitarian crisis.

## 16. Sahel Region

Prior to the Malian crisis I visited from 31<sup>st</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011, several African countries namely Benin, Togo, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Senegal and Niger. This tour enabled me to take stock of the humanitarian situation of the Sahel region. I took several initiatives and sent letters to many OIC countries urging them to reinforce their socioeconomic cooperation with the visited countries.

Indeed, the Sahel region has been witnessing a very challenging humanitarian situation for close to 18 million people are in need of food assistance due to natural or man-made disasters. I have made on this occasion several appeals both to the OIC Member States and the International community to come forward and provide the much needed assistance to Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Senegal, etc. It is forecasted that erratic rains recorded during last season have worsened the food deficit which has been compounded by the Malian crisis which has turned thousands of people into refugees or IDPs. According to reliable sources, close to 300,000 Malians have fled their countries and sought refuge mainly in Algeria, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso. Obviously the situation has improved slightly of late but the humanitarian situation is still pending.

This state of affairs in Sahel requires urgent actions to alleviate the burden placed on the shoulders of these hosting countries. In Mali alone, there are countless numbers of IDPs who have never moved from the Northern part of the country to other places within the confines of Mali. Many observers have also noted that some innovative actions based on resilience building have to be implemented to avert major natural disasters in this region so as to prevent vulnerable people from the suffering the dire consequences of hunger and starvation.

The OIC strongly believes that by developing resilience among people you make them immune from recurrent cycles of droughts which annihilate decades of development. That is the reason why the OIC undertook in October 2012, a joint partnership tour to Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso to make a thorough assessment of the real needs and the humanitarian situation prevailing there with its partners such as Qatar, Brunei, Kazakhstan, the IDB, the Turkish Red Crescent, Ecowas, African Union and many other Gulf countries' philanthropic organizations.

The tour was a success and important findings were made and members of the joint partnership mission came across the sad socioeconomic reality taking place in Sahel and particularly in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso which have been suffering the most the negative impact of the humanitarian crisis unfolding in the whole area where over 18 million people have been registered as food insecure; out of whom 5 million are underfed children who are prone to fatal diseases due to malnutrition.

To mitigate the suffering of the vulnerable people whose livelihood has been much affected by the crisis in Mali, the OIC has devised a strategic humanitarian programme of 100 million US dollars evolving around the following points:

- Food assistance; logistics and support to livelihood.
- Medical assistance and nutrition programmes.
- Shelter, wash and protection.
- Education and vocational training.

The OIC has not been able to implement this important programme despite the various and repeated appeals I have made so far. I would like at this juncture reiterate my expression of thanks and gratitude to both the Governments of the Republic of Cameroon and Guyana which have generously donated US dollars 100,000 and 10,000, respectively to the Malian people through the OIC General Secretariat to support them in their ordeal. The Government of Egypt also deserves to be lauded for its efforts in providing a diversified humanitarian assistance to Mali and its neighboring countries where thousands of refugees have sought refuge.

The OIC also attended the donors conference for the Development of Mali held in Brussels on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2011. I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the Government of Mali to the IDB, the UAE, Turkey, Kuwait, Malaysia, Russia, Tunisia, Algeria, Sierra Leone, Qatar, Chad, Saudi Arabia, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger and Togo for their generous contributions in cash or in-kind which will assist Mali in its rehabilitation and development efforts.

## **II/ OIC Funds**

The Department of Humanitarian Affairs supervises the work of the OIC's Funds operating in Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina and Sierra Leone. Each of these Funds has been established by Ministerial resolutions to assist these beneficiary countries that were affected by major disasters to overcome the negative impacts of these crises.

It is worth noting that these Funds have immensely contributed to peace building and confidence boosting among conflicting parties after the signing of a peace agreement hence facilitating the return of IDPs and refugees in concerned countries which is very critical. In Bosnia Herzegovina for instance where the return of Muslim refugees is a strategic issue according to the provisions of the Dayton Agreement, the OIC Fund has done its best to create a conducive and enabling environment for the return of refugees in previously Muslim populated areas. Moreover, all these Funds depend on voluntary support from Member States, financial institutions and the countries concerned. Each Fund has a headquarter agreement, a permanent office and a number of staff implementing projects in coordination with relevant authorities.

I would like to thank all Member States and institutions that have generously contributed to the financing of these Funds particularly the State of Qatar, Turkey,

United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

However, one should note that these Funds have been facing very serious constraints due to their limited financial resources. I have subsequently made several appeals to OIC Member States and Philanthropists so as to replenish their financial capabilities but all my initiatives have been so far inconclusive.

The Government of Qatar has recently accepted to provide these Funds with facilities at secretarial level and it also agreed to host them under one umbrella and decided to meet some of their urgent expenses.

### **III/ OIC NGOs**

Given the important role played by NGOs in the humanitarian sector, the OIC has decided to form a strong and longstanding partnership through the establishment of a consultative body. To this end, a series of conferences were organized in Senegal (2008); Libya (2009); Qatar (2010) and Sudan in 2011. These meetings enabled the OIC to institutionalize its relationships with the humanitarian NGOs operating in the Muslim world by providing a means of screening the NGOs and eliminating the issues of recognition that are faced by some of them, and also an opportunity for the NGOs to interact more closely among themselves also with the international humanitarian stakeholders. A code of conduct for the NGOs was adopted by the first meeting held in Senegal in 2008 and several Expert Group meetings were held later on, and finally the rules for granting OIC consultative status to Humanitarian NGOs were adopted by the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the council of foreign Ministers convened in Djibouti. Close to twenty NGOs have been selected and they will hopefully be granted this status which they will fully enjoy.

### **IV/ Cooperation with international humanitarian stakeholders**

Fostering closer cooperation with major international humanitarian stakeholders is of paramount importance for any action to be successful. The OIC has worked tirelessly towards that end. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs has received many visiting delegations from all parts of the world to develop strong bonds at all levels when it comes to humanitarian activities. So far, fruitful interaction has been devised and MoUs have been signed with OCHA which is one of ICHAD's strategic partners; and also with UNHCR, UNDP, WFP, DFID, the Saudi Red Crescent Society; the Yemeni Red Crescent; MSF; Muslim Aid; etc. We have also a good cooperation with UNISDR, Swiss Development Agency (SDA), the Turkish International Cooperation Agency, USAid, Qatar Red Crescent Society, AuSaid, MSF, Muslim Aid, New Zealand Aid; etc. More importantly, the OIC, AuSaid and OCHA have put in place a tripartite framework aimed at building capacities within ICHAD and its affiliated humanitarian NGOs.

## **VI/ Closer cooperation with OIC Member States**

While all these activities were underway, one also had to devise best strategies on the ways and means of cooperating more efficiently with OIC Member States. It is worth noting that this task was carried out in parallel with tackling pressing emergency humanitarian challenges deriving from many causes.

To this end, several expert group meetings were held so as to endow the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs with the necessary legal and conceptual tools to work in an efficient and concerted manner with the Member States.

A great deal of preparatory work was undertaken ranging from drafting conceptual papers to expert group meetings and many related undertakings which finally led to the adoption of a resolution establishing the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (ICHAD) in June 2008 by the 35<sup>th</sup> session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda.

Another resolution followed in May, 2009 during the Council of Foreign Ministers convened in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic and by June 2009, the process was completed regarding the structural formation of the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs which could therefore operate with a clear mandate and strategic objectives. Indeed, ICHAD mandate is to elaborate a clear Islamic humanitarian strategy by drawing upon the good practices and experiences of Member States in humanitarian relief efforts whereas its strategic objectives revolve around eleven (11) major points:

- 1) Raise awareness.
- 2) Mobilize emergency relief.
- 3) Promote disaster risk reduction activities.
- 4) Provide humanitarian assistance.
- 5) Put in place rapid reaction mechanisms and mobilize resources.
- 6) Strengthen Member States institutional and technical capacities.
- 7) Contribute to post-emergency rehabilitation and recovery.
- 8) Develop coordinating mechanism with relief organs.
- 9) Strengthen OIC-ICHAD capacities.
- 10) Coordinate and supervise OIC Funds and Programmes.
- 11) Develop strategic partnerships in line with the OIC Charter and its Ten-Year Programme of Action (TY-POA).

## **VI/ Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund**

The increasing frequency of disasters in the Muslim world requires a serious reflection, including the development of a strategy to address this phenomenon so as to enable the General Secretariat to respond quickly to the urgent needs of the victims in the event of a disaster. To this end, I have proposed the establishment of a Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund at the General Secretariat to be financed

from voluntary contributions of Member States, financial Institutions and philanthropists. The proposed capital is US\$100 million which will be used to enable the OIC and its humanitarian implementing partners to provide timely, life-saving response and immediate recovery to affected populations of disasters, and other emergencies whenever disasters strike in the Muslim World.

The Regulations on the Functioning of the OIC Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund and Financial Regulations to Govern ICHAD Field Regulations have been drafted and deliberated upon by Expert Group convened on this occasion.

Two Experts Group meeting were held in February and June 2013, to implement Para.9 of Resolution No.1/39-ICHAD endorsed by the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held on 15-17 November 2012 in Djibouti, Republic of Djibouti, and also to comply with the provisions of the Final Communiqué of the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Islamic Summit Conference held on 6-7 February 2013 in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, *“mandating the Secretary General to convene an Expert Group Meeting to conclude discussions on preparing a document for the establishment of a Special Emergency Fund and present it to the next session of the Council of Foreign Ministers”*.

## **VII/ Recommendations & conclusions**

- a) I would like to call upon Member States to assist the General Secretariat by providing timely statistics containing information on humanitarian crises and disasters. This information is critical in enabling ICHAD to undertake its duties in areas of coordination of responses, mobilization of resources and dissemination of information to other partners and actors in the humanitarian arena.
- b) There is also an urgent and vital need to establish sooner than later an OIC Humanitarian Emergency Response Fund (HERF) under the umbrella of the OIC General Secretariat to express collective Islamic action in the humanitarian field to relieve the most vulnerable populations whenever a disaster strikes in our Member States.
- c) The Department of Humanitarian Affairs (ICHAD) has to be supported by OIC Member States so as to work efficiently for the benefit of the Ummah. Humanitarian issues are taking a growing importance in the world and the OIC could not afford to be left out of this important segment of international activities.
- d) Finally, I sincerely do believe and hope that this is the way forward for the OIC to have a positive and felt impact on the humanitarian scene. Indeed, there is a repetition of humanitarian crisis and most of our Member States have gone through some difficult times due to major humanitarian disasters which took a heavy toll on their respective population, and the OIC could not

only rely on external international cooperation to mitigate disasters and their negative impact on populations. We have to act together to avert disasters and also to provide assistance to the most vulnerable and needy people in times of distress.