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ISTANBUL DECLARATION

**THE SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES**

ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

**01-03 NOVEMBER 2016
(01-03 SAFAR 1438 H)**

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THE SIXTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

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- We, the ministers or representatives of the OIC Member States participating in the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Women's Role in the Development of the Member States held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, under the theme of "Status of Women in the OIC Member States in light of current challenges" on 01-03 November 2016 (01-03 Safar 1438H).
- Guided by the precepts of the Islamic faith which lays emphasis on the need for women to partake fully in responsibility, to be involved in crafting the future and to assume an active role in providing for their families and supporting their societies and the Ummah.
- Recalling Resolution no.3/32-C (B) on "Muslim Women and their role in the Development of Muslim Society" as issued by the 32nd session of the Council of Foreign Ministers which was held in Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, in 2005.
- Recalling the resolutions issued by the various sessions of the Islamic Summit Conference and the other Islamic conferences, particularly the thirteenth ordinary session of the Islamic Summit, the third extraordinary Islamic Summit, the 42nd session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, and the Fifth Ministerial Conference On The Role Of Women In The Development of the OIC Member States.
- Reaffirming our commitment to the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW) for women's empowerment and its implementation mechanisms.
- Recalling the United Nations' (UN) principles and resolutions on women as approved by the OIC Member States.

- Reaffirming that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Sustainable Development Goals.

 - Recalling all the conclusions reached on the role of women in development by past ministerial conferences which were held successively in Istanbul (Turkey) on 20-21 November 2006, Cairo (Egypt) on 24-25 November 2008, Tehran (Iran) on 19-20 November 2010, Jakarta (Indonesia) on 4-6 December 2012 and Baku (Azerbaijan) on 20-21 October 2014.

 - Reminding the Member States of the need for an early elaboration of the “Covenant on Women’s Rights in Islam” under Resolution no.60/27-P and the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (68-POA 11-6.3)

 - Guided by the Final Communiqué of the 13th Islamic Summit which reiterated the Summit’s principled position against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its motives, justifications, and source;

 - Alarmed by the threat terrorism poses to peace and stability in many OIC Member States, concerned about the power vacuum that eventually offers fertile ground to terrorist organizations like DEASH, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and PKK/PYD/YPG to gain ground, and determined to fight scourge of terrorism by all available means;

 - Guided by the relevant resolution of the 43rd Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers recently held in Tashkent, regarding the Fetullah Teror Organization,
1. Take knowledge of the OIC 2025 work program as adopted by the thirteenth Islamic summit in Istanbul, and to invite all parties concerned with its implementation to see to the fulfillment of the goals relevant to women’s empowerment.

 2. Take note of the findings of the Inter-Governmental Experts Group’s meeting on revising the OPAAW, which was held in Jeddah on 03-04 November 2015, as well as the findings of IRCICA’s workshop on the revision of the plan’s implementation mechanisms, held in Istanbul at IRCICA’s headquarters on 28-29 June 2016. We also decide to adopt the said plan as amended.

3. Adopt the proposal made by the Republic of Turkey to set up the Advisory Women Council for the Ministerial Conference and to invite the General Secretariat to coordinate with the Republic of Turkey to activate the newly established Council.
4. Reiterate the commitment of the Women of the OIC Member States to the central purpose of the OIC, namely the Palestinian Cause and to the preservation Al-Haram Al-Sharif as an Islamic site in all aspects and in its entirety; expressing solidarity with the women organizations in Palestine,
5. Reiterate our commitment to the full implementation of Resolution.3/54(2010) issued by the UN Commission on the Status of Women as to “the release of the women and children who are taken hostage in armed conflicts, including those who may be jailed later”, as well to all other relevant resolutions issued by the same Commission. We urge all parties in armed conflicts to be observant of the standards of international humanitarian law, to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and to combat hostage-taking exactions.
6. Call for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution no.1325 on women, peace and security as well as annexed protocol, and for the protection of women and children in war and conflict zones.
7. Reassert our deep concern over the internally displaced and refugee women, particularly those living under conditions of longstanding armed conflict. We stress that the outstanding conflicts represent a serious roadblock that impedes women’s development. We pay tribute to the efforts consistently put in by the host countries for their response to the needs of the refugees and the displaced women.
8. Congratulate and salutes the firm stance of and expresses full solidarity with the Parliament, Government and people of the Republic of Turkey, particularly Turkish Women in defense of democracy and constitution during the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 by Fetullah Teror Organization.
9. Condemn the rising trend of Islamophobia in light of the results deriving from the offensive actions against the Muslims’ values and religious feelings, particularly against Hijab-wearing women.

10. Take the necessary measures to protect women and girls against violence, harmful practices or exploitation in the case of conflicts and wars and in the refugee camps.
11. Acknowledge the full rights of women, including their right to equal opportunities, participation and leadership, which calls for the adoption of gender sensitive measures and that include frameworks relevant to budgets, laws, policies and institutions.
12. Emphasize the need for particular attention to be paid on all forms of discrimination against women and girls, particularly on account of their attachment to their Islamic creed and culture, in education, and employment or in social life and media.

I. Recommendations to the OIC Member States

13. Continue urging OIC Member States to guarantee and support women's equal access to opportunities through enacting laws geared towards enabling them to participate more in all developmental fields.
14. Invite the OIC Member States to adopt such policies and programs necessary to ensure quality education for women and girls, including the free literacy programs and equal access to free education in all levels especially in higher education.
15. Invite the OIC Member States to encourage to conduct education programs for all family members that may enable building and preserving a healthy family and consolidating its standard of living and basic nutrition.
16. Invite governments to take the necessary measures, especially in educational systems, to facilitate women's access to scientific and technological sectors and to eliminate any gender stereo-types in these sectors.
17. Ensure the participation of women and the family in society through governments, non-governmental organizations and the civil society, and to enhance the role and societal contribution of both by evolving and strengthening policies and laws that boost and ensure welfare and social security.

18. Call upon the non-governmental organizations and the civil society in the OIC Member States to organize a common platform for cooperation and coordination to enhance joint positions and actions for the empowerment of Muslim women.
19. Invite the Member States and the OIC relevant organs to enhance and support women's and girls' creativity and innovation in all fields such as education, project management, arts, technology, social action and development, along with consolidating and encouraging the spirit of innovation among women providing them with educational grants, loans and supporting civil society organizations.
20. Invite supporting Member States and the OIC relevant organs to ensure women's and girls' equal access to sport facilities and opportunities and promote female sports federations.
21. Ensure subsidized health services and enhance family health awareness and acquaintance with the principles of healthy nutrition for the benefit of mother and child, along with improving motherhood practices and supporting the implementation of effective solutions to the increasing health problems facing women and the family.
22. Invite to offer assistance to women and children in those Member States that have been affected by natural or man-made disasters.
23. Invite the OIC Member States' Parliaments to enact the necessary legislations to combat trafficking of women and girls and abuse or sexual harassment, and to prohibit violence and domestic violence against women and children.
24. Further develop policies and legislations to support women's employment. Moreover to introduce special measures to eradicate sexual harassment in the workplace and public spaces.
25. Urge the Member States to sign and ratify the statute of the OIC Women- Development Organization so as to allow it to enter in force and enable the organization to become operative.

26. Urge the Member States to implement the provisions of the OPAAW, in coordination with the General Secretariat, through the approved mechanisms and in line with the indicators of evaluation of achieved progress in this area.
27. Invite the Member States to work closely with the General Secretariat for the implementation of OPAAW and to challenge the offensive actions against the Muslims' values and religious feelings, especially against Muslim women. .
28. Invite the Member States' governments to pay increased attention to women's empowerment in order to preserve the values of the marital and family institution so as to ensure society's cultural and civilizational future.
29. Invite Member States to continue updating their focal points to facilitate the General Secretariat's work in the area of family affairs and women's advancement.

II. Recommendations Directed at the OIC subsidiary organs and specialized institutions

30. Encourage the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission to continue its processing of women and child rights and the values of justice and equality.
31. Provide adequate financial and human resources in order to ensure effective outcomes of the works on women empowerment.
32. Pay the necessary attention to the family by recognizing that family as the fundamental nucleus of the Muslim Society and as a contributor to development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals for women and girls, and in this regard stress the need for elaborating and implementing family policies aimed women's empowerment.
33. Take into consideration the need to adopt macro-economic policies to ensure that the polices and institutional environment are considerate of the special challenges that women facing.

34. Reassess the family laws to eliminate violence against women and girls, early marriages and all forms of discrimination against women.
35. Invite the Islamic Fiqh Academy and the OIC universities to expand the scope of Islamic studies on women.
36. Call for the establishment of special centers and sections at the OIC universities for female studies and to provide those active in the field of women's empowerment in the Member States with scientific encyclopedic works on femininity, motherhood, women within the family and the marital institutions, issues of divorce and social and cultural development in the Islamic world.
37. Support the production of information material relevant to the issues of women, mother and child welfare and family education, and to work simultaneously, through the press and social media, for the anchorage of Islamic culture for the family's welfare and empowerment of women for effective development.
38. Invite ISESCO and the OIC's other relevant organs to organize a workshop on the psycho-social situation of woman and child in conflict zones and submit their findings to the ministerial conference on children due to be held under the gracious hospitality of the United Arab Emirates early next year.

III. Recommendations for the OIC General Secretariat

39. Invite the OIC General Secretariat to organize a workshop for the capacity-building of national institutions and mechanisms concerned with the follow-up of OPAAW's implementation in the area of indicators for follow-up and periodical evaluation submission of reports to the OIC General Secretariat. We also invite the IDB and other relevant OIC organs to contribute towards this workshop's convening in the first semester of 2017.
40. Invite the General Secretariat to evolve a general framework for cooperation and coordination among the OIC organs active in the area of women's empowerment and women and child development and to set up structures and special sections for the family, women and child within such organs.
41. Urge the OIC General Secretariat to work closely with highly reputed and acknowledged civil society institutions in the areas tied to the affairs of women and the family, through

executing joint projects including organizing special seminars, workshops and training sessions in the area of women's empowerment, the family and child care.

42. Commend H.E. the former OIC Secretary General Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani for his diligent efforts and commitments to the advancement of women.
43. Pay tribute to H.E. Mohamed Ahmad Ali, the former President of IDB Group for his extraordinary dedications, efforts and commitments to the promotion of women in the OIC members States during his tenure, and welcome and congratulate H.E Bandar Ben Mohamed Hamza Hajar, the IDB new President.
44. Address a congratulatory cable to the Ministry of the Family and Social Policies of the Republic of Turkey, for its successful hosting of the Sixth Ministerial Session On The Role Of Women In The Development of OIC Member States and for the outstanding arrangements they have made towards that end.
45. Pay tribute to Her Excellency Mrs. Emine Erdogan, the first lady of the Republic of Turkey in her capacity as high sponsor of the Sixth Ministerial Session On The Role Of Women In The Development of The OIC Member States, and we commend her consistent efforts towards the promotion of women's empowerment.