

OIC

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S.G. Leads an International Dialogue with World Leaders



Afghanistan: OIC's Integrated Approach to Overcome Challenges

About OIC

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents. The Organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

The Organization was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco on 12th Rajab 1389 Hijra (25 September 1969) following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. In 1970 the first ever meeting of Islamic Conference of Foreign Minister (ICFM) was held in Jeddah which decided to establish a permanent secretariat in Jeddah headed by the organization's secretary general. H.E. Hissein Brahim Taha is the 12th Secretary General of the Organization. He assumed the position in November 2021.

The first OIC Charter was adopted by the 3rd ICFM Session held in 1972. The Charter laid down the objectives and principles of the organization and fundamental purposes to strengthen the solidarity and cooperation among the Member States. Over the last 40 years, the membership has grown from its founding members of 30 to 57 states. The Charter was amended to keep pace with the developments that have unraveled across the world. The present Charter of the OIC was adopted by the Eleventh Islamic Summit held in Dakar on 13-14 March 2008 to become the pillar of the OIC future Islamic action in line with the requirements of the 21st century.

The Organization has the singular honor to galvanize the Ummah into a unified body and have actively represented the Muslims by espousing all causes close to the hearts of over 1.5 billion Muslims of the world. The Organization has consultative and cooperative relations with the UN and other inter-governmental organizations to protect the vital interests of the Muslims and to work for the settlement of conflicts and disputes involving Member States. In safeguarding the true values of Islam and the Muslims, the organization has taken various steps to remove misperceptions and have strongly advocated elimination of discrimination against the Muslims in all forms and manifestations.

The Member States of the OIC face many challenges in the 21st century and to address those challenges, the third extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit held in Makkah in December 2005, laid down the blue print called the Ten-Year Program of Action. It has successfully concluded with the close of 2015. A successor programme for the next decade (2016-2025) has been adopted.

The new programme OIC-2025 is anchored in the provisions of the OIC Charter and focuses on 18 priority areas with 107 goals. The priority areas include issues of Peace and Security, Palestine and Al-Quds, Poverty Alleviation, Counter-terrorism, Investment and Finance, Food Security, Science and Technology, Climate Change and Sustainability, Moderation, Culture and Interfaith Harmony, Empowerment of Women, Joint Islamic Humanitarian Action, Human Rights and Good Governance, among others.

Among the OIC's key bodies: the Islamic Summit, the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), the General Secretariat, in addition to the Al-Quds Committee and three permanent committees concerned with science and technology, economy and trade, and information and culture. There are also specialized organs under the banner of the OIC including the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as subsidiary and affiliate organs that play a vital role in boosting cooperation in various fields among the OIC member states.

For more details, visit the OIC website at
www.oic-oci.org



منظمة التعاون الإسلامي
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OUR MESSAGE

Dialogue with our International Partners is Strategic Necessity

The status of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and its global role make it a worthy partner of other international organisations and major countries, as it aptly represents 57 Member States, having the weight of the "Islamic group" at the United Nations. The Organisation also works on files that mainly concern many countries and organisations, the most prominent of which is the issue of Islamophobia, which the United Nations proclaimed the 15th of March of each year as a day to combat it. This indicates the global concern with this phenomenon and its negative repercussions, and highlights, at the same time, the world's awareness that the active partners at the OIC have the capacity to join forces to eradicate this phenomenon, as well as other phenomena, such as extremism and terrorism perpetrated by groups falsely in the name of Islam, in addition to other issues of Muslim communities in non-Member States. These are common denominators and overlapping files that require the OIC to cooperate with other international organisations, major non-member states and any party that works dutifully for international peace and security.

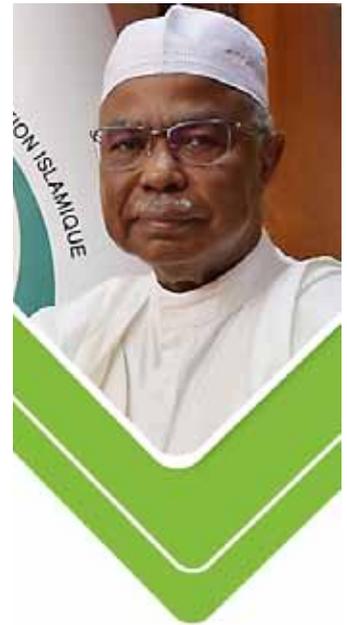
That is why we note through the pages of this issue that last summer witnessed a tireless movement and numerous meetings and communications between the OIC and its international partners. The strategic dialogue between the OIC and the United States of America was an important opportunity for coordination, consultation and exchange of views on more than one issue. The dialogue that took place on 23-24 May 2022, and included a meeting with H.E. Mr. Antony Blinken, the US Secretary of State, highlighted the importance of continued consultations on various issues that top the agendas of both the OIC and the United States, foremost of which is the fight against terrorism, extremism and Islamophobia, and international efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions in many ways.

This strategic dialogue was not the only bridge that we extended in order to foster the OIC's action, intensify its activity and enhance its efforts. Consultations had been held regarding the 15th session of the biennial OIC-UN meeting, which was held last July 18th, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva. During this meeting, I expressed my preoccupation with the unprecedented challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. I also affirmed the importance of fostering cooperation between the two Organisations in building peace, ensuring security and achieving economic prosperity in many parts of the world. The meeting adopted several joint activities in the fields of peace and security, combating Islamophobia, countering violent extremism, human rights, women empowerment, education and humanitarian aid. Views were also exchanged on common regional and international issues.

I also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, with whom I discussed in detail the main regional and international challenges, and the importance of coordination and consultation, in such a way as to serve international efforts and endeavours to bring about peace, stability and development in the world. Our meeting affirmed our mutual keenness to further support the existing friendship ties and the Russian-Islamic rapprochement in various fields, within the framework of Russia's observer membership at the OIC.

The past four months witnessed several bilateral meetings, during which I personally received in my office diplomats from the United States, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Japan and Georgia. Our meetings were important opportunities for exchanging views and visions, presenting the OIC's directions and listening to the other opinion, which is what concerns us all in pursuit of the noble goals of promoting stability, peace and international security.

Once again, the dialogue between the OIC and the world, and the strengthening of partnerships with international organisations and major countries, is one of the most important platforms of the OIC to work on solving the problems in the Islamic world, and to continue exchanging views and expertise, building a policy of mutual respect and introducing the world and partners to the capacities and capabilities of the OIC and the areas in which joint action is possible, taking into account the OIC's areas of competence, which makes it unique in many parts of the world. It operates in the areas of Islamophobia, Muslim minorities in non-Member States and combating terrorism and extremism. These special files will be the link between the Member States, poles and partners. We must not forget that the changes and great challenges that are taking place in the world and that reach the point of wars, unrest and even natural disasters, require the OIC to find its place in this changing world, in which the movement of poles and the formation of international camps become clear. This is crucial for the OIC to be able to play its role and assume its high status that reflects a vast area of the world's geography.



Hissein Brahim Taha

Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

last summer witnessed a tireless movement and numerous meetings and communications between the OIC and its international partners

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International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), Jeddah, www.fiqhacademy.org
Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT), Casablanca, www.icdt-oic.org
The Islamic University of Technology, Dhaka, www.iutoic-dhaka.edu
Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Ankara, www.sesric.org
Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul, www.ircica.org
Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF), Jeddah, www.isf-fsi.org
Islamic University in Niger (IUN), Niamey
Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), Kampala

Specialized Institutions and Organs

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Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), www.icesco.org
Union of News Agencies of the OIC Member States (UNA), Jeddah, www.una-oic.org
Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU), Jeddah, www.ibuj.org
Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC), Benghazi, www.icic-oic.org
Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), Nur-Sultan
Women Development Organization (WDO) in OIC Member States, Cairo
The OIC Labor Center, Baku
OIC Center for Police Cooperation and Coordination, Istanbul
The Science, Technology and Innovation Organization (COMSTech General Secretariat), Islamabad

Affiliated Organs

Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), Karachi, www.iccia.com
Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Istanbul
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Kuala Lumpur
The Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF), Riyadh
Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), Istanbul
General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions (CIBAFI), Manama
Islamic World Academy of Sciences (IAS), Amman
Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC), Makkah Al-Mukarramah
Global Forum for Moderation, Amman
The International Union of Muslim Scouts, Jeddah,
OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT), Malaysia
Association of Tax Authorities of Islamic Countries (ATAIC), Khartoum
World Federation of Arabo-Islamic International Schools (WFAIIS), Cairo
Federation of Contractors from Islamic Countries (FOCIC), Casablanca
Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC), Istanbul
Real Estate Union in Islamic States (REUOS), Djibouti
Organization of the Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA), Jeddah
OIC Media Forum, Turkey
Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (IBRAF), Turkey



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Chadian President Mahamat Idriss Receives OIC Secretary-General



President of the Transitional Military Council of Chad receives the OIC Secretary-General

H.E. the President of the Transitional Military Council of Chad, Mr. Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, received in audience the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, on 8 August 2022, in Doha, on the sidelines of the signing ceremony of the peace agreement between the Chadian government and a large group of Chadian armed political movements.

During the audience, the outcomes of the dialogue and the peace agreement were reviewed. The President thanked the Secretary-General for the OIC participation in the signing ceremony of the agreement. Issues of common interest were also addressed.

For his part, the Secretary-General congratulated the Chadian President on the success of the negotiations and the signing of the peace agreement, wishing that this step would lead to peace, security and stability in Chad.

At the invitation of the State of Qatar, the OIC Secretary-General participated in the signing ceremony of the peace agreement in Doha, on August 8th, between the Chadian government and a wide group of Chad's armed politico-military groups after five months of negotiations, thus ending

decades of wars and conflicts between the government and political armed groups, which participated in the National Dialogue Conference held later in N'Djamena.

The signing ceremony was attended by H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister

Hissein Brahim Taha Welcomes Signing of Peace Agreement in Doha

of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), representatives of the United Nations, the European Union, the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), and ministers of foreign affairs of some African countries.

The OIC Secretary-General praised the transitional government and the politico-military movements in Chad for their commitment, which enabled the signing of this historic

agreement. He also paid tribute to the State of Qatar for hosting and sponsoring the negotiations between the Chadian parties.

The OIC Secretary-General expressed his hope that the agreement would lead to a lasting peace in Chad, with the commitment of the Chadian parties and the active support of the international community to Chad in this crucial phase. He also expressed the readiness of the OIC to cooperate with international partners to accompany the Chadian parties in their quest for peace, security, and sustainable development in the interest of the Chadian people.

At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Chad, the OIC Secretary-General again participated in the opening ceremony of the comprehensive and independent national dialogue between all political parties, civil society and representatives of living forces in Chad, on 20 August 2022, in N'Djamena. The dialogue followed the signing of the Doha peace agreement between the transitional government and the opposition political and military movements. The important national dialogue aims to discuss issues of the transitional period and the political, security, economic and social challenges facing Chad.

OIC Secretary-General Visits Mali and Meets with President of the Transition Council



President of the Transitional Military Council of Mali receives the OIC Secretary-General

H.E. Colonel Assimi Goita, President of the Transition Council of Mali, received in audience the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, on 5 August 2022. During the audience, the Secretary-General underlined the essential role Mali plays to preserve the stability and security of the Sahel and the ECOWAS region. The audience was also an opportunity to review the multiple challenges facing Mali, including those related to the transition period and the importance of combining efforts and promoting dialogue and cooperation to find acceptable solutions. Colonel Assimi Goita expressed his gratitude to the OIC for its constant and multifaceted support to Mali. He also welcomed the commendable efforts by the OIC through the Special Envoy of its Secretary-General to Africa, to find a way out of the crisis, satisfac-

tory to all concerned parties, following the sanctions imposed by ECOWAS against Mali on 9 January 2022. In the same connection, the Secretary General highlighted the OIC's continued commitment to the restoration of security and stabilization of the country and the promotion of its development.

The Secretary-General also met H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, and discussed with him relations between the OIC and Mali, reaffirming the will to strengthen them.

H.E. the Secretary-General also met with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, H.E. Mr. El-Ghassim Wane. The two sides stressed the

importance of the participation of Mali's partners in achieving its security, stability and sustainable development. They also discussed ways to enhance cooperation between the Organisation and the UN Mission to achieve lasting peace in Mali.

The Secretary-General also met with H.E. Mr. El Hawass Riach, Ambassador of Algeria and Chairman of the Follow-up Committee for the Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The two sides highlighted the importance of the said Agreement and discussed ways to overcome the obstacles impeding its implementation, while respecting Mali's sovereignty and territorial integrity. They also underlined the need to coordinate efforts in order to encourage the Malian parties to continue dialogue to implement the Agreement.



Secretary-General Receives Credentials of Mali Representative

H.E. the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received the Ambassador of the Republic of Mali to Riyadh, H.E. Mr. Abubakar Gouraud Dial, who presented his credentials as the permanent representative of his country to the Organisation.

Talks with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and the Gambia



President of Kazakhstan receives the OIC Secretary-General



President of Uzbekistan meets the OIC Secretary-General

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, received on 18 August 2022, at his residence in Jeddah, the OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha. The President commended the great role played by the Secretary-General in leading the Organisation's efforts to promote joint Islamic action and consolidate the spirit of Islamic solidarity. He also stressed that the OIC received special attention from his government, which looked forward to strengthening cooperation with the OIC.

For his part, the Secretary-General valued the active role of the Republic of Uzbekistan within the OIC and its efforts in supporting its activities and promoting joint Islamic action through various initiatives. The Secretary-General also reaffirmed the OIC's keenness to enhance cooperation with the Republic of Uzbekistan in all areas of common interest.

During the meeting, discussions revolved around several issues of common interest, including promoting peace and security in the world and in the region, and protecting the interests of the OIC and its Member States.

The OIC General Secretariat and the Republic of Uzbekistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding, as part of their cooperation on many issues of common interest. The MoU was signed by the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, on behalf of the OIC, and Mr. Vladimir Norov, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In this context, the OIC Secretary-General praised the active role played by the Republic of Uzbekistan in the OIC and its Member States.

Previously, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, received on 26 July 2022, in his office, H.E. Mr. Furkat Sidikov,

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan, who was accompanied by a high-level delegation from a number of ministries and institutions.

During the meeting, the Secretary-General commended the important role played by Uzbekistan within the OIC to promote the joint Islamic action through the various initiatives it presented. He also

lauded its role in supporting peace, stability and cooperation in the Central Asian region. For his part, H.E. Mr. Furqat Sadikov, stressed the high importance attached by his country to the OIC and the need to strengthen cooperation with it in various fields.

Following the meeting, a round table entitled "Promoting Relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the OIC in Light of Constitutional Reforms Aimed at Building a New Uzbekistan" was held. Uzbekistan was represented in the round table by the Deputy Minister and his accompanying delegation, while the OIC General Secretariat was represented by the Assistant Secretaries-General for Political Affairs, Science and Technology, and Economic Affairs, in addition to a number of representatives of the OIC Organs. The round table dealt with prospects for cooperation between the two sides.

As part of his visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, received on 24 July 2022, at his residence in Jeddah, the OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha. The President commended the great role played by the General Secretariat and the Secretary-General in leading the Organization's efforts to promote the joint Islamic action and consolidate the spirit of Islamic solidarity.

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security in the world

Leaders of Member States Affirm their Support for Joint Islamic Action

H.E. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev underlined that the Organisation receives special attention from his country's government, which is looking forward to strengthening cooperation between the two sides.

For his part, H.E. the Secretary-General valued the active membership of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the OIC and its efforts in supporting its activities and promoting joint Islamic action through various initiatives. The Secretary-General also affirmed the OIC's keenness to enhance cooperation with the Republic of Kazakhstan in all areas of common interest.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged opinions on many issues of common concern, including supporting peace and security in the countries of the region and the world and taking due care of the interests of the OIC and its Member States.

As part of his official visit to the Republic of the Gambia, H.E. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of the Gambia, received H.E. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, on 17 June 2022. The President welcomed the Secretary-General and wished him further success in his duties. He also stressed the importance his country attaches to the OIC and to supporting the joint Islamic action, especially through hosting the upcoming Islamic summit and its keenness to provide the conditions conducive to its success.

For his part, the Secretary-General praised the role of the Gambia within the OIC and the readiness of the General Secretariat to enhance cooperation and coordination in various fields, praising its



President of Gambia meets the OIC Secretary-General

role in defending the cause of the Muslim Rohingya community. Also, the Secretary-General met in Banjul with H.E. Mamadou Tengara, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia. During this meeting, the two sides praised the close cooperation between the OIC and the Republic of the Gambia in various fields, and stressed their keenness to further support it. The Secretary-General valued the Gambia's contributions to the various activities of the Organisation.

Hissein Brahim Taha Receives Permanent Representative of the Gambia to OIC



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, received, on 12 June 2022, at the headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat, H.E. Ambassador Omar Jibril Sallah, Ambassador of the Republic of the Gambia to Saudi Arabia and the permanent representative of his country to the OIC.

During this meeting, the Secretary-General praised Gambia's active role within the OIC and in promoting the joint Islamic action. The two sides reviewed the prospects for cooperation between the OIC and the Gambia.

Secretary-General Bids Farewell to Consul-General of Kazakhstan in Jeddah

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, on 2 August 2022, in his office, H.E. Mr. Talat Shaldenbay, Consul-General of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Jeddah, who paid a farewell visit to H.E. the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General commended the active role of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the OIC and its support for joint Islamic action through the various initiatives it made. He also reiterated the OIC keen interest to enhance cooperation with the Republic of Kazakhstan in all areas of common interest, praising the contribution made by the Consul-General to enhance cooperation between the two sides during his mandate in Jeddah.



OIC Secretary-General Visits Kuwait and Holds Talk with its Senior Officials



Ex-Prime Minister of Kuwait receives the OIC Secretary-General

H.E. Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, ex-Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, received on 9 June 2022, at Seif Palace, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, who was on an official visit to the State of Kuwait. Mr. Taha lauded the pioneering role of Kuwait inside the Organization as well as its various contributions to develop the joint Islamic action. He also praised Kuwait's contribution to the development projects of the Member States and the humanitarian aids it provides to them.

For his part, Sheikh Al-Sabah welcomed the Secretary-General, wishing him more success in his duties, praising the important role played by the OIC in uniting the Member States to face the political, economic, and development challenges. He stressed the readiness of his country to provide more support to enhance the OIC's role to enable it to respond to the aspirations of its Member States.

H.E. Mr. Taha, also held talks with H.E. Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait.

The two sides appreciated the distinct level of cooperation between the OIC and the State of Kuwait in various fields. They



Kuwait's Foreign Minister Meets the S. G.

stressed their keen interest to promote it to serve the causes of the Islamic world. They reviewed a number of issues on the OIC agenda, foremost of which is the Palestinian cause. They also stressed the need to support the Palestinian people to regain their legitimate rights, including the establishment of their independent state with Al-Quds Al-sharif as its capital, and to support peace efforts to achieve a solution in accordance with international resolutions.

The two sides also discussed the developments of the situations in Afghanistan and Yemen. They also reviewed the political, se-

curity, economic and social challenges facing the countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad, stressing the importance of supporting efforts to enable these countries to achieve the aspirations of their peoples with regard to security, stability and development. The meeting also dealt with the situation of Muslim communities and minorities in non-member countries, the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia, and the fight against terrorism and extremism.

On the side-lines of his official visit to the State of Kuwait, on 9 June 2022, the Secretary-General also met with Mr. Waleed Al-Bahar, Deputy Director General of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (Kuwait Fund).

During this meeting, the OIC Secretary-General praised the role of the Kuwait Fund in advancing development in several regions of the world, especially in the OIC Member States, valued the economic, developmental, and social projects financed by the Fund, and expressed his hope that the Kuwait Fund would expand its fields of activity in those countries, especially those that look forward to attracting investments to complete their development projects.

For his part, Mr. Waleed Al-Bahar appreciated the role of the OIC in the political, economic, social, and humanitarian fields.

OIC Secretary-General Discusses Issues of Islamic World in Rabat



Moroccan Foreign Minister receives the Secretary-General



Secretary-General meets the Speaker of the House of Councilors

H.E. Hissein Brahim Taha, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), made an official visit to Rabat.

On 14 June 2022, H.E. the Secretary-General met with H.E. Mr. Nasser Bourita, Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation, and Moroccan Expatriates. During this meeting, the two sides valued the long-standing OIC-Morocco relations, which witnessed the establishment of the OIC in 1969 in Rabat. They praised the distinguished level of cooperation between the two sides in various fields, stressing their keenness to support it further to achieve the OIC's mission that calls for cooperation and solidarity between the Member States and serving the causes of the Islamic Ummah. The Secretary-General praised the pioneering role played by the Kingdom of Morocco within the OIC and in promoting joint Islamic action. For his part, the Moroccan Foreign Minister affirmed his country's firm support for the OIC and Morocco's readiness to put its experiences and expertise in various fields at the OIC's disposal.

The two sides reviewed several issues on the OIC's agenda, foremost of which is the Palestinian issue. In this regard, they stressed the need to support the Palestinian people

to obtain their legitimate rights, including the establishment of their independent state with East Al-Quds as its capital, and to support peace efforts to achieve the two-state solution as per the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative. In this connection, the Secretary-General praised the vital role of Al-Quds Committee headed by His Majesty King Mohammed VI.

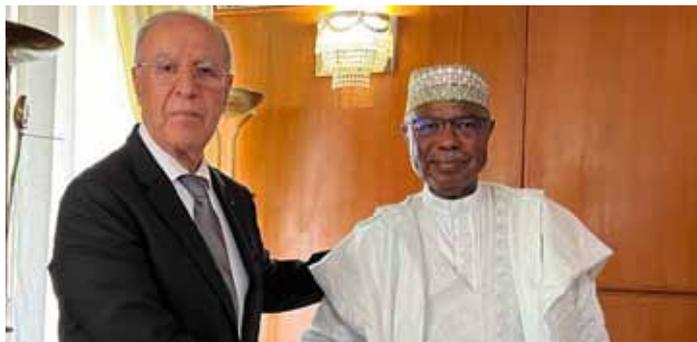
The two sides also discussed the developments of the situation in Afghanistan, Yemen, and the Rohingya Muslim community. They reviewed the political, security, economic, and social challenges facing the Sahel and Lake Chad countries, stressing the importance of supporting efforts to enable these countries to achieve the aspirations of their peoples for security, stability, and development. The two sides expressed their deep concern about the growing Islamophobia.

Also, the Secretary-General met with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, H.E. Mr. Rachid Talbi Alami, and the Speaker of the House of Councilors, H.E. Mr. Al-Naam Mayara. During the two meetings, the Secretary-General praised Morocco's leading role within the OIC and its many

contributions to its activities. In this regard, he stressed the importance of the role entrusted to the parliaments of Member States in promoting joint Islamic action. For their part, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Speaker of the House of Councilors welcomed the Secretary-General, praising the important role played by the OIC in uniting the Member States to rise up to the political, economic, and development challenges.

During the two meetings, opinions were exchanged on several regional and international issues, especially the Palestinian issue, Afghanistan, the African Sahel region, Lake Chad, the situation of Muslim communities and minorities, and the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia, which requires strengthening cooperation and solidarity among the OIC's Member States.

Also, H.E. Mr. Taha visited the headquarters of Bait Mal Al-Quds Asharif Agency. The Secretary-General also met with H.E. Mr. Ahmed Toufiq, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, who praised the OIC's role in unifying the Member States' positions regarding the challenges facing the Islamic world.



Secretary-General meets the Minister of Awqaf



Secretary-General recites Fatiha for late King Hassan II



Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hosts 4th Mediation Conference

“Experiences and Prospects”

The Fourth Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Mediation “Experiences and Prospects,” hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with the OIC General Secretariat, convened in Jeddah on 5-6 June 2022.

The opening session began with a speech by H.E. Eng. Waleed bin Abdulkarim Al-Khuraiji, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, and H.E. Hisein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General. Also, during the session a video about the efforts of Saudi Arabia in mediation was screened and the speeches of African, Asian, and Arab groups were delivered.

At the beginning of his speech, the OIC Secretary-General thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting the Conference, praising all the efforts made by the Kingdom in its capacity as the host country of the OIC and Chair of the 14th Session of the Islamic Summit. He also expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude for the attention the Kingdom extends to all OIC’s activities and the continuous support it provides under the generous patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and HRH Prince Mohammed bin

Salman, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister. H.E. Secretary-General also extended his thanks to the delegates of all Member States, the representatives of international organizations, as well as the experts and invitees that took part in the conference.

The Secretary-General stressed that the Conference was held at a critical juncture and at a time when the world needed more mediation, dialogue, and negotiations to resolve conflicts. In this connection, he highlighted that the OIC, since its establishment in 1969, has worked hard to promote peace, stability, harmony, security and development at the international level.

The Secretary-General also explained that Paragraph 6 of Article 1 of the OIC’s Charter stipulates that among the objectives and principles of the OIC is strengthening relations between countries on the basis of justice, mutual respect and good neighborliness to ensure peace, security, and general harmony in the world. He also highlighted that the Charter, in Article 15, regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes, requires the Member States to adopt peaceful means of settling disputes through good offices, negotiation, mediation, conciliation,

arbitration, judicial settlement, or other peaceful means, including consultation with the executive committee and the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General stressed that the OIC pays special attention to mediation, as about 60 percent of all conflicts in the world fall within its geographical area, noting that because of these conflicts, the peoples have been exposed to many bitter experiences and that the comprehensive development in these countries has declined. Therefore, OIC Member States need to firmly commit to resolving the outstanding disputes peacefully. In his speech, the Secretary-General underlined that “the relevant ministerial resolutions have reaffirmed the commitment to enhance awareness in the OIC region of the benefits of mediation, as a cost-effective tool for conflict prevention and peaceful resolution”. He also underscored the need to integrate mediation into the scope of the Organization’s action and activities and build competences in the field of supporting activities and establishing partnerships between the OIC, the United Nations and other regional organizations working in the field of mediation”.



Secretary-General: OIC has Several Mediation Mechanisms

H.E. the Secretary-General said in his speech at the Mediation Conference that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has established many tools and mechanisms at its peace and security structure, as the Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution Unit, which was established within the OIC General Secretariat, serves as a focal point to support the focus on the peaceful settlement of disputes as well as on mediation.

It is noteworthy that during the 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad, in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in March of this year, the Ministers encouraged the Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution Unit to continue to disseminate information among Member States on best practices and lessons learned from mediation efforts in which the Organisation participates. The ministers also stressed the need to strengthen the Unit's capacities in the field of mediation, conflict peaceful resolution and conflict prevention through preventive diplomacy, and promoting dialogue and mediation, with the aim of obtaining greater political recognition within and outside the Organisation.

Among the tools and mechanisms of the OIC Peace and Security Structure are two main contact groups. One is known as the Group of Friends of Mediation, which serves as a platform for collective endeavours in mediation, in addition to complementing

existing peace and conflict resolution mechanisms within the OIC. The second contact group on peace and dialogue is tasked with developing the best solutions to challenges related to radicalism, extremism, sectarianism, religious discrimination, Islamophobia, xenophobia, statelessness and terrorism, as well as with promoting the values of understanding and moderation.

Since its establishment, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has played an important role in conflict resolution, especially when disputes are with members of the Organisation or when the Islamic community is a party to it. In this regard, the OIC has succeeded in mediating various conflicts, notably in the southern Philippines, southern Thailand, Sudan, Chad, Afghanistan, Somalia and Guinea, where the Organisation provided significant support to international efforts aimed at establishing peace and security and restoring the rule of law. The Organisation also played an important role in trying to end sectarian tension in Iraq.

The issue of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Palestine remains the focus of the joint Islamic action of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, as the main consensus of all Member States remains the basis of the effort to end the Israeli occupation and help the Palestinian people enjoy their legitimate rights. Thus, during the discussions that H.E. the Secretary-General had with the US Secretary of

State, Mr. Antony Blinken, in Washington, and with Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, in Riyadh, he raised the Palestinian issue, the importance of dialogue and the need to avoid actions that would undermine the chances of peace, based on the Organisation's firm position for the two-state solution.

H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha explained that he had already discussed with the heads of US and Russian diplomacy the situation in Africa, in general and in sub-Saharan Africa, in particular. It was agreed that there is a need to initiate and implement joint actions aimed at restoring sustainable peace and development in Africa, and more specifically in the Sahel and Lake Chad, which has particular importance to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

With regard to the political tensions facing West Africa, including those related to the political transitions in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, the Organisation has been contributing to the mediation efforts for a lasting peace. Thus, in Mali, the OIC mediation efforts contributed to the conclusion of Algiers Agreement in 2015 and continues to play its role in its implementation. In the Central African Republic, the Organisation's efforts led to the completion of the political transition, allowing elections to take place in 2016.



The Conference Comprises Four Working Sessions

Four working sessions were held during the Conference, with the participation of speakers and international experts in the field of mediation. The first session was held under the title “The Role of the OIC and its Member States in the Field of Mediation”, and was chaired by Dr. Abdullah bin Musa Al-Tayer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, former Director General of the Cabinet of the OIC and former advisor to the OIC Secretary-General. Speakers at this session were Dr. Mutlaq Al-Qahtani, Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Combating Terrorism and Mediation in Conflict Resolution at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Ambassador Ahmed Abdel Latif, Director General of the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding, Nabil Dabour, Director General of SESRIC, and Ambassador Hassan Ali, Director of the Legal Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat.

It is worth noting that according to the report of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), an OIC affiliated organ, about 60% of conflicts unfortunately occur in Islamic countries, which requires the Organisation to strive hard, and on a large scale, towards strengthening its capacities to resolve disputes and work to use its avail-

able capabilities and the capabilities of its Member States in the field of mediation, in order to face the contemporary challenges and resolve conflicts that have produced the largest proportion of refugees and displaced persons since World War II. Considering its status as the second largest multilateral intergovernmental organisation in the world, The Organisation sought, through the conference, to enhance its role in the field of mediation and achieve regional and global peace and security, and to create a new effective mechanism for mediation through the Organisation’s capabilities and capacities in conflict resolution, in accordance with the principles of its Charter, and in compliance with the spirit of Islamic solidarity and joint Islamic action.

The second session, “Partnerships with International and Regional Organisations”, was chaired by Ambassador Faisal Trad, former ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the European Union, Belgium and Japan. Panellists at this session were Dr. Abdulaziz Hamad Al-Owaishek, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Negotiation Affairs at the Gulf Cooperation Council, Ambassador Khalil Ibrahim Al-Thawadi, Assistant Secretary-General for Arab National Security Affairs at the League of Arab States, Mr. Martin Albani, Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa,

Division of Conflict Resolution and Mediation Support at the European Union, Ambassador Ibrahim Khairat, Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General for Myanmar, and Ms. Theresa Whitfield, Director of the Policy and Mediation Division at the United Nations.

The third session “Mediation from a Humanitarian Perspective in the Light of Crises”, was chaired by Ambassador Tarig Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General for Afghanistan. Speakers at this session were Dr. Qutb Mustafa Sano, Secretary-General of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), Dr. Samer Al-Jutaili, Adviser to the General Supervisor of King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief), Mr. Omar Odeh, Head of the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for the GCC Countries, and Dr. Muhammad Al-Asbali, Executive Director of the Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC).

During the fourth session themed “The Way Forward in Mediation”, chaired by Ambassador Yousef Al-Dubaie, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General for Jammu and Kashmir.

A Powerful Islamic World Meets Challenges

For more than half a century, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and its Member States have developed their own feature, based on norms, principles, constants, issues, grievances and possibly crises that have made the Islamic world unique and different in the light of the diversity encouraged by the world and highlighted by the United Nations, despite the burden posed by the problems of this unique world, historically known as the old and central world.

For centuries, a lifestyle interspersed with Islamic convictions and teachings, which do not oppose mankind's itinerary but rather has been shaped through constants specific to the OIC Member States and their ways of life. However, the OIC's story cannot be summed up in the uniqueness of its States or their belonging to a single cultural framework, insofar as it includes elements that can be exploited and utilised in the mobilisation of great power and the formation of a world pole that imposes itself with mutual respect, special understanding and committed openness.

A look at the weight of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation necessarily alludes to the magnitude of the challenges it faces. The capabilities that the Organisation enjoys directly or indirectly through its representation of a broad international framework undoubtedly places it in front of great responsibilities that require work and effort. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, represented by the Islamic Group in the General Assembly, is considered a significant voting bloc, and a diplomatic force with regard to making international decisions.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is the second largest intergovernmental organisation in terms of the number of member states after the United Nations, with 57 member states from the continents of Asia, Africa, Europe and South America. This makes it a platform for different spectrums that share a connected geographical area from the far east of the Asian continent to the west of Africa, and spreading over South America, especially as the Islamic world extends geographically from longitude 18 west to 140 east, and latitude 10 south of the equator to 55 north. The area of the Islamic world is about 32 million square kilometres, which is approximately a quarter of the land area of about 149 million Square kilometres.

At the demographic level, the number of Muslims in the world is about one billion and eight hundred million people, according to the statistics of 2015. Studies, however, expect that the number of Muslims will outnumber followers of other religions by 2050. The youth category in the Islamic world represents a quarter of their number in the world. Expectations indicate that Muslim youth will account for one third of young people globally by 2050.

From an economic point of view, the Islamic world has 69% of the world's oil and 57% of natural gas reserves, which makes it a leader in the field of energy and wealth acquisitions. This certainly is pushing for it to become an influential economic force with an international impact.

The agricultural wealth in many countries of the Islamic world cannot be underestimated as well, especially if we know that 70% of the population of the OIC countries work mainly in agriculture. According to statistics, the Islamic world possesses 245 billion cubic meters of water annually, in addition to the seas and oceans it overlooks, and the lakes and rivers that exist or pass through its lands, which provide a wealth of fish that can be exploited commercially, despite the fact that large parts of the Member States also suffer from water scarcity and drought, taking into account the presence of large quantities of groundwater that have not been sufficiently exploited. As far as tourism is concerned, OIC Member States are visited by 37 percent of tourists worldwide, due to the historical and archaeological sites which these countries have, and which attract many tourists.

A quick look at the capabilities and wealth of the Islamic world would confirm that this old-new world has a lot of potential and wealth. However, the challenges facing the Islamic world are enormous and numerous. Some OIC countries were the scene of civil and internal wars, bloody conflicts and natural disasters. They have also suffered from poverty, diseases, lack of infrastructure and lack of health and education equipment. Also, a large number of Muslim communities have been subject to hostility that was labelled Islamophobia. What made matters worse was the adoption by tiny minority Islamic groups of extremism and their perpetration of terrorist operations. As a result, Muslims in many parts of the world were subjected to negative reactions, widespread hatred and defamation. Also, their religious symbols were insulted.

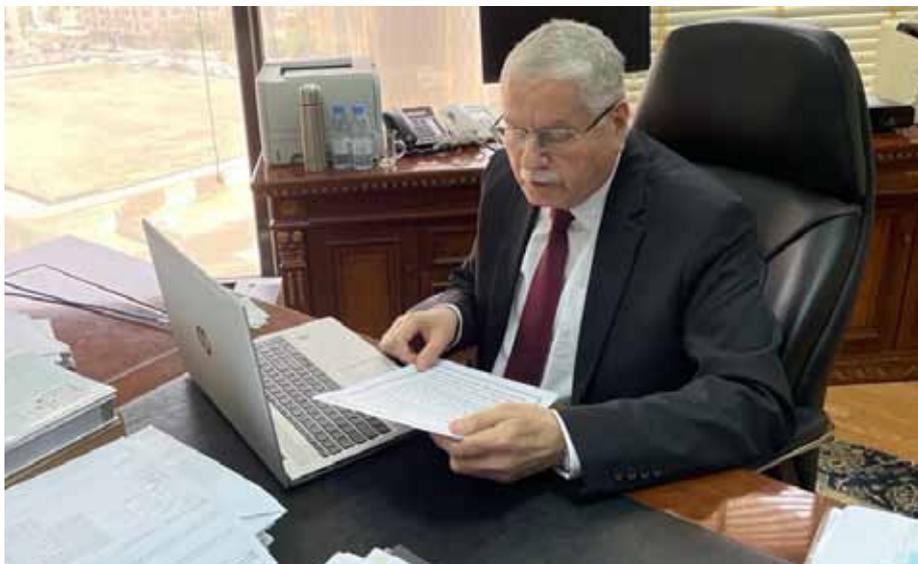
Nevertheless, by examining the strengths of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and the negative points that surround the reality of the Muslim world, the OIC can achieve much of what the peoples of the Muslim world aspire to through the General Secretariat in Jeddah, along with its offices in New York, Geneva, Brussels, Niamey, Ramallah, Mogadishu, Baghdad and Kabul, as well as their subsidiary, specialised and affiliated organizations, which have recently reached 37 organizations spread over 16 member states, and working in various political and economic fields, depending on their areas of competence.



Aiman Abboushi
Editor of the OIC Journal

a lifestyle interspersed with Islamic convictions and teachings, which do not oppose mankind's itinerary but rather has been shaped through constants specific to the OIC Member States

OIC Condemns Aggression on Gaza and Incursions by Settlers Participates in Conference on Historical Status of Al-Aqsa



The Supreme Committee of Al-Quds, in the State of Palestine, in cooperation with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), held the Conference on Property Documentation and the Historical Status of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, under the patronage of His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, in Ramallah, on 8 June 2022.

H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas said “this conference is in the context of our defence of our religious and historical narrative against the defunct and false narrative of the occupation, which has no basis, neither in the history, nor in reality, nor in international law”. He also stressed that all evidence and historical documents confirm the identity of Al-Quds, Al-Aqsa Mosque, and all the Islamic and Christian holy sites in the holy capital.

Ambassador Samir Bakr Diab, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs, delivered the speech of the OIC stressing that the conference took place at a time when the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif was going through a very delicate and dangerous phase due to the persistence of Israel, the occupying power, in pursuing the policies of Judaisation that threaten the Islamic and Arab identity of this city and its religious position.

Ambassador Diab explained that the OIC, in its recent meetings, discussed the dangerous

situation in Al-Quds and the incursions that occurred at the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, stressing that the defence of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is at the heart of the OIC’s work. He emphasized support for efforts and initiatives towards preserving the historic, cultural and civilizational identity and memory of the city of Al-Quds, and the preservation of its Islamic and Christian sanctities, especially the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. He further affirmed support for the rights of the Palestinian people to embody the sovereignty of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital on the 1967 borders.

On another note, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation had warned of the continued violations of the sanctity of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque by extremist settlers, under the Israeli occupation force’ protection by threatening to storm it last May. It also strongly condemned the storming of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque by thousands of extremist settlers who performed Talmudic rites and rituals with the support and under the protection of the Israeli occupation forces. The OIC vehemently denounced the extremist settlers’ organisation of the racist and provocative “flags march” in the occupied city of Al-Quds and the barbaric attack on Palestinian citizens. The OIC considered these acts as dangerous escalation, in addition, they constituted a blatant challenge to the feelings of the entire Muslim Ummah,

and a flagrant violation of relevant international resolutions and covenants.

The OIC Secretary-General H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, held Israel, the occupying power, fully responsible for the possible repercussions of these continuous attacks, calling at the same time on the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to act to put an end to these repeated Israeli violations. He reiterated the OIC’s firm and absolute support for the right of the Palestinian people to sovereignty over East Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Palestine, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions.

Earlier, the OIC had expressed its rejection and condemnation of the Israeli unfounded statements about the alleged sovereignty over the occupied city of Al-Quds and the demolition of Al-Rajabi family building in Silwan, considering it a flagrant violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

The OIC asserted its firm support for the right of the Palestinian people to full sovereignty over East Al-Quds as the eternal capital of the State of Palestine and reiterated its condemnation of all Israeli positions and measures aimed at changing the legal and historical status of the holy city, including its nefarious colonial settlement, home demolitions, forced displacement of Palestinian citizens, and the attempt for temporal and spatial division of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Al-Asadi Briefs the Secretary-General on the Developments of the Situation

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received at the headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat on 12 June 2022, Ambassador Mahmoud Al-Asadi, the Consul General of the State of Palestine, in order to exchange views on developments in Palestine, especially in the occupied city of Al-Quds, and the serious Israeli



OIC Condemns Assassination of Shireen Abu Akleh

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) expressed strong condemnation of the assassination of the correspondent of Al-Jazeera Network, Shireen Abu Akleh, in the Palestinian territories, stressing that this crime constituted a blatant violation of international laws and norms and required immediate investigation and holding those responsible to account.

The OIC stressed that the targeting by the Israeli occupation forces of Abu Akleh while on duty, reporting facts and documenting crimes committed against the Palestinian people, came in the context of the Israeli violations of press and media freedom, as part of its policy aimed at blocking the truth, gagging mouths, covering up its daily violations, and withholding such information from the world public opinion.

The OIC held Israel, the occupying power, fully responsible for this heinous crime, and called on the relevant international institutions to take immediate action to ensure justice and provide the necessary protection for journalists and media professionals working in the occupied Palestinian territory, in accordance with international humanitarian law and relevant international conventions. On a related note, the OIC General Secretariat condemned the attack by the Israeli occupation forces on the mourners of the

martyr Walid Al-Sharif in the occupied city of Al-Quds, injuring dozens.

The General Secretariat considered this brutal attack on the funeral and the desecration of the sanctity of Islamic cemeteries a flagrant violation of international law and conventions and called on the international community to assume its responsibilities towards obligating Israel, the occupying power, to stop its ongoing violations and provide international protection for the Palestinian people and their sanctities.

Meanwhile, the OIC expressed its strong condemnation of the crime of assassination by the Israeli occupation forces of three Palestinian citizens in the city of Jenin, last June. The OIC held the Israeli occupation forces fully responsible for this heinous crime, calling on the international community to provide international protection for the Palestinian people, and to pressurise the Israeli occupation government to cease its continued crimes and violations against the Palestinian people, their land and their sanctities.

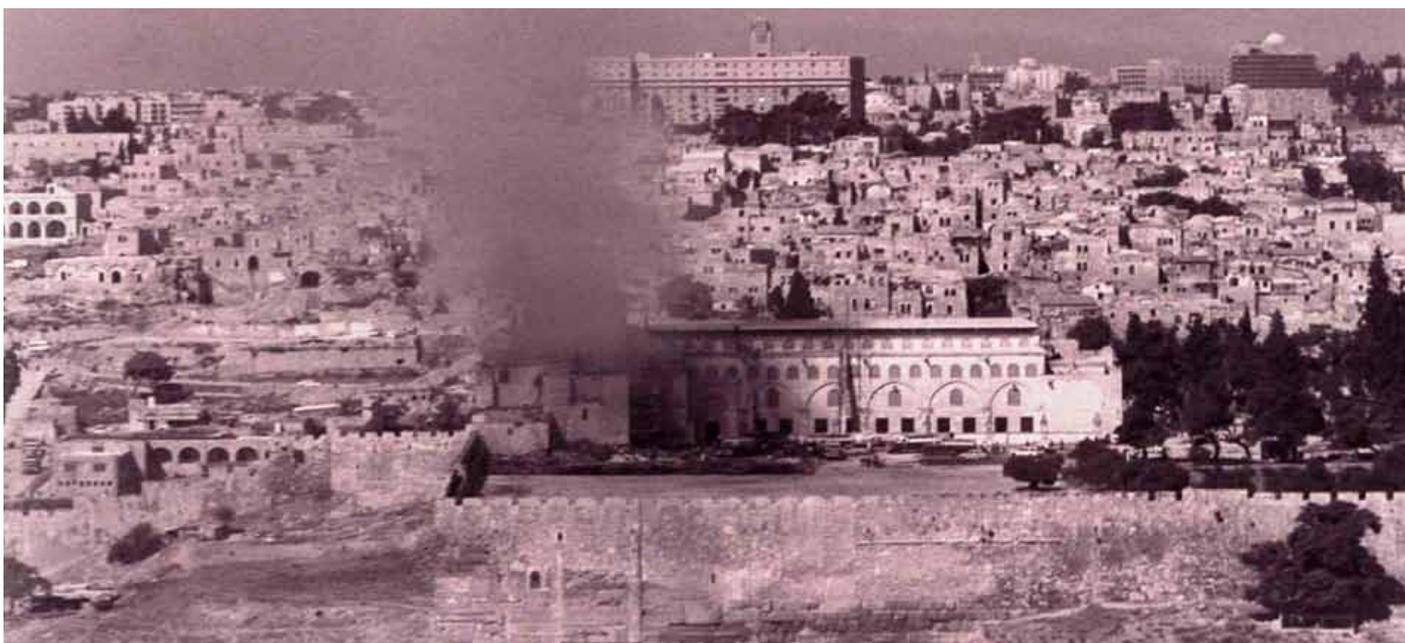
The OIC General Secretariat also condemned, last August, the continued crimes of the Israeli occupation in the Palestinian land, and its assassination of 3 Palestinian citizens and wounding of seventy others, in addition to the destruction of a number of

homes and properties during its storming of the city of Nablus.

As far as settlement is concerned, the OIC condemned the plans of Israel, the occupying power, to build 4000 new settlement units on the occupied Palestinian land, and to evacuate and demolish 12 Palestinian villages in the Yatta area, south of Khalil Province. In this connection, it stressed that the Israeli colonial settlement policy represented a blatant aggression against the rights of the Palestinian people, and a flagrant violation of the International law and relevant UN resolutions, particularly UNSC Resolution 2334 of 23 December 2016.

On 27 July 2022, the OIC General Secretariat condemned the decision of Israel, the occupying power, to build 1446 new settlement units on the lands of Sur Baher town, south of East Jerusalem, stressing that the Israeli colonial settlement policy represents a flagrant violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, especially the Security Council Resolution No. 2334.

It also called on the international community and the UN Security Council, to assume its responsibilities in implementing its resolutions, halting all settlement activities in all the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.



OIC Commemorates the 74th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba

Warns Against Isolating Jerusalem from its Palestinian Surroundings

On May 15th, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) recalled the 74th Anniversary of the Nakba of Palestinian land and people, following the declaration of the establishment of the so-called State of Israel, and the subsequent eradication, ethnic discrimination, mass displacement, murder, persecution, confiscation of property, and deprivation of the authentic Palestinian people of their legitimate national rights. In a statement, the OIC underlined that this painful memory is still alive in the individual and collective memory at a time when the suffering of the Palestinian people caused by Nakba is exacerbated because of asylum, exile, and displacement, in addition to Israel's nefarious illegal actions, such as looting lands, demolishing homes, committing massacres, and desecrating holy sites, as well as its policies of Judaizing the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and isolating it from its Palestinian surroundings, in violation of all the resolutions of international legitimacy. The statement also underlined that the repercussions of Nakba have continued for decades because of the international community's inability to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy and its double standards, reminding it of its responsibilities toward correcting the historical injustice still

inflicted on the Palestinian people. On this occasion, the OIC underscored the political, legal, and humanitarian responsibility of the international community and the United Nations for ending the Israeli occupation and finding a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue, in line with the relevant international legitimacy resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. The OIC reiterated its firm and unconditional support for the Palestinian people in its just struggle to regain and exercise their inalienable national rights, foremost of which is their right to return, according to the United Nations Resolution No. 194, as well as their right to establishing an independent State of Palestine on the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Al-Quds as its eternal capital. It also called upon the free nations and peoples of the world to continue their solidarity with the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights. Relatedly, 53rd painful anniversary of the sinful attempt to burn the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first of the two Qiblas and the third of the Two Holy Mosques, came on the backdrop of the escalating frequency of violations by Israel, the occupying power, and its attempts to impose the temporal and spatial division of the blessed Al-Aqsa

Mosque, and its policies aimed at changing the geographical and demographic character of the city of Al-Quds as well as isolating it from its Palestinian surroundings, in flagrant violation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. In the same connection, the OIC underlined in a statement that on that painful anniversary, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation renewed its absolute support for the right of the Palestinian people to sovereignty over their land occupied since 1967, including the city of East Al-Quds, capital of the State of Palestine. It also stressed the importance of protecting the Arab identity of Al-Quds, and preserving the legal and historical status of its Muslim and Christian holy sites. The OIC stressed that the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque / Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and its entire area of 144 dunums, is a place of worship purely for Muslims, calling on the international community to take serious action to put an end to all repeated Israeli aggressions and violations, and to engage in sponsoring a serious peace process that leads to ending the Israeli occupation, enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable national rights, including the right of return, self-determination.



Rabat

2022 Culture Capital in the Islamic World

Under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, a major ceremony was held to mark the inauguration of the Celebration of Rabat as Culture Capital in the Islamic World for 2022. Held by the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication of the Kingdom of Morocco, in coordination with the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), on 24 March 2022, at Mohammed V Theatre, the ceremony witnessed high-level participation including officials from the Moroccan Government, public figures, authors, intellectuals and artists in addition to a large audience.

The year-long celebration of Rabat as the 2022 Culture Capital in the Islamic World is organized as part of ICESCO Programme for Culture Capitals in the Islamic World, and features a large selection of programmes and activities both in Rabat and other Moroccan cities. The celebration aims to highlight the civilizational status of Rabat and cast light on its abundant tangible and intangible heritage.

The ceremony was opened by Mr. Mohamed Al-Mehdi Bensaid, Moroccan Minister of Youth, Culture and Communication, who gave an address, in which he stated that the selection of Rabat as Culture capital in the

Islamic World for 2022, under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, reaffirms the special attention His Majesty accords to the Kingdom's capital. He added that this designation also reflects Rabat's special position in the African, Arab and Islamic region as well as in the world as a model for cultural coexistence, a symbol of both authenticity and modernity, and a hub of several key developmental projects.

The Moroccan Minister also expressed his thanks to ICESCO and all the cooperating parties and media outlets for their efforts to ensure the success of this event and highlight the cultural image of the Kingdom as a land of respect, coexistence and tolerance.

Taking the floor next was Dr. Salim M. Al-Malik, ICESCO Director-General, who talked about Rabat's long-standing landmarks, ten-century-long glorious history and diverse heritage sites including Udayas Castle, Hassan Tower, Challah, and Bouregreg River, noting that Rabat is a city of the past, present and future.

ICESCO Director-General also expressed his deepest thanks and appreciation to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of the Kingdom of Morocco, for the royal attention ICESCO has been receiving since its inception by late King Hassan II, may Allah rest his soul

in peace.

In addition, Dr. AlMalik noted that Rabat celebrations will feature a large number of activities, cultural, literary and art exhibitions, most notably the International Exhibition and Museum of the Prophet's Seerah and Islamic Civilisation, in its first destination outside Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. The Director-General concluded his address with a poem he wrote praising the history and glory of Rabat.

For her part, Ms. Asmaa Rhlalou, Mayor of Rabat, stated in her address that the cultural projects implemented in Rabat will contribute to its cultural outreach, in an embodiment of the royal keenness to render the Kingdom's capital an international civilizational and cultural hub. She added that this celebration is a re-discovery of the Capital of Lights from various cultural and artistic dimensions, which would eventually promote the image of Morocco as a land of tolerance and diversity and contribute to highlighting its openness to various cultures nations.

Following the opening speeches, a short video on the City of Rabat, prepared by the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication, was screened. Then, Dr. AlMalik handed over the celebration flag to the Mayor of Rabat.



US-Islamic Dialogue

Reviews Political, Social and Cultural Issues

A high-level delegation from the General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), headed by H.E. the Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, visited Washington, D.C. to discuss many issues and topics of common interest, on 23-24 May 2022, at the invitation of the US State Department.

Political issues, including the situation in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, came to the fore of discussions with the US side. Social issues, foremost of which is women empowerment, as well as cultural issues, and human rights, in addition to cooperation between the two sides in the fight against Corona (COVID-19) pandemic were also discussed.

During this visit, the Secretary-General met, at the headquarters of State Department in Washington, D.C., the US Secretary of State, H.E. Mr. Antony Blinken. The two sides discussed bilateral relations and ways to enhance them, as well as the outcomes of the first round of strategic dialogue between the Organisation and the United States. The two sides agreed on the importance of consolidating these relations in various fields, in light of the challenges facing the world. The two sides also agreed on the importance of continuing consultations on various issues that top the agenda of the two parties, especially the fight against terrorism, extremism and Islamophobia.

In his opening speech, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, stressed that the first round of strategic dialogue with the US came at a time when the world is facing enormous challenges that



Secretary-General meets US Secretary of State

require strengthening dialogue, cooperation and solidarity, in order to maintain peace, security and mutual understanding and promote development. The Secretary-General noted that the OIC encourages its Member States to engage in dialogue, defuse tensions and conflicts, and resolve them by peaceful means. He also underlined that the OIC calls for promoting the values of moderation and tolerance and encouraging dialogue among civilizations.

The Secretary-General also stressed that the Palestinian issue remains the central issue of the OIC as it defends the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and strives for reaching a two-state solution, stressing at the same time that the OIC is committed to restoring peace, security and stability in Afghanistan, and the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin countries. He also added that the OIC has consistently encouraged dialogue to resolve crises in Yemen, Libya, Somalia and Sudan, and defends the rights of Muslim

communities and minorities in non-Member States, including the Rohingya.

In his speech, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha also pointed out that the priorities of the OIC also include combating violent extremism and terrorism, striving to promote human rights, empowering women, the elderly, children, and people with special needs, etc.

The first round of the strategic dialogue was launched, and the agendas of the two sides included many issues and topics. The discussions of the final day of the dialogue also included topics of common interest, foremost of which are the fight against Islamophobia and hate speech, the conditions of Muslim communities and groups in non-OIC countries, religious freedoms, freedom of expression, gender equality, women empowerment, human rights issues, food security challenges, and climate issues.

The two sides agreed to follow up on what was agreed upon in this round and to move forward with holding other rounds of OIC-US strategic dialogue as the first round yielded fruitful and encouraging results towards strengthening cooperation between the two sides in order to face common challenges.

Senior officials of the US Department of State, a number of OIC Assistant Secretaries-General, the Secretary-General of International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA) and the Advisor to the President of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) participated in the first round of the OIC-US strategic dialogue.



Exploring Partnership between OIC and UN

in Addressing Contemporary Challenges

The 15th Session of the Biennial General Cooperation Meeting between the Secretariats of the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and their specialized organisations and agencies was held on 18 July 2022, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was co-chaired by Amb. Tarig Ali Bakhiet, OIC Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and Amb. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the United Nations. In his statement delivered by Amb. Tarig Ali Bakhiet during the opening session, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, recognized the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pan-

dem and underscored the importance of enhanced cooperation between the two Organisations in ensuring peace, security, and economic prosperity in many parts of the world. The meeting adopted a Matrix of Joint Activities that covered cooperation between OIC and the United Nations in areas such as peace and security, combating Islamophobia, countering violent extremism, human rights, women empowerment, education and humanitarian assistance. The meeting was also an occasion to exchange views on regional and international issues of common concern.

On another note, H.E. Amb. Tarig Ali Bakhiet met with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), in Geneva. The meeting dis-

cussed resource and support mobilization to strengthen the health sector in Afghanistan, and the Sahel region, including through enhancing access to COVID-19 vaccines.

The two sides also agreed to draw up a new Memorandum of Understanding and develop a plan of action to reinforce their bilateral cooperation in the field of health and technical assistance, provision of medical supplies, training and capacity building for the benefit of OIC Member States.

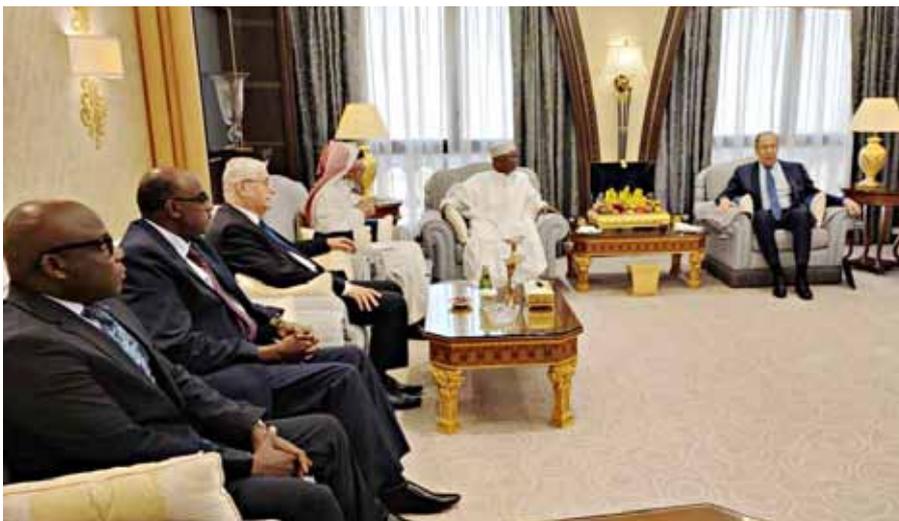
Relatedly, H.E. Amb. Tarig Ali Bakhiet met with Mr. Robert Mardini, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), at the latter's headquarters in Geneva. The meeting discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations between the two sides.

Secretary-General Meets Russian Foreign Minister

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, met H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, on 31 May 2022, in Riyadh.

During the meeting, both sides discussed key regional and international challenges, and affirmed the importance of coordination and consultation to serve the international efforts and endeavours to bring about peace, stability and development in the world. They also underscored their commitment to further support the existing bonds of friendship and to support rapprochement between the Russian Federation and the Muslim world in various fields, in view of Russia's observer status in the OIC.

The two sides also reviewed bilateral cooperation and coordination on all issues of common concern.



Secretary-General Receives US Ambassador-at-Large for IRF



The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, in his office, the United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Mr. Rashad Hussain. During this meeting, both sides underlined the importance of dialogue and bilateral cooperation and prospects for their promotion. They also exchanged views on issues of common interest, including the situation in Palestine and Afghanistan, as well as the situation of Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC Member States. Talks between the two sides also focused on Islamophobia and religious freedom and prospects of cooperation in their regard.

Secretary-General Meets the Special Envoy of Germany

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received on 12 June 2022, Dr. Eltje Aderhold, Special Envoy of the Federal Republic of Germany to the OIC. The meeting was an opportunity for the two sides to review the existing areas of cooperation and to express the desire to further strengthen bilateral dialogue and cooperation on themes and issues of common interest.

The Special Envoy highlighted the importance of the OIC's role at the international level. For his part, the Secretary-General welcomed Germany's continuing interest in the activities of the OIC.



OIC Secretary-General Meets Special Envoy of France

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received in his office, on 21 June 2022, H.E. Mr. Mustafa Mehraj, Special Envoy of the Republic of France to the OIC and Consul General in Jeddah, on completion of the latter's tour of duty.

The Secretary-General praised the Special Envoy's role in promoting relations between France and the OIC and commended his efforts during his tenure. For his part, the Special Envoy stated that France accords special interest to the OIC and looks forward to promoting dialogue and cooperation with it on various issues of common interest.



Secretary-General Meets Consul-General of Japan

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received on 17 May 2022, in his office, H.E. Mr. Shimmura Izuru, Consul-General of Japan in Jeddah, who was appointed by the Government of Japan as Representative to the OIC. Mr. Shimmura affirmed the desire of Japan to strengthen its cooperation with the OIC and its Member States in areas of mutual interest.

For his part, the Secretary-General commended Japan as an important development partner of OIC Member States.



Mr. Taha Receives Ambassador of Belgium in Riyadh

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, on 7 June 2022, in his office, Ms. Dominique Mineur, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, the two sides expressed a common desire to promote dialogue and cooperation between the OIC and Belgium in areas of common interest. They also exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues.





Luxor.. Land of Light that Attracted World Artists Throughout the Ages

Luxor-Hagag Salamah (dpa): The historic city of Luxor occupied a great place in Arab and foreign sources as well as in the writings of historians and archaeologists. The name of the city, rich in hundreds of tombs and dozens of temples built by the rulers of ancient Egypt in Upper Egypt, as well as its past steeped in history and its towering archaeological monuments were prominent in the exhibition halls of books related to Egyptology, estimated at hundreds of foreign and Arabic titles.

It is also remarkable that the archaeological monuments of the city, and the nature that was unique to Luxor on both sides of the immortal Nile River, which splits the city in two, attracted the eyes of the world's artists in ancient times, who were charmed by the city, and painted its various landmarks and monuments that were built by the ancient Egyptians thousands of years ago.

In his book "Luxor in World Poetry and Art", issued by the General Egyptian Book Organisation, the Egyptian poet and translator, Al-Hussein Khodeiri, mentions many names of international painters and photographers, who introduced Luxor in amazing works of art that still fascinate art lovers in the world.

The interest of the world's artists in Luxor and its monuments, landmarks, Nile and special nature has continued until today, according to the statements of the Egyptian plastic artist, Dr. Mohamed Orabi. The city has become a destination for Egyptian,

Arab and foreign plastic artists. Also, art exhibitions, conferences and art forums have been organised in the city throughout the year, in addition to the art exhibitions spread along its avenues, which periodically display new artworks by artists from all over the world, who loved the city, and be-



came fascinated by its inspirational landmarks. One of the artists that painted a large number of paintings of Luxor temples and its

various landmarks, is David Roberts, who was a Scottish painter that lived from 1796 to 1856. He gained his fame from the large number of paintings of the city landmarks he drew, along with other paintings of the countries of the East.

David Roberts, whose paintings made him one of the prominent orientalists, came to Egypt in 1831, aiming from that trip to draw up sketches and return to his country to then turn them into oil paintings, at a time when Egypt was full of Orientalists, travellers, artists, and antiques dealers. Roberts made an extensive tour of Cairo, Luxor, Aswan and even Sinai. He also toured a number of countries in the East.

Among the world famous artists that the landmarks of Luxor dominated their works is the Russian artist "Vasily Polenov", who was associated with the movement of realistic artists, and was called "The Knight of Beauty". Polenov succeeded in adhering to the European and Russian painting traditions. Through his paintings, he strived to promote the audience's happiness and joy.

Vasily Polenov visited the countries of the East during 1881 and 1882. He toured Cairo and the historic cities of Upper Egypt. He also visited Istanbul, Beirut, and Al-Quds. Then he returned to the countries of the East again. In his paintings, inspired by Egypt and the countries of the East, as well as Luxor, he was interested in drawing ancient temples, landscapes, architecture, mosques, and even people's faces.

Snapshots



Secretary-General Receives
Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to OIC



Secretary-General Receives Credentials of
Iraq's Permanent Representative to the OIC



Secretary-General Receives
Permanent Representative of Djibouti to OIC



Secretary-General Receives
Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to OIC



Hissein Taha Bids Farewell to
Permanent Representative of Iraq to OIC



Secretary-General Receives
Permanent Representative of Tunisia to OIC

Snapshots



Secretary-General Receives Credentials of Permanent Representative of Gabon to OIC



Secretary-General Receives Permanent Representative of Somalia to OIC



Secretary-General Receives Permanent Representative of Kuwait to OIC



Secretary-General Receives Deputy Permanent Representative of Oman to OIC in Jeddah



Secretary-General receives Permanent Representative of Sudan to OIC



Secretary-General Receives Permanent Representative of Pakistan to OIC

AFRICA

25TH MAY

DAY

Secretary-General Receives Honorary Shield of Africa Day for 2022

OIC Delegation Visits AUC



The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, dispatched a high-level delegation, headed by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ambassador Yousef bin Mohammed Al-Dubaey, to visit the African Union Commission (AUC).

The delegation met with H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki, the AUC Chairperson, in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. The meeting addressed relations between the OIC General Secretariat and the AUC and ways to enhance them. The two sides also exchanged views on issues of common interest.

On another note, H.E. the OIC Secretary-General received the honorary shield of Africa Day for 2022, awarded by the group of African Consuls General in Jeddah, in a ceremony held to commemorate the International Day of Africa. Dr. Ahmad Sen-

gendo, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, received the shield on behalf of the Secretary-General, and expressed in a speech he delivered on this occasion, on behalf of the Secretary-General, thanks and warm congratulations to the African Consuls General on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of the Organisation of African Unity, which was transformed in 2002 to the African Union.

In the speech of the OIC Secretary-General, Dr. Sengendo indicated that the Organisation, since its establishment in 1969, as an intergovernmental organisation, has represented the collective voice of the Islamic world, and that it has always considered Africa as its natural partner, stressing the Organisation's commitment to continue contributing to the promotion of development, security and stability in Africa.

Besides, the Organisation participated with its Member States from the African Group and the African Union, as well as the countries of the whole world in commemorating "Africa Day", which falls on May 25 of each year, in remembrance of the founding day of the Organisation of African Unity on 25 May 1963, whose name was later changed to the African Union.

The Organisation valued the social, cultural and economic achievements of the African continent, which is rich in the diversity of its natural resources, cultural heritage and noble values common to the peoples of the African continent. The OIC affirmed its firm commitment to mobilising efforts to provide support of all kinds to the peoples of the continent with the aim of contributing to the development of the economies of its Member States from the African continent, as a contribution to the development of their structures and infrastructure and the advancement of the vital sectors of these countries in various fields, including education, agriculture, science, technology, media, culture and social affairs.

In a press release, the OIC stressed that it will spare no effort along with all its offices, permanent committees and subsidiary, specialised and affiliated organisations spread across Africa and other continents of the world, in directing its various development projects that it offers, to serve the development goals in the African continent.

It also added that the OIC institutions, also make efforts consistent with the same goal, in consolidation of the objectives of the Charter of the Organisation and all its instruments.



Arifari Holds Talks in a Number of Countries in the African Region

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to Africa, Mr. Nassirou Bako-Arifari, made a new tour of Africa, during which he was received by a number of leaders of Member States in the region. H.E. Mr. Patrice Talon, President of the Republic of Benin, current Chairman of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, received Mr. Arifari in Cotonou, last May 6th, who delivered a written message from H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, to H.E. President Talon.

This meeting was an opportunity to review the various challenges facing the West African sub-region and to explore ways and means to enhance dialogue and cooperation between the OIC, the Economic Community of West African States and the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

H.E. Colonel Assimi Goïta, Transitional President, President of the Republic of Mali, also received Mr. Arifari in Bamako, last May 10th, who was on a visit to the West African sub-region. During the reception, Mr. Arifari conveyed to President Assimi Goïta a message from the Secretary-General. The Envoy stressed the pivotal role of Mali in achieving stability and security in the Sahel and ECOWAS regions. Also during the meeting, the two sides discussed the transitional phase in Mali, and the Transitional President was briefed on the results of the mission of

the Special Envoy in the West African sub-region, as part of the efforts to achieve stability in Mali.

The Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General had previously held talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Mali, H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, on relations between the OIC and Mali, as well as the social, political and security situation in Mali, and ways and means of providing support by the OIC, especially in the humanitarian field.

In the same context, H.E. Mr. Faure Gnassingbe, President of the Republic of Togo and Dean of the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), received Mr. Arifari, in Lomé, last May 13th. During the meeting, the Special Envoy handed President Faure Gnassingbe a written message from the OIC Secretary-General. The discussions were an opportunity to review the multiple challenges facing the West African sub-region, including challenges related to the transitional phase in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, and to stress the importance of concerted efforts and encouraging dialogue and cooperation in order to find acceptable solutions.

On another note, Mr. Arifari held talks in Malabo, capital of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, on 27 May 2022, with H.E. Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, the current President of the Afri-

can Union, on the sidelines of the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union. During the meeting, Mr. Arifari conveyed to the Senegalese President a message from H.E. the Secretary-General. They also exchanged views on humanitarian issues, terrorism and food security in the African continent, especially in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin.

H.E. Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of The Gambia, received Mr. Arifari, on 29 May 2022. The Special Envoy conveyed the greetings and congratulations of H.E. the Secretary-General to the Gambian President on the occasion of his re-election, praising the efforts made by his government to achieve development, peace and stability in the country.

The meeting was an opportunity to review the multiple challenges facing the West African region, including challenges related to the political transition in Mali, Burkina Faso and the Republic of Guinea. The two sides also stressed the importance of concerted efforts, cooperation and dialogue in order to find acceptable solutions to these issues.

Similarly, Mr. Arifari met with Mr. Goodluck Jonathan, former President of Nigeria and ECOWAS mediator, on 1 June 2022. During this meeting, the Special Envoy delivered a message from the Secretary-General to the group's mediator.

Hissein Brahim Taha Praises Saudi Arabia's Donation of \$30 Million to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund



Secretary-General: Adopting Coordinated and Strategically Integrated Approach to Address Challenges in the Country

The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, commended the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's announcement of a donation of about \$30 million to contribute to Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund. The Secretary-General expressed his thanks and gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his Crown Prince, HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, for this generous donation and for the unwavering support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the host country of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation since its establishment. The Secretary-General also thanked the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the tireless efforts, as part of the existing close cooperation between the Ministry and the OIC General Secretariat.

The Secretary-General renewed his thanks to the OIC Member States that donated to the Fund. He also called on the other Member States to contribute to the Fund to help the Afghan people overcome the current humanitarian conditions.

It is noteworthy that the initiative to establish this humanitarian fund was approved by the resolution adopted during the 17th

special session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held on 19 December 2021, in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Islamic Development Bank embarked on this task, which it effectively and efficiently completed last March. In this regard, the Secretary-General congratulated H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al-Jasser, President of the Bank, and his staff, for the appreciated efforts they have made to operate this humanitarian trust fund in such a short period of time.

The Secretary-General underlined that since the issuance of the resolution and before the official launch of the Trust Fund, he and his Special Envoy for Afghanistan have worked to mobilise resources from Member States in order to fill this Fund and address the tragic humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

Relatedly, in his speech before the "Tashkent International Conference on Afghanistan: Security and Economic Development", which was held last July 26th, in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Secretary-General praised the timely initiative of the Uzbek authorities to hold this major event at this defining moment for the future of Afghanistan.

In his speech, delivered on his behalf by H.E. Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, his Special

Envoy for Afghanistan, and OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, the Secretary-General stressed the urgent need to "adopt a coordinated and strategically integrated approach to dealing with the many challenges facing Afghanistan and its people," stressing that the way to achieve this is continuous and constructive engagement with the authorities in the country.

The Secretary-General called on multilateral humanitarian and development organisations to provide humanitarian assistance that would save the lives of the Afghan people in these critical circumstances. He also encouraged OIC Member States, countries of the world, as well as international and regional organisations to consider making contributions to Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund. "The more support provided to the Trust Fund, the wider the scope of the assistance projects and the greater the benefit of larger sectors of Afghan society from the assistance programmes", he underlined. The Secretary-General concluded his speech by stressing that the desired goal is to promote the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Afghan citizens in a safe, stable, and economically prosperous environment.

Secretary-General's Envoy Continues his Movements for Afghanistan Delegation of Fiqh Academy visits Kabul



The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for Afghanistan, H.E. Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, arrived in the Afghan capital, Kabul, and met with Mr. Maulvi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the de facto authority in Afghanistan, on 21 June 2022.

The two sides discussed the OIC's humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan after establishing and activating Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund in the Islamic Development Bank, in addition to many political and economic issues that constitute a priority for the OIC, within the framework of following up on the implementation of the resolutions of the Council of Foreign Ministers on the situation in Afghanistan. Also during this visit, the Envoy met several Afghan officials. Dr. Muhammad Ayyash, Director of OIC office in Kabul attended the meeting.

The visit coincided with another visit by a delegation of Muslim scholars to Afghanistan to engage with Afghan scholars and officials on issues of paramount importance, such as tolerance and moderation in Islam and women's education. The delegation was headed by H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, Secretary-General of the International

Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA). The delegation held several meetings with Afghan scholars, ministers, and officials of the de facto government in Afghanistan.

The delegation's visit came within the framework of OIC General Secretariat's follow-up on the resolution adopted by the Council of Foreign Ministers at its emergency session, held last December in Islamabad, and which called on the OIC Secretary-General to send a delegation of scholars and religious scholars led by the IIFA and other relevant religious institutions in the Muslim world to engage with Afghanistan on issues of paramount importance, such as tolerance and moderation in Islam and women's education.

It is worth noting that, upon arrival, the delegation held a meeting with ambassadors and representatives of the OIC's Member States in Afghanistan and the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan. Meetings with Afghan scholars continued to address various topics and interests.

Relatedly, Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, the Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General, held a virtual consultative meeting with H.E. Ahmed bin Ali Al Sayegh, Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates, on 15 June 2022. The meeting was attended by

HH Sheikh Nahyan bin Saif Al Nahyan, UAE Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Permanent Representative to the OIC.

Discussions focused on the latest developments in Afghanistan and the OIC's efforts to follow up on the implementation of the resolution adopted by the extraordinary ministerial session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad, in December 2021, regarding the situation in Afghanistan. The Special Envoy praised the decades-old humanitarian and development support provided by the United Arab Emirates to the Afghan people.

The Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, also held a consultation meeting on 14 June 2022, with Special Envoy of the European Union for Afghanistan, H.E. Mr. Thomas Nicholson, who was in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on a working visit. Discussions during the meeting focused on the sustained and multi-faceted engagement of the OIC towards Afghanistan, as well as the unfolding developments in the country. Both sides emphasized the need to reinforce their mutual cooperation with regard to Afghanistan and other critical issues of common interest.

One-Year Post-Regime Change:

OIC as Ever Committed to Constructive Engagement in Afghanistan

In a press release, published mid-August, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), underlined that one year after the regime change in Afghanistan, the OIC still believes that continued and constructive engagement is the best way to move forward towards economic and political stability for Afghanistan and its people, and towards achieving peace and stability in the region and the whole world.

OIC stated in its press release that a year had elapsed since the regime change in Afghanistan, and highlighted that in the immediate aftermath of that development, the OIC convened its 17th Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting (CFM) in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which was dedicated exclusively to the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

A few months later, in March 2022, the OIC 48th CFM was also held in Pakistan. The situation in Afghanistan remained as a high-priority file on the OIC's agenda.

The two resolutions issued by the two ministerial sessions outlined the multi-faceted approach embraced by the OIC vis-à-vis the

fast-paced developments that ensued in Afghanistan.

On repeated occasions, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, stressed that the daunting challenges facing Afghanistan would not be effectively addressed without pursuing sustained and constructive engagement with the de facto authorities in Kabul.

The press release also highlighted that the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Afghanistan, Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, had taken the lead of this engagement through multilateral consultations with the relevant stakeholders. The Special Envoy's two-fold engagement focussed on developing humanitarian programmes to be funded by the OIC Humanitarian Trust Fund for Afghanistan, which was established by virtue of a ministerial resolution under the stewardship of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) to alleviate hardships caused by food insecurity and natural disasters as well as conducting extensive political consultations with the de facto government in Kabul on issues of pressing concerns as well as other

priority areas of his mandate.

Though some encouraging signs had emerged about the will of the de facto authorities to tackle controversial issues that had impeded Afghanistan from regaining its position within the international community, the OIC had maintained its unremitting call for the de facto government to fulfil its promises on granting women and girls their fundamental right to work and education.

The OIC underscored that a more vigorous stand by the Kabul de facto government on stamping out terrorist groups and putting in place a truly inclusive and representative government would go a long way towards securing lasting peace for the Afghan people who had borne the brunt of decades of conflict and deprivation.

In a bid to set the path towards accomplishing that objective, a delegation of Muslim Scholars conducted a first working visit to Kabul in June 2022, to engage in a consultative dialogue with Kabul authorities and Afghan religious scholars on a slew of socio-religious questions.





OIC Welcomes the Return of Girls to Schools

Flash Appeal for Flood Victims in Afghanistan

The OIC General Secretariat launched a flash appeal to provide aid to flood victims in Afghanistan, following the torrential rain and flash floods that hit the eastern, southern, and central regions of Afghanistan, destroying homes as well as infrastructure, and leaving thousands of people in need of urgent assistance. The flash floods occurred following precedent flooding across several parts of the country, further compounding an already precarious humanitarian situation.

The OIC appealed to all its Member States and other countries across the world as well as relief organisations to urgently channel life-saving assistance to help Afghan people impacted by the ongoing floods.

Relatedly, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, expressed deep condolences to Afghanistan over victims of the earthquake that ravaged the eastern part of the country on 22 June 2022. H.E. Mr. Taha conveyed his condolences and sympathy to the families of those killed and affected by the quake, praying to Allah to have mercy on the souls of the dead, grant the injured quick recovery, and protect Afghanistan and its people from evil.

The Secretary-General called on Mus-

lim world's humanitarian organisations to quickly provide necessary humanitarian assistance to the earthquake victims and the Afghan people facing difficult humanitarian and economic conditions, requiring immediate action to end their suffering.

The Secretary-General also directed the OIC

Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, expressed deep condolences to Afghanistan over victims of the earthquake that ravaged the eastern part of the country

Islamic Solidarity Fund to provide aid and assistance to those affected by the earthquake that hit eastern Afghanistan. In the same vein, he indicated that urgent humanitarian aid was needed to relieve the suffering of

the Afghan people who were severely affected by the earthquake. He underlined, at the same time, that the aid provided by the Fund was an expression of the OIC's solidarity with the affected countries and peoples. The Secretary-General renewed the call for all humanitarian institutions in the Islamic world to act to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, so that they could face up to the consequences of the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan. On another note, The OIC General Secretariat welcomed the announcement made on 27 May 2022 by the de facto authorities in Afghanistan about the establishment of an eight-member committee to facilitate the reopening of secondary schools for Afghan girls.

This development, the General Secretariat indicated, bore the much-awaited promise of fulfilling an earlier commitment made by the de facto authorities to allow 6+ -year girls to return to schools.

The General Secretariat also pointed out that the formation of the committee was a positive sign that would hopefully culminate in tangible steps towards effectively and expeditiously granting Afghan girls their fundamental right to education.

President of Azerbaijan Receives the OIC Secretary-General Baku Hosts 11th Session of Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers



H. E. President Ilham Aliyev receives the Secretary-General

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, received the OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, on 27 June 2022, on the sidelines of the 11th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM), which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Mr. Aliyev highlighted the significance of the OIC for Azerbaijan as an active Member State, and underscored its importance at the regional and international levels. He also pledged Azerbaijan's full support for the Secretary-General's vision and mission to protect and safeguard the interests of the Islamic world.

The Secretary-General congratulated Mr. Aliyev on the liberation of territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan that were occupied by Armenia. Mr. Taha also reaffirmed the principled and unwavering support of the OIC to Azerbaijan, for the reconstruction of its liberated territories. The Secretary-General also shared with H.E. Mr. Aliyev his vision to promote Islamic solidarity and Islamic joint action.

The Secretary-General also commended the leadership of Azerbaijan for its activities and initiatives to promote Islamic solidarity and cooperation between OIC Member States, and thanked the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting the 11th ICTM.

The 11th session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers was held in Baku, on 28 June 2022. The opening session was attended

by Ministers of Tourism, Member States' Heads of delegation, as well as the OIC Secretary-General. H.E. Mr. Fuad Naghiyev, Chairman of the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan, delivered an opening speech on behalf of the President of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

In his speech during the Opening Session, the OIC Secretary-General underlined that the devastating impacts of COVID-19 pandemic eroded confidence in international travel, and that the strict containment measures that were put in place resulted in significant losses in terms of both tourist arrivals and tourism receipts.

"The Worldwide tourist arrivals declined by 72.8% in 2020 compared to 2019, which resulted in an estimated loss of US\$ 1.3 billion in tourism revenues," said the OIC Secretary-General.

He also highlighted that the emerging market of Halal Tourism has the potential to give OIC Member States a competitive edge in this sub-sector. He also called on both public and private tourism sectors stakeholders to increase their investment in Halal Tourism. In the same connection, he underlined that tourism has continued to hold greater potentials for promoting Small and Medium Enterprises and for generating employment opportunities for a significant number of OIC Member States' peoples, including the vulnerable and the youth.

In this context, he called for providing efficient public mechanisms and financial resources, and for preparing to respond to crises. "This will determine how and to what extent can each OIC Member States successfully respond to and recover from the unprecedented crisis that has hit tourism stakeholders since 2020", he underlined. Mr. Taha also called on the Member States and relevant OIC institutions to develop new programmes in Islamic Tourism Capitals so as to attract tourists and promote new OIC tourism destinations at the same time.

The Secretary-General also met with the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov.



OIC Secretary-General Visits Liberated Areas of Azerbaijan



The Ministers of Tourism took stock of the progress of tourism projects carried out by several Member States and OIC institutions, assessed the development in the organisation of Islamic Cooperation Tourism exhibitions and deliberated on the challenges facing the OIC regarding the successful organisation of various tourism exhibitions, and concerning the development of a joint strategy for the successful organisation of exhibitions.

As part of the activities of the 11th Session of Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, the Secretary-General, alongside Tourism Ministers of Member States, visited the liberated areas of Azerbaijan. During the tour, the delegation was briefed on the level of destruction witnessed by Karabakh region during its occupation and the ongoing reconstruction projects, including the restoration of the religious, cultural and historic heritage sites in the Susha city, the cultural capital of Azerbaijan.

The OIC Secretary-General once again congratulated Azerbaijan on its victory and regaining of its lands. He also commended the country's leadership for the reconstruction and restoration projects it launched, including projects with huge potentials, destined for tourists from outside the liberated areas. The Secretary-General reiterated the OIC's continued support to Azerbaijan in maintaining its security and territorial integrity.

On another note, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs highlighted, in the statement he delivered on behalf of the OIC Secretary-General, during the Senior Offi-

cial Meeting preparatory to the 11th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, that, in addition to its economic benefits, tourism plays a vital role in the promotion of solidarity within the Muslim Ummah and international understanding.

The statement asserted that tourism development has always received primary attention of the entire OIC family, because exchange of services in the tourism sector has always contributed to the growth and development of the economies of the 57 Member States of the Organisation, both in pre- and post-COVID 19 pandemic eras, considering the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the tourism sector by closing borders, reducing both the transportation of tourists and tourist demand.

Dr. Sengendo emphasized that one of the major tasks of the Organisation during this challenging time is increasing cooperation efforts through improving tourism policy harmonisation, development of Islamic tourism, domestic tourism facilitation, tourism training, increasing investment opportunities and development of tourism infrastructure. The OIC also called upon Member States and institutions to exert more efforts to exploit the great tourism potential of the Member States.

The Opening Session of the Senior Officials Meeting was also addressed by Mr. Kanan Gasimov, of the State Tourism Agency of Azerbaijan and witnessed the handing over of the Chairmanship of the Session from Bangladesh as the Chair of the 10th Session to Azerbaijan as the Chair of the 11th Session.

OIC Secretary-General Meets Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha met with the Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Tourism of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Aziz Abdulkhakov, on 27 June 2022, on the sidelines of the 11th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers.

The two sides underlined the need to further enhance collaboration among Member States in the area of tourism promotion, increase intra-OIC tourism exchanges, and promote and preserve cultural heritage.



OIC Praises Saudi Aid Package to Yemen

OIC Praises Saudi Aid Package to Yemen

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) welcomed the agreement to extend the armistice in Yemen. It also reiterated its support for the efforts made by the United Nations and its Special Envoy to reach a comprehensive political solution to the Yemeni crisis.

The General Secretariat also commended the efforts made by the government of Saudi Arabia to reach a sustainable political solution to the crisis, based on the GCC Initiative and its Implementation Mechanisms, the outcomes of the comprehensive national dialogue, and relevant Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 2216. The General Secretariat also reaffirmed the OIC support for Yemen to alleviate the suffering of its people and achieve their aspirations for security, peace, stability, and development.

H.E. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General had praised the announcement by Saudi Arabia of an essential package of USD 400-million development projects to be implemented by the Saudi Programme for the Development and Reconstruction of Yemen. The Secretary-General valued this benevolent initiative by Saudi Arabia and its leadership, which have supported Yemen in various humanitarian, economic, and development fields to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. In the same connection, he noted that Saudi Arabia's aid to Yemen reaffirmed its solidarity with the Yemeni people and came in line with the resolutions of the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign



Ministers. Mr. Taha also reiterated the OIC's full solidarity with the Yemeni people to achieve their peace, security, stability, and comprehensive development aspirations.

Relatedly, the OIC General Secretariat welcomed the announcement by the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Mr. Hans Grundberg, on 2 June 2022, of the agreement to extend the armistice in Yemen for a period of two months. The General Secretariat also valued the efforts of the Special Envoy and expressed its hope that the truce would be implemented and consolidated in full, which would help create conditions conducive to a sustainable political solution to the conflict in Yemen, in response to the aspirations of the Yemeni people.

Besides, the OIC welcomed the release and transfer of 163 Houthi prisoners within the framework of the Saudi humanitarian initiative and valued that initiative and the previous ones that would contribute to closing the prisoners' file and supporting peace efforts in Yemen.

The General Secretariat also appreciated the efforts made by the International Committee of the Red Cross to coordinate the return of prisoners and the efforts by the United Nations, expressing hope that efforts and endeavours would continue to establish the armistice and provide the appropriate conditions for the Yemeni parties to continue dialogue to reach a comprehensive political settlement of the Yemeni crisis.

OIC

Supports all Measures Taken by Saudi Arabia to Preserve its Security

The OIC General Secretariat affirmed its full solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to counter any threat to its security and stability and to the safety of its citizens and residents. The General Secretariat commended the Saudi security forces for their firm response to the would-be perpetrators

of any crimes that may prejudice its security and stability, given the announcement of the Presidency of State Security about a security operation to track down one of the most wanted in Jeddah Governorate, who detonated himself with an explosive belt, killing himself and injuring a resident and

three security men.

The OIC Secretary-General affirmed the OIC's support for all measures taken by the competent authorities in Saudi Arabia to maintain its security and stability, expressing at the same time his wishes for a speedy recovery for the injured.

Hissein Brahim Taha Participates in Algeria's Celebrations of 60th Independence Day



The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, participated in the official celebrations of the 60th Independence Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, organised on 5 July 2022, in Algiers, in the presence and patronage of H.E. the President of the Republic of Algeria, Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria launched Independence Day celebrations with an unprecedented military parade in the capital, marking the sixtieth anniversary of the end of colonialism after 132 years of French colonialism.

After an eight-year war between Algerian revolutionaries and the French army, the fighting ceased after the signing of the historic Evian Accords on 18 March 1962, which paved the way for Algeria's declaration of independence on 5 July of the same year. Algeria's independence was declared days after a referendum on self-determination, in which the Algerian people voted for independence. Algeria gained independence seven and a half years after a bloody war that left hundreds of thousands dead. The celebrations, especially the military pa-

rade, were attended by foreign guests, including H.E. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, and H.E. the President of Niger, Mr. Mohamed Bazoum. The French President, Emmanuel Macron, had sent a message to his Algerian counterpart, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, in which he congratulated him on Algeria's 60th Independence Day from France, expressing his hope to "strengthen the already strong relations" between the two countries.

In an indication of the importance of the occasion, a special logo that appeared for weeks on all television channels was designed, a circle adorned with 60 stars, with the words "glorious history and a new era" at the centre.

Also during his visit, the OIC Secretary-General held discussions with H.E. Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, on 6 July 2022, in Algiers. The two sides valued the long-standing relations between the OIC and Algeria. They praised the distinct level of cooperation between the two sides in various fields, stressing their keen interest in promoting cooperation and coordination to achieve the OIC mission that calls for

cooperation and solidarity among Member States and serving the causes of the Muslim Ummah.

The Secretary-General commended the leading role played by the Republic of Algeria within the OIC and in promoting joint Islamic action. For his part, the Algerian Foreign Minister reaffirmed his country's firm support for the OIC, its various activities and its Secretary-General. The two sides reviewed the situation in the region, especially the Palestinian cause.

The two sides also discussed developments relating to Afghanistan, Yemen and the Rohingya Muslim community. They reviewed the political, security, economic and social challenges facing the Sahel and Lake Chad countries. Furthermore, they underlined the importance of supporting efforts to enable these countries to achieve the aspirations of their peoples for security, stability and development.

The two sides expressed deep concern about the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia, stressing the need for more coordination among Member States to address it. They also discussed issue of terrorism and extremism and ways to address them.



OIC Expresses Concern over Attempts to Redraw Electoral Boundaries of Jammu and Kashmir

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) expressed deep concern over India's attempts to redraw the electoral boundaries of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir; which might alter the demographic structure of the territory and violate the rights of the Kashmiri people. In this connection, the OIC underlined that the 'delimitation' exercises infringe the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention.

Referring to the long-standing and principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute and relevant decisions of the Islamic Summit and OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, the General Secretariat reiterated its solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their legitimate quest for the right of self-determination, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions. It also urged the international community, particularly the UN Security Council to take immediate cognizance of the grave implications of such 'delimitation' exercises. Relatedly, on 5 August 2022, the OIC com-

memorated the 3rd anniversary of the illegal and unilateral actions taken in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and followed by additional unlawful measures including illegal demographic changes. "Such illegal actions can neither alter the disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir nor prejudice the legitimate right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people", the OIC underlined.

Recalling the resolutions of the Islamic Summit and Council of Foreign Ministers on Jammu and Kashmir, the General Secretariat reaffirmed the OIC's solidarity with the Kashmiri people in the realisation of their inalienable right to self-determination. It called for the respect of their fundamental freedoms and basic human rights and for the reversal of all illegal and unilateral measures taken on or after 5 August 2019.

The General Secretariat reiterated its call on the international community to take concrete steps for the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

On another note, the OIC General Secretariat expressed its deep concern over the pronouncement of life sentence for one of the most prominent Kashmiri leaders, Mr. Yasin Malik, who led a peaceful freedom struggle for many decades.

Reiterating its solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for their rights, including their right to self-determination, the General Secretariat urged the international community to ensure that the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiris for the realisation of their rights must not be equated with terrorism.

The General Secretariat also called on the government of India to release all Kashmiri leaders unfairly incarcerated in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, halt forthwith the gross and systematic persecution of Kashmiris in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK); and respect the rights of the people of IIOJK, as enshrined in the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.



OIC Countries Stand Firmly against the Wave of Terrorism in Summer of 2022

The Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) witnessed a series of attacks, most of which were concentrated in the Asian and African regions.

In Africa, the Republic of Mali witnessed more than 4 operations, concentrated in the summer months. The Organisation strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that targeted several villages in the centre of the country, killing 132 people in early June, and the terrorist attack that took place near the city of Gao in the north of the country and killed 20 civilians, in addition to attacks targeting the "Kati" military barracks near Bamako, and those that targeted other areas. The General Secretariat also strongly condemned the terrorist attack launched by gunmen on the town of "Tset", which led to a number of deaths and injuries.

The General Secretariat strongly condemned the two terrorist attacks that took place in northern Burkina Faso on 7 May, and killed 12 people, and the terrorist attacks that targeted soldiers and security volunteers in the country, on 8-9 August, and which caused many casualties.

It also condemned the attacks carried out by dozens of gunmen on motorcycles, targeting 3 villages in north-western Nigeria, killing 48 people. It also strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place in the Republic of Togo and targeted the armed forces, and the outpost of Operation Tandjouaré (Kpendjal in the Savanes region), in addition to provinces in the north of the country.

In last May, the Arab Republic of Egypt was victim to two operations. The General Secretariat expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of the terrorist incident that took place at a water pumping station in West Sinai, killing 11 soldiers and injuring 5 others, and the second attack that targeted a security point in North Sinai, killing and wounding a number of soldiers.

As for the Arab region, the General Secretariat strongly condemned the terrorist bombing that targeted a hotel in the city centre of Jowhar near the presidential palace of Hirshabelle State of Somalia, last July, killing many and wounding others, including government officials, as well as destroy-

ing nearby buildings.

The General Secretariat expressed its sincere condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims and to the governments and peoples of the Member States affected by these attacks. H.E. the OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, affirmed the Organisation's firm stance against terrorism and extremism and its full solidarity with Member States and his support for the efforts of their governments in all the measures they take to combat terrorism and extremism and to address all that threatens the security and stability of these countries. In Afghanistan, the country witnessed increased terrorist attacks. The OIC strongly condemned those acts, the most prominent of which was the explosion that targeted the Kabul International Cricket Stadium, injuring 4 spectators. Other bombings targeted a mosque in Kabul, and 3 minibuses in Mazar-i-Sharif, in addition to a series of attacks on 25 May, leaving dozens of severely injured victims.



OIC Welcomes the Election of Somali President

General Secretariat Launched an Appeal to Help those Affected by Drought

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) welcomed the confidence placed by the two Chambers of the Somali Parliament, the People's Assembly and the Senate, in H.E. Mr. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, who was elected as President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Houssein Brahim Taha, extended his sincere congratulations to the President elect, wishing him success in his mandate to achieve the aspirations of the Somali people.

The Secretary-General also offered his warmest congratulations to the Somali people on the success of this election. He reiterated the OIC support to the Federal Republic of Somalia at this crucial stage and in its quest to promote security, stability and development.

A high-level OIC delegation, headed by H.E. Mr. Yousef Aldoubeay, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, representing the Secretary-General, participated in the inauguration ceremony of H.E. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, as President of the Federal Republic of Somalia, which was

held in the capital Mogadishu, on 9 June 2022.

On behalf of H.E. the OIC Secretary-General, the Assistant Secretary-General, delivered a speech in which he commended the process of the peaceful transfer of power, expressing his hope that this step would lead to more prosperity, development, and stability for the Federal Republic of Somalia. The Secretary-General also wished the elected president success in his new mission, praising, at the same time, the efforts made by the former president during his tenure.

On another note, H.E. the OIC Secretary-General received on 14 August 2022, in his office at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Jeddah, H.E. Mr. Abdul Rahman Abdul Shakour, the Special Envoy of the Somali President for Humanitarian Affairs and Drought, who delivered written message from the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia to the Secretary General. The Secretary-General welcomed the Special Envoy, stressing that the OIC General Secretariat followed with deep concern the famine with its repercussions emerging

in Somalia as a result of the drought.

The Secretary-General reaffirmed the commitment of the General Secretariat to implement the Resolution issued by the 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad, Pakistan, earlier this year, which reiterated the Organisation's commitment to alleviating the suffering of the Somali people. He also called for intensifying assistance to those affected by the drought. Also, during the meeting, the importance of relations between the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Republic of Somalia was emphasized.

The Organisation followed with deep concern the famine, whose consequences began to emerge in Somalia as a result of the fourth consecutive year of severe drought.

The Secretary-General stressed the importance of moving too quickly to avoid widespread famine, threatening the lives of more than 7 million people, noting that the Organisation shares many humanitarian partners' grave concern about the scale of the international response to the famine in Somalia.



OIC Reiterates its Support for its Member States in Face of Trials and Catastrophes Committee on Mobilising Resources to Assist Refugees in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin Holds its First Session

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held the first activity of the Ad hoc Committee on Mobilising Resources to Assist Refugees and IDPs in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin regions, in line with Resolutions 3/44 ICHAD and 4/48 ICHAD, adopted by the 48th Session of Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad, last March.

In his speech before the Committee, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Houssein Ibrahim Taha, stressed that the mandate of this Committee is of paramount importance, given the urgent needs of the victims of the crisis witnessed by many countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region, Member States of the OIC, particularly Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon. The Secretary-General pointed out that the mass displacement of populations in these countries, following the actions of the Boko Haram terrorist group, has exacerbated the food crisis in the region and reduced access to basic services for both the displaced and the host communities, despite the great efforts of the concerned governments.

He also underlined that mobilising more support from international partners is need-

ed to provide better humanitarian assistance to millions of affected people. Furthermore, Mr. Taha underlined that the OIC General Secretariat is determined to work with donor Member States, financial institutions and regional Mission in Niger, as well as with its external partners, to initiate concrete measures aimed at alleviating the suffering of refugees and IDPs in the two regions, in accordance with the relevant resolutions.

It is noteworthy that the meeting held by the Organisation's Humanitarian Affairs Department witnessed the participation of Committee members from the countries of the Sahel and Lake Chad region, the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Solidarity Fund. On a related note, some Member States witnessed disasters and tragedies that claimed the lives of a number of citizens of these countries. In this connection, the Organisation, through its Secretary-General, expressed its full solidarity with the countries of the Organisation in facing these ordeals, including the death of 11 new-born children in the fire that broke out in the neonatal department at Abdelaziz Al-Dabbagh Hospital in the city of Tivaouane, in the north of the Senegalese capital, Dakar.

The Organisation also expressed solidarity with the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria due to the fires that broke out in the country. The Secretary-General offered his sincere condolences to the leadership and people of Algeria, and to the families of the victims. Also, the Secretary-General offered his sincere condolences and sympathy to the people and government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for the incident of Abu Sefein Church fire incident in Imbaba area, Giza Governorate, Egypt. Also, in the context of the wave of fires, the General Secretariat fully sympathized with the Kingdom of Morocco due to the fires that raged in the country.

In another context, the Secretary-General reiterated his solidarity with the people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, following the death of dozens of citizens and the isolation of more than two million people due to the floods that hit many areas in the north-east of the country.

Also, the Secretary-General had called on Member States and humanitarian Organisations to provide urgent aid to Sudan, following the torrential floods that swept the country.

OIC Countries Face Great Challenges Regarding Water Consumption



A high level delegation of the OIC General Secretariat, led by Ambassador Askar Mussinov, Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, participated in the Second High Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2088, held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 6-9 June 2022, and organised by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, in collaboration with the United Nations.

The Conference was attended by more than 1000 delegates from all over the world, including representatives from regional and international organisations. The conference was opened by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, who expressed in his speech his high hope that the Conference would lead to taking practical steps to achieve the internationally agreed goals and objectives in the field of water resources.

Ambassador Mussinov delivered a speech on behalf of the OIC Secretary-General. He underlined that the 57 Member States of the OIC are facing a common and major challenge of maximizing the productive use of water and minimizing its destructive impacts, despite the great diversity of wa-

ter environments. He also highlighted that several OIC countries are suffering from the aggravation of the problem of water scarcity, as the total renewable water resources per capita is less than the threshold levels and that climate change will exacerbate the problem of water scarcity, which will lead to a decline in agricultural activity.

Ambassador Mussinov underscored the efforts made by the Organisation to further focus on water-related issues in the OIC Member States. He also emphasised that after adopting the OIC Water Vision on "working together for a secure water future", the OIC Water Council was established in 2016 to promote the activities recommended by the OIC Water Vision, enhance capacity building and exchange expertise through collaboration among stakeholders, discussion and study of potential financial mechanisms, and highlighting of success for further cooperation. He also pointed out that the first and second summits on science and technology, which were held respectively in Astana in 2017 and Abu Dhabi in 2021, gave great priority to enhancing the capabilities of Member States for the optimal use of water resources.

On another note, the OIC joined the in-

ternational community in commemorating June 5th as the World Environment Day. "This year's theme "Only one Earth" with the focus on "living sustainably in harmony with nature" once again reminded us to live responsibly so that we can protect this planet and its environment.", the Organisation underlined in a statement it released.

The statement also highlighted that the protection of the environment is also an integral part of Islam's values. It also emphasised that the Islamic principles of equity in terms of access to resources, the maintenance and preservation of the environment as Allah's gift to human beings and moderation in consumption, provide a solid basis for concerted action and international cooperation in the areas related to this year's theme of the World Environment Day.

It also underlined that climate change and environmental issues are high on the OIC agenda, particularly as the OIC 2025: Programme of Action called upon the Member States to coordinate their environmental policies and positions in international environmental fora to prevent any adverse effects of such policies.

Dutch Envoy Discusses with OIC “Inter-religious Dialogue”



The Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian, Social, and Cultural Affairs, Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, on 4 August 2022, received H.E. Dr. Jos Douma, the Dutch Special Envoy for Religion and Belief.

The two sides underlined the importance of enhancing inter-religious dialogue by collaboratively addressing existing challenges. Other critical issues of concern to the OIC were extensively explored, notably human rights, religion-based discrimination, and Islamophobia.

Ambassador Bakheet and Dr. Douma highlighted the need for sustained engagement by the OIC and the Netherlands through developing result-oriented programs and initiatives on the various issues examined at the meeting

Seminar on “Cultural Diversity” on its International Day

The OIC General Secretariat, through the Department of Cultural Affairs, held a cultural seminar on the occasion of the celebration of the International Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, commemorated yearly on 21 May. The seminar, which was held on 7 June 2022, was part of a series of regular seminars held by the OIC at its headquarters in Jeddah.

The Mauritanian author and researcher, Dr. Abdallah El-Sayed Ould Abah, gave a lecture entitled: “Universalism and Cultural Diversity: On the Concept of Human Commonality.” It revolved around several axes, most notably “modernity as a cosmic project within the conceptual theoretical components”, “modernity or modernities”, “cultural pluralism”, and “cosmic humanity within identities and commonalities”.

Dr. Ould Abah said that the problem of diversity dates back to the eighteenth century, when the problem of identity or the basis of modernity emerged through self-awareness. He pointed out that the emergence of awareness of identity as a general issue, raised a problem that included two meanings. The first highlighted identity as the common human self as a possibility, or the identity that reflects societal entities through civilisations, cultures and nations.

Dr. Ould Abah reviewed the concept of identity in the sense of either sharing between human beings or meaning personal privacy

and authenticity. He stressed that this problem was not resolved, until the emergence of the nation-state that did not constitute a legal product between individuals as much as it expressed the spirit of a people, nation and culture. He also noted that the political state does not necessarily represent a legal system as much as it expresses a tacit agreement between the group in the form of this state, its borders, and culture.

It is noteworthy that Dr. Abdallah El-Sayed Ould Abah holds a doctorate in modern and contemporary philosophy, and is a professor of philosophical and social studies at the University of Nouakchott in Mauritania. In addition to his work as a visiting professor at Arab and international universities, he has written articles, studies and research papers published in a number of newspapers and journals.

In this context, Dr. Ould Abah pointed out that the current conflicts and wars in the international arena, such as the current war between Russia and Ukraine, is a reflection of the intellectual backgrounds of the opposition movement to the unilateral globalism that reflected Western control over the world.

Dr. Ould Abah added that the slogan of dialogue among civilisations, just as cultural diversity and its rights, has led to a very big predicament because it has been misunderstood, considering that dialogue reflects jux-

taposition and does not focus on blending. It also consolidates the separation between separate and distinct identities that have nothing in common, which, according to Dr. Ould Abah, establishes a rupture between human circles, which may lead to inflaming conflict, contrary to what these models hope for from the dialogue of civilisations.

He also said that the idea of unilateralism has entered into a deep crisis, just as it happened with cultural distinction, calling for the need to reconsider the idea of the human commonality, which does not define a specific human cultural pattern and emphasises diversity while underlining the common that is based on what human societies already share to build international peace as an indispensable requirement. In the same connection, he highlighted that the human commonality is an element adopted by the three monotheistic religions, which are based on the reality of the oneness of the Creator, and the unity of human origin, traced back to Adam. As for the third idea, he said, it lies in religions themselves or the revealed messages. He stressed that monotheistic religions contribute to perpetuating this common discourse. However, he emphasised that this idea should not take into account the confusion of religions, but rather, it should adopt a distinction of these religions separately.



At Islamic Unity Conference in Abu Dhabi: OIC Secretary-General Calls for Devising Comprehensive Islamic Formulation

H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, said that the hosting by the United Arab Emirates of the Islamic Unity Conference, organised by the World Muslim Communities Council, in Abu Dhabi on 8-9 May 2022, confirmed the position of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a global capital of tolerance and coexistence after the proactive steps it has taken by establishing a first of its kind "Ministry of Tolerance".

The Secretary-General expressed his happiness to attend the opening session of the intellectual and scholarly event, which dealt with a topic that lies at the core of the Organisation's primary mission, which is focused on strengthening unity among Islamic countries and working to strengthen the unity of the Ummah.

H.E. Mr. Hissein Taha indicated that the Conference takes place amid various challenges facing the Muslim Ummah, including defamation of Islam. He stressed that this situation requires Muslim individuals, countries, societies and institutions to stand united to restore Islamic unity and reinvigorate the actual image of Islam. He also noted that the Conference coincided with several changes at the international level, including the outbreak of wars and ethnic and sectarian conflicts, which have destabilized various OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General added that more than ever, the Islamic states, peoples, governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions, are called upon, to work together in order to devise a comprehensive Islamic formulation that includes the rules, principles and constants of convergence and disagreement that govern the interrelationship between the various components of the Muslim Ummah.

He also pointed out that the OIC believes that sectarian, cultural and intellectual diversity in Islamic societies should be a factor of enrichment and distinction, not a factor of difference and division, and a factor of construction, not a factor of demolition and sabotage, and a cultural and civilizational asset that is unique to the Islamic Ummah and should be invested in a positive way that paves the way for unifying visions and creating bridges of solidarity, understanding and teamwork among the components of our great Ummah.

The Secretary-General stressed that the OIC considers that consolidating the principle of dialogue among all Muslims is at the forefront of the inevitable priorities, in order to overcome differences and achieve Islamic unity, which requires the confrontation of the dangers that beset the Islamic Ummah with tight ranks, clear goals, and full aware-

ness of the challenges of a common destiny. He added that the 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, which was held in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 19-20 March, adopted a ministerial resolution, in which it called on the OIC General Secretariat and its relevant bodies to develop a plan for the rapprochement of cultures and religions. It also urged them to intensify their efforts to protect freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief.

The Secretary-General received in his office, on 3 August 2022, H.E. Shaykh Abdallah bin Mahfudh bin Bayyah, Secretary-General of Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace. During the meeting, Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah praised the OIC's leading role in uniting Islamic countries and promoting cooperation, solidarity, and peace. He also expressed the desire of Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace to cooperate with the OIC in areas of common interest.

For his part, H.E. the Secretary-General praised the role of Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace in serving peace, dialogue, coexistence, and moderation, stressing the full readiness of the OIC General Secretariat for cooperation between the two sides. He also valued the contributions of the United Arab Emirates in promoting the values of peace and tolerance.

Seminar on “National Archives: Boosting Efforts to Preserve the Archives”

A delegation of the OIC General Secretariat participated in the seminar themed “National Archives in the Islamic Countries - Distinctive Experiences and Future Directions), held last June 9th. The seminar was organised by the National Center for Archives and Records in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat, and with the participation of representatives of the competent authorities from Member States.

The seminar began with a speech by H.E. the General Supervisor of the National Center for Archives and Records, Dr. Fahd Al-Semmari, followed by a speech of H.E. the OIC Secretary-General, delivered on his behalf by Dr. Amina Obaid Ramadan Al-Hajri, Director General of Cultural and Family Affairs, in which he stressed the importance of strengthening efforts to preserve the documents preserved in national archives. He also underlined the importance of joining efforts to preserve Islamic archives and promoting cooperation mechanisms between archives in the Islamic world.

In his speech, His Excellency said that archives deserve to have an international day, because they are the memory of any nation and contain invaluable documents that date back to a period of time that have repercussions on the current reality. He also added that archives have a very important place, therefore, it is necessary to provide them with modern technologies to accommodate the large amount of information and documents. The Secretary-General also indicated that the “International Archives Day” is an important occasion to strengthen cooperation mechanisms between archive institutions around the world, and to upgrade their practices.

In the same connection, Dr. Fahd Al-Semmari stressed the importance of the seminar and its future goals of establishing Islamic archives that would contribute to strengthening joint Islamic action, provide the necessary support to national archives in the least developed Islamic countries, and contribute to strengthening the relationship with the International Council on Archives in its efforts to bring peoples and researchers closer and benefit from their expertise and com-



petencies.

The paper entitled “The value of archiving legacies in the Arab region, the Kingdom of Bahrain as a model, and the importance of adopting university curricula,” delivered by the Director of the Bahraini National Archives, Dr. Safaa Al-Alawi, showed the value of archival legacies in the Arab region, the necessity of incorporating them in Arab universities curricula, and their usefulness as a reference for researchers in historical, social, economic and architectural studies. She also underlined the importance of archiving and documentation as primary sources of information that must be preserved for future generations, the organisation of joint events in the region, and the creation of channels of communication between Arabica and heritage-based institutions, citing the experience of her country in preserving tangible and intangible heritage.

In the paper “Empowerment and Archives” delivered by the Director of the Archives Department, Mr. Hamad Al-Mutairi, the United Arab Emirates highlighted the role of the National Archives and Library in the Emirates in consolidating the institutional reputation and sustainability of the National Archives and Library, providing digital services, as well as promoting, qualifying and empowering human resources through academic education and specialised courses, in addi-

tion to digital platforms, consultation and artificial intelligence.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan participated with a working paper on “The Levant Documents, Manuscripts and Studies Center: Archiving from the Traditional System to the Electronic System, Reality and Ambition,” delivered by the Director of the University of Jordan’s Archive Centre, Dr. Salamh Al-Naimat. He highlighted that the centre contains more than 40,000 diverse illustrated manuscripts collected from 23 countries, serving as reference to researchers and scholars, in addition to records of Sharia courts, endowments and municipalities of the Levant cities, as well as newspapers and magazines. He also underlined that the Centre also restores, sterilises, preserves and digitises documents.

Bahrain concluded its participation with a working paper titled “Organisation Project to Archive and Manage Private Archives and People’s Documents” delivered by the Bahraini National Archives Coordinator, Mr. Mahjoub Saleh Baba, who highlighted the importance of concerted efforts among Member States in implementing recommendations and working on their sustainability, citing the role played by Bahrain in the field of Islamic documentation and archiving and its participation in this field at the international level.

Secretary-General Discusses Establishment of Family Bank in Sahel Countries



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received in his office, on 15 August 2022, Mr. Ali Adji Mahamat Seid, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture, Mines and Handicrafts of the Republic of Chad. The meeting followed-up on the implementation of the family bank project in the five Sahel countries, including Chad. The project was called for by the 7th Ministerial Conference on Women, held in Burkina Faso, in 2018.

Mr. Ali Adji Mahamat Seid reviewed the efforts made by the concerned authorities in Chad to establish a family bank, in coordination with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), the OIC General Secretariat and the Chambers of Commerce in the five Sahel countries. The Secretary-General reiterated the OIC General Secretariat's interest in the project

to establish family banks in the five Sahel countries, stressing the readiness of the General Secretariat to support the efforts of the concerned countries in implementing the project in coordination with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. On another note, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, in his office on 15 August 2022, Ms. Sharon Slater, President of Family Watch International (FWI), and her accompanying delegation. Ms. Sharon reviewed the efforts exerted by her institution to preserve family values in various international forums.

During the meeting, bilateral cooperation between the OIC and Family Watch International in empowering the institution of marriage and family and preserving its values was discussed. The OIC Secretary-General praised the efforts of the FWI to preserve

and empower the family and enhance its role in society.

The OIC Secretary-General indicated that the relevant OIC resolutions and approved international covenants and instruments call for preserving the values of the institution of marriage and the family as the basic unit of society, stressing the readiness of the OIC General Secretariat to support the efforts of Family Watch International and strengthen partnership with it in this regard.

It should be noted that Family Watch International is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization, established in 1999 and headquartered in the United States of America. The FWI enjoys a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and works to protect the family, preserve its values and enhance its role.

Hissein Brahim Taha Calls for Protection of Displaced and Refugee Families

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued a statement on the occasion of commemorating the International Day of Families, observed by the international community each year on May 15th, by virtue of a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, issued on 20 September 1993. The OIC Secretary-General called on Member States and the international community to join efforts to protect displaced and refugee families, and those living under occupation, especially in the State of Palestine.

The Secretary-General indicated that this occasion came at a time when families in sev-

eral Member States are experiencing cases of asylum and displacement due to armed conflicts or natural disasters, which have repercussions on the family and its components.

The Secretary-General stressed that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation realises the importance of preserving the values of the institution of marriage and the family and the central role of the family in social life and in achieving development, ensuring the well-being of society and facing crises. He also highlighted that the decisions issued by the Organisation affirmed that the social dimension is essential in achieving sustain-

able development, and that investing in social protection is a means to achieve it.

In this context, the Secretary-General urged Member States to create an enabling environment to promote and support the family as a contributor to achieving sustainable development, and to work to provide the necessary social, educational and psychological services to families of refugees and displaced persons. He also called on the relevant OIC organs and institutions and partner institutions to support the efforts of Member States to contribute to alleviating the suffering of the members of those families and the communities that host them.



OIC Observes International Humanitarian Law Day and World Humanitarian Day

The OIC General Secretariat released a statement on the occasion of commemorating the International Humanitarian Law Day, which falls on 9 May of each year. The General Secretariat called for respecting the principles and rules of the international humanitarian law aimed at providing protection for human beings in conflicts and wars in various regions around the world. On this occasion, the OIC called on all societies to consolidate the values of peaceful coexistence, tolerance and acceptance of the Other, and to take concrete measures to strengthen international humanitarian law, many principles of which constitute the core values of the true Islamic religion.

By dedicating the 9th of May each year, pursuant to its Resolution No. 1/42 issued by the 42nd session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in the State of Kuwait, in 2015, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation seeks to highlight the extent of its deep commitment to promoting the principles and rules of international humanitarian law. In its statement, the OIC called on its Member States to seize this day to carry out activities that contribute to strengthening the rules of international humanitarian law.

On another note, the OIC General Secretar-

iat released a statement on World Humanitarian Day, which falls on 19 August of each year. On this occasion, the OIC joined its counterparts and the world at large in duly and deservedly paying tribute to humanitarian workers. The statement underlined that the OIC General Secretariat greatly appreciates the sense of dedication and heroism

“millions of vulnerable people around the world have survived and thrived thanks to the dedication and courage of humanitarian workers.”

that motivates the humanitarian endeavours of those humanitarian workers who put their lives at risk to save the lives of others in the midst of disasters and adversities. The OIC press release noted that “millions of vulnerable people around the world have survived and thrived thanks to the dedication and courage of humanitarian workers.” The press release further stated that, like

many other regions around the world, the OIC region is rife with humanitarian tribulations due to occasional natural disasters and protracted armed conflicts. The statement pointed out that “in fact, many OIC Member States, such as Somalia, the countries of the Sahel region and Lake Chad are still suffering from terrible challenges and difficult problems.” The OIC General Secretariat also stressed that these ongoing challenges require greater mobilisation of human and material resources for a more effective humanitarian response.

The press release also confirmed that the OIC affirmed its praise for the steadfast support provided by donors in the humanitarian field for their tangible contribution to alleviating the negative effects of crises on vulnerable local communities.

The press release of the OIC General Secretariat also underlined that “The theme of this year’s World Humanitarian Day ‘Humankind’ is a very relevant one”. “Indeed, it requires a global and collective awareness of the growing need for real and impactful action to help save the human race from the continuing humanitarian catastrophes that affect large parts of the planet.”, it emphasised.

Delegation Visits Thailand to Take Stock of Muslims' Conditions in the Country's South

General Secretariat Recalls Suffering of Rohingya Five Years after the Events in Myanmar



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, sent a high-level delegation to the Kingdom of Thailand, headed by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Ambassador Yousef Bin Mohammed Al-Dobeay, over the period from 27 June to 1 July 2022, at the official invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

The delegation met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai, in Bangkok. The two sides commended the good level of relations between the OIC and Thailand, an observer State in the OIC, and underlined the importance of further promoting dialogue and cooperation in all fields. They also discussed a number of issues of mutual concern, including in particular the situation of the Muslim community in the southern border provinces of Thailand, which the delegation visited.

The OIC delegation held a number of meetings with senior officials of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The delegation also visited the Halal Science Center at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, where it was briefed on the Centre's role and its scientific research, technology and innovation programmes in the Halal industry.

On another note, the OIC Assistant Secretary General, Amb. Samir Bakr, received, at

his office on 19 June 2022, H.E. Mr. Soradjak Puranasamriddhi, Consul-General of Thailand in Jeddah for a farewell call on behalf of the Secretary-General.

The Consul General of Thailand stressed his country's keenness to cooperate with the OIC Member States in the fields of sustainable development, technical assistance and education and to increase the level of engagement with the OIC in these areas. He also apprised the ASG of the recent developments and current challenges on the issues related to the Muslim community in Southern Thailand. The ASG commended the Consul General for his services, and thanked him for his sincere efforts in supporting the aims and objectives of the OIC during his tenure.

On another note, the OIC released a press statement to mark five years since the beginning of the massive refugee influx of Rohingya people and other communities from Myanmar's Rakhine State into Bangladesh.

"On 25 August 2017, Myanmar's military started carrying out violent operations against the Rohingya population in Northern Rakhine State, which resulted in grave crimes under international law and forced hundreds of thousands to flee.", the press statement underlined.

It also highlighted that five years later, Ro-

hingyas in Rakhine State still lack freedom of movement and other basic rights, such as access to adequate food, healthcare and education. "This anniversary is a reminder that the crimes committed against Rohingya call for accountability.", the statement emphasised.

In the same connection, the OIC paid tribute to the government and people of Bangladesh for their relentless efforts to provide protection, hospitality, and necessary assistance to Rohingya refugees who have been living in Bangladesh for the past five years. It also expressed its appreciation of the international support, including by OIC Member States, for the cause of these Refugees.

The OIC General Secretariat reiterated the OIC's firm support for the Rohingya people and called on the international community to stand firm with them in their plight, and to redouble efforts to protect their fundamental human rights, including their right to full citizenship, and to ensure favourable conditions for the safe, voluntary, dignified, and sustainable return of all Rohingya refugees and internally displaced persons to their homeland.

The OIC General Secretariat also expressed the hope that the recent ruling of the International Court of Justice to dismiss the preliminary objections of Myanmar would contribute to mobilising the necessary momentum for effective international action that would provide more support to the Rohingya people and contribute to finding a final solution to their constant affliction.

Besides, the OIC General Secretariat strongly condemned and denounced the recent denigration of Prophet Muhammad by an official of India's ruling party.

These acts of defamation came in the context of the escalation of hatred and abuse against Islam in India and within the framework of the systematic practices against Muslims and restrictions on them, especially in light of a series of decisions banning headscarves in educational institutions in a number of Indian states and demolition of Muslim property, in addition to the increase in violence against them.

Hajj Murals: Traditional Art that Refuses to Disappear



Luxor- (dpa)- Artist Al-Tayeb Al-Najjar, one of the pioneers in the art of Hajj murals in Upper Egypt, said that the drawings and paintings that decorate the homes of pilgrims, during the Hajj season every year, are a popular art that refuses to disappear, pointing out that the art of Hajj drawings is attracting more artists from various social classes, such as doctors, academics and others who were fascinated by this art, became fans thereof, and who are keen to practise it. Al-Najjar added that generations after generations of innate artists have taken up the mantle from those who preceded them, and have been keen to preserve that art engraved in the popular memory, which is one of the most important rituals witnessed during the Hajj season every year. He considered that those innate artists who paint Hajj murals in cities and villages, especially in the southern governorates, stand as guardians of this art, and prevent its disappearance, as their efforts continue to transfer the art of Hajj paintings and murals from generation to generation.

As for his own experience in painting on the walls of pilgrims' homes, Al-Najjar said that he benefited greatly from his presence amid the tombs of the Pharaohs, and his copying

of the drawings and inscriptions of those tombs, in developing his practice of the art of Hajj murals. He also pointed out that he makes the colours he uses in Hajj drawings from materials available around his house, located amid the tombs built by the nobles of ancient Egypt.

He added that his artwork, which varies between artistic drawings, drawings on the walls of pilgrims' homes, and folk paintings depicting the rituals of daily life in Upper Egypt was influenced by his work in the Egyptian antiquities sector. His work as a painter who moved from one cemetery to another within an archaeological documentation team enabled him to see hundreds of paintings and murals drawn by the ancient Egyptian artist, and he learned from those drawings how to determine the features of faces, and how to paint their details. He also learned how to formulate the bright colours he uses in drawing Hajj murals and folk paintings. He underlined that he makes those colours from the same materials the ancient Egyptian artist made the colours with which he painted the walls of tombs and temples. He highlighted that he contemplated a lot on how to get bright colours such as those that decorated the

pharaohs' tombs, after he noticed that his drawings on the walls of pilgrims' homes, and the facades of hotels and restaurants, quickly "faded" and lost their lustre with the passage of days. Regarding the scenes that he paints on the walls of pilgrims' homes, he said that he records the details of the entire Hajj journey, starting with the joyful celebrations that precede the pilgrims' travel to the Holy Land in Saudi Arabia, such as playing tambourines, dancing and singing, horse dances, and the folk flute bands and the game of tahtib, famous in Upper Egypt, then the pilgrim's journey by boat or plane, the circumambulation of the pilgrims around the Kaaba, their visit to the Prophet's Mosque, their ascend to Mount Arafat, and then the return of the pilgrims and their reception in massive ceremonial processions. As far as the atmosphere that prevailed while he was painting the murals, he said that he was drawing amid ceremonial manifestations, during which everyone around him sang and danced to the sounds of pilgrims' songs. He also noted that the paintings painted on the walls of the homes of men pilgrims differ from the paintings that are painted on the homes of women pilgrims.

At IUIU: Affirming Importance of Education in Promoting Sustainable Development OIC : Provide Students with Cutting-edge Technology



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, called on the universities of the OIC Member States to adapt their curricula and equip their students with cutting-edge technology, in order to keep abreast of the technological advancement around the world.

The Secretary-General made this call in a statement delivered on his behalf by H.E. Amb. Askar Mussinov, Assistant Secretary General for Science & Technology, at the 30th Graduation Ceremony of the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), held in Mbale, Uganda, on 10 June 2022. The Secretary-General also congratulated the graduates and advised them to continue to upgrade their knowledge and skills and keep up with the rapid technological advances, in order to ensure continued progress in their lives. The colourful ceremony attracted thousands of guests from the East African region and beyond. The ceremony was also addressed by several officials who commended the OIC for its commitment to the promotion of higher education, science and technology in OIC Member States. They also praised its unwavering support for the Islamic University in Uganda, which has made tremendous achievements, including increased academic programmes and enhanced modern infrastructure development, under the OIC patronage.

Prior to the Graduation Ceremony, the Governing Council had held its 35th ordinary meeting, in Mbale. The Council adopted a number of resolutions aimed at improving

the administrative and academic performance of the University.

The IUIU, which started its activity with no more than 88 students in 1988, currently has more than 10,000 students distributed among nine colleges. The IUIU had only two colleges when it was established. It soon expanded in other parts of the country through the establishment of 3 other university campuses, in addition to the main campus in Mbale. The graduation ceremony for the last academic year included a total of 2,278 graduates who obtained university degrees or PhD degrees.

On another note, the OIC General Secretariat, in close cooperation and coordination with the IUIU, Kampala City, co-organized a two-day cultural event on the theme of: "Culture, Education and Development: Experiences from the Muslim World", on 11-12 June 2022.

In his statement delivered on his behalf by Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social and Cultural Affairs, H.E the Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, extended thanks to the IUIU for collaborating with the OIC to organise such unique cultural event. He also highlighted the role of education in creating dynamic spaces of cultural interaction and optimal outreach channels to connect Muslim communities within the OIC bigger family, while offering opportunities to better train the youth in the Muslim world and to build their capacities to be role models and actors of genuine change and

development in their countries.

This cultural event was organised in implementation of the Council of Foreign Minister's successive resolutions calling for reinforcement of cultural links and cooperation networks among Member States and diverse international partners to promote cultural rapprochement among Muslim countries and OIC Member States, and to build bridges of Cultural understanding with other cultures and civilisations.

The event was characterized by the wide and significant participation of international actors from Member States, including government officials, heads of educational and youth institutions, political leaders, academics, professors, local community leaders, parliamentarians, a representative of the Ministry of Education and Sports of Uganda, and diplomats representing the diplomatic corps in Kampala.

A number of OIC institutions, including IR-CICA, the ICYF, the IUMS, the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) in Bangladesh, etc., participated also in this event with stands showcasing their activities.

This two-day event was an opportunity to expose the diversity of the Islamic culture in a university that brings together students from more than ten African countries, which reflects how an educational institution can be an incubator of cultural exchange and a promoter of cultural understanding and cooperation within the OIC geography and the larger African space.

Secretary-General: We are Working to Boost OIC-intra trade to 25% by 2025



The OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, affirmed that the Organisation has set the goal of raising intra-OIC trade to 25% in the next three years. He also added that trade finance, commercial insurance operations and support for private sector activities have cumulatively reached \$140 billion since the establishment of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investments and Export Credit (ICIEC), and the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD).

In his statement, read on his behalf of by Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, during the opening ceremony of the 17th Trade Fair, held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal on 13 June 2022, the Secretary-General said that he “hopes and prays that the Fair would effectively contribute to raising the Intra-OIC trade, from 18% in 2021 to 25% by 2025.

“I urge all our trade promotion agencies to continue to collaborate with the entire OIC family towards the realisation of this achievable target,” he added.

The Secretary-General indicated that the organisation of the general trade fair every two years and the organisation of specialised trade fairs regularly represent an important tool for promoting trade and services among the OIC Member States. He also added that this matter is all the more important given the turmoil faced by the OIC Member States due to the lack of trade sta-

bility caused by COVID-19 pandemic, and the global food crises caused by various challenges.

H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha also stressed that the tourism sector allows for effective and comprehensive cooperation to tangibly

commending the role played by ICCIA in enhancing and activating cooperation among Member States

expand the intra-OIC trade. In this context, he called on all Member States to actively participate in the 11th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 27 to 29 June 2022.

On another note, the OIC General Secretariat, participated in the opening session

of the “Microfinance and Transformation to Sustainability” workshop, organised (virtually) by the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (ICCIA), on 14 June 2022, in collaboration with the General Federation of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce, on 14-15 June 2022, in Cairo 2022, with the participation of chambers of commerce in the OIC Member States, especially in Africa and the Islamic world.

In the speech delivered by Dr. Amina Al-Hajry, Director-General of Cultural, Social, and Family Affairs, on behalf of the General Secretariat, she thanked the Arab Republic of Egypt for its efforts in following up on the implementation of the resolutions issued by the 8th Conference of Ministers in Charge of Women, which Egypt chaired. She also commended the role played by ICCIA in enhancing and activating cooperation among Member States on common issues, including microfinance and transition to sustainability, which reflects one of the most important objectives of the OIC-2025, i.e. achieving economic stability and sustainable development in the Member States.

Dr. Amina also thanked ICCIA for its efforts in implementing the project of establishing family banks in the five Sahel countries, in coordination with the General Secretariat, and in cooperation with the concerned countries. In the same connection, she noted that the Council of Foreign Ministers had called on the Member States and relevant OIC organs and institutions to support this vital project.



OIC Calls on its Member States to Grow Strategic Commodities (Wheat, Rice and Cassava)

The OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social and Cultural Affairs, and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, delivered a speech last June 20, at the High-level Economic and Social Council in its segment on humanitarian affairs. The speech addressed the two interrelated issues of food insecurity and displacement, calling for urgent measures to build resilience and find sustainable solutions in this regard.

Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet highlighted the widespread food insecurity, which was exacerbated by large-scale displacement, in the Sahel, Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and Afghanistan. In this connection, he highlighted the efforts of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to support the countries in the region. He also called on the international humanitarian community to adopt a comprehensive approach to effectively address these escalating crises. He also reiterated the OIC's commitment to work closely with international partners to reduce and hopefully eliminate food insecurity and displacement.

On another note, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, hailed the contribution of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the private sector players, in general, in rebuilding the economies of the OIC Member States that were severely affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

The remarks were made in a statement by the Secretary-General, delivered on his behalf by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, during the opening ceremony of ICCIA's 38th General Assembly, which took place in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, on 17-18 July 2022.

The Secretary-General emphasised that the worsening food security situation worldwide, including in many OIC Member States, especially the least developed ones, has led to starvation and urgent need for food assistance. He also highlighted the importance of putting into action OIC's programmes for growing the three strategic commodities of wheat, rice and cassava, and establishment of food reserves at national and regional

levels.

H.E. Hissein Taha welcomed the initiatives by ICCIA and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey to establish the OIC Arbitration Center, and the "Family Bank", which will provide financial participation opportunities for the peoples of the five Sahel Region countries. He also thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for financing the Family Bank, and expressed his hope that the Family Bank model will be extended to other Least Developed OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General also urged to the Chambers of Commerce and the entire private sector in OIC Member States to participate in the forthcoming OIC Investment Forum in Africa and the OIC Private Sector Forum, due to be held later this year.

It is worth noting that ICCIA is a key catalyst to mobilising investments, drawing up economic policies, and launching various initiatives for the development of the private sector through the Chambers of Commerce of OIC Member States.



OIC General Secretariat Organizes Training Session on Election Observation

As part of the continuous endeavours to strengthen the capacities of the OIC staff in election observation in the Member States, and in implementation of the elections-related activities scheduled in the joint action plan with the United Nations, the OIC General Secretariat (Election Observation Unit), in cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNAED) and the Regional Office of the

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), organised the “BRIDGE” training session entitled: Training Session on Election Observation (BRIDGE Methodology) for the OIC Observers Group, on 24-26 July 2022. The training session was aimed at raising electoral knowledge and enhancing the capabilities of the OIC’s team and improving the performance of the OIC’s election observation missions, so as to contribute to Mem-

ber States’ efforts to ensure transparent and credible elections. Twenty-five observers from various departments of the General Secretariat participated in this training session, which used the “BRIDGE Methodology”. The latter relies mainly on interactive activities between the participants, in addition to academic lectures.

OIC’s Election Observation Delegation in Kazakhstan

The OIC General Secretariat dispatched a mission to observe the referendum that took place on 5 June 2022, in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The OIC mission observed the referendum process in the capital, Nur-Sultan, and its suburbs and noted with satisfaction that it was conducted in a peaceful, transparent, and orderly manner.

H.E. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, congratulated the government and people of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the success of the referendum process and praised the profound maturity and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the people of Kazakhstan throughout the process.





OIC Secretary-General Congratulates Muslims on Eid al-Adha 1443

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, extended his best wishes to the Ummah on the advent of the blessed Eid al-Adha 1443. He also congratulated their Majesties, Excellencies, Highnesses, Kings, Princes, and Heads of the OIC Member States on this blessed occasion.

The Secretary-General also extended his congratulations to the host country, Saudi Arabia, Chair of the 14th Islamic Summit, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and HRH Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman on Eid Al-Adha. He also lauded Saudi Arabia on the blessed efforts to ensure the success of the Hajj season, and on providing the required facilities for the safe performance of the rituals, as well as the excellent care and services provided to the pilgrims to ensure their safety.

The Secretary-General wished for this Eid to be an event that teemed with goodness and blessing for all OIC Member States, and be an occasion of peace and happiness. He highlighted that Eid came at a time when several Member States were going through great difficulties, notably the continuous aggression of the Israeli occupation forces against the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque to undermine its status and seize it, reiterating the OIC's firm position supporting its Islamic identity alongside other Islamic holy sites in

Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

Mr. Taha also indicated that the repercussions of asylum have increased the suffering of camp residents in many parts of the Islamic world, including the African Sahel and Lake Chad, along with the Rohingya

“Secretary-General Congratulates Saudi Arabia on success of Hajj Season”

refugees in Cox's Bazar, and other afflicted areas, in addition to the problems of poverty, epidemics, diseases, wars, and attacks by extremist groups that take a heavy toll on the lives of the innocent and their properties.

The Secretary-General prayed to Allah Almighty to make this occasion the beginning

of immediate relief, healing the spirit of the Ummah and uniting it to achieve stability, peace, and prosperity in all countries of the Muslim world.

Relatedly, the OIC Secretary-General commended the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, for all the necessary support provided to ensure success of the holy rituals for pilgrims coming from different parts of the Muslim world and the entire world.

H.E. the Secretary-General expressed heartfelt appreciation for the good care accorded by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and HRH the Crown Prince, to the service of the Two Holy Mosques, pilgrims to the Sacred House of Allah and visitors to the Prophet's Mosque. He also praised the sincere efforts made by Saudi Arabia to organise the Hajj season every year.

H.E. the Secretary General stressed that providing facilities and services to the Two Holy Mosques is a great honour and a great responsibility that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia proceeds to without delay with all sincerity and generosity.

H.E. the Secretary-General prayed to Allah the Almighty to reward the leadership and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for all the good they offer to the Muslim Ummah.



Local Bangladeshi Food is Getting Worldwide Fame on YouTube

Shimulia- Bangladesh- Nasr Al-Islam (dpa)- Rupali Khatun sticks her finger into the mixture of yogurt and noodles, to test whether the meal is ready to be served. Khatun has finished preparing dinner, while the smell of roasted garlic and fried pepper wafts in the air. In a spacious courtyard, a woman is roasting chickpeas, while another prepares a traditional drink.

Everyone is involved in preparing a meal for 300 people, and the youngsters extend mats made from dried Hogla Pata, also known as elephant grass, a leafy plant that grows in the meadows of the remote village of Shumulia, in Kushtia district of south-western Bangladesh. Khatun and her team prepared hundreds of such feasts for the villagers, twice a week for more than 5 years, for free. The team consists of 14 women, all of whom were former housewives, and now they are known for their culinary skills. They prepare only traditional foods, in keeping with what this community likes to eat.

Today, a team equipped with cameras is filming the scene, from preparing the food to serving it, and later the event will be uploaded to the YouTube channel (Around-MeBD), a channel dedicated to village cooking in Bangladesh, with about 4.2 million subscribers, and 1.33 billion views.

"Initially, we prepared food for about 20 people, now we cook from time to time

for up to 1,500 people at a time", Khatun says. Khatun, a mother of two, had no previous experience before joining the cast. The money she gets from broadcasting cooking videos on the channel complements the monthly income her husband brings home

More than 200 videos show the villagers preparing meals of grilled goat meat

from his day job.

"I am proud that hundreds of thousands of people are watching my videos of the local culinary arts", says team member Sharmeen Akhtar. She says she is also proud that peo-

ple are calling her village "YouTube Village" thanks to the channel's popularity.

More than 200 videos show the villagers preparing meals of grilled goat meat, with 14 trotters, 40 meals prepared from goat intestines with curry, and a dish of about 300 kilograms of buffalo meat. The team also made a 200-kg vanilla cake, on Valentine's Day.

Viewers of the channel can also see the team preparing the traditional "rosher payesh" dessert, made of creamy milk and date juice. The video begins with the members of the team walking through a field dressed in purple, carrying clay jugs, and boiling the juice in wide flat pots, in a courtyard, then they distribute the dessert to the children of the village.

"We love to feed the villagers, entertain ourselves, and showcase the culinary heritage of our village through this channel", says Leighton Ali Khan, a software engineer who founded the channel in 2016 as a form of entertainment.

Ali Khan began showing daily life in the capital, Dhaka, from bustling streets, to brightly coloured children's toys, to markets and fishermen. Soon his channel attracted a large number of subscribers. Khan decided to switch to making money from the channel, and discussed his ideas with his uncle, Delaware Hussain, who works as a teacher.



4000 Athletes Participate in Islamic Solidarity Games

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Turkey, opened the 5th Session of the Islamic Solidarity Games, on 9 August 2022, in Konya, Republic of Turkey, with the participation of H.E. Mr. Houssein Ibrahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal, Minister of Sports in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, President of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF), and H.E. Mehmet Kasapoglu, Minister of Youth and Sports of Turkey, Chair of the organising committee of the 5th session.

In his statement, H.E. the Secretary-General said that the convening of this session in Konya, at a time when the world is recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, reflects Turkey's commitment to promoting youth and sports in the Member States, supporting cultural pluralism and intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue, and spreading Islamic values through sports.

The Secretary-General added that the OIC is convinced that this great event will contribute to supporting sports and youth in the Member States, for the Islamic Solidarity Games are one of the most significant sports events in the world, as it brings together nearly 4,000 athletes from different countries, and from different cultural back-

grounds. "This is a clear manifestation of Islamic solidarity, and a reflection of the true spirit of Islam, the religion of peace, tolerance, unity, friendship and peaceful coexistence among people regardless of their culture and differences.", he also pointed out. In the same connection, the Secretary-General stressed that the OIC attaches great importance to sports and youth, as the 13th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held in Istanbul, in 2016, adopted the OIC-2025 Programme of Action, which gives special attention to youth and sports issues in the Islamic world.

The Secretary-General thanked the leadership and people of the Republic of Turkey for hosting this session. He also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting the 5th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers in September, in Jeddah.

The Secretary-General underlined that the 3rd and 4th sessions of the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports in Istanbul and Baku adopted the OIC Plan of Action for the Development of Sports in Member States and the OIC Youth Strategy as documents aimed at developing youth and sports in Member States.

The Secretary-General also expressed the

General Secretariat's appreciation for the efforts made by the Sports Federation, as one of the OIC affiliated organs, aimed at developing youth and sports in the Member States under the wise leadership of HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki.

The Secretary-General stressed that scientific studies have proven that physical activity enhances the cognitive performance of individuals, which impacts positively all developmental, economic, social, cultural and scientific activities. He also pointed out that sport has become an economic support factor, a tourist attraction, and a means of communication and acquaintance between athletes and their countries from around the world. He also called on the participants to put before their eyes the various advantages that sport brings, and to practice it with the spirit of sportsmanship and positive interaction and give it full importance.

At the conclusion of his speech, the Secretary-General expressed his full confidence that achieving more cooperation among the OIC Member States, through the National Olympic Committees, the OIC General Secretariat, organs and institutions, especially the Sports Federation, will support the achievement of goals to serve our youth in the Islamic world.



OIC Attaches Great Importance to Sports and New Unit for Youth Issues

The Board of Directors of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) held the 11th session of the Federation in Konya, Republic of Turkey, on 7 August 2022, on the sidelines of the 5th session of the Islamic Solidarity Games (ISG).

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, ISSF President, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Mehmet Muharrem Kasapoglu, the Turkish Minister of Youth and Sports, Chairman of the Organising Committee of the 5th ISG.

Ambassador Tarig Ali Bakheet, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, delivered the statement of the OIC, conveying the greetings of H.E. the Secretary-General, Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, to the participants. Ambassador Bakheet also expressed his pleasure to participate in the opening session of the 11th session of the ISSF General Assembly, organised by the Federation in Konya, on the sidelines of the Islamic Solidarity Games.

He also thanked the Republic of Turkey on behalf of the OIC for its appreciable efforts to host the 5th session of Islamic sports and to harness all its capabilities to make this great sport event a success, praising Turkey's efforts in promoting joint Islamic coopera-

tion and Islamic solidarity.

The Assistant Secretary-General highly valued the tireless efforts of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation, under the wise leadership of HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal Al Saud, to advance the youth and promote sports in the Islamic world, which contributes significantly to promoting youth development and advancing sports in Member States, and in strengthening the bonds of unity and solidarity among the youth of the Islamic world in order to achieve the goals for which the Organisation was established.

Ambassador Bakheet underscored that the Federation's creative initiatives and continuous activities would enhance the bonds of unity, harmony and friendship among the OIC Member States, pointing out that the General Secretariat trusts that more cooperation and coordination between Member States, the OIC General Secretariat and the Federation will help achieve the goals set in the OIC Action Plan for the Development of Sports and the OIC Youth Strategy, which will advance youth issues in the Islamic world. He also praised the efforts made by the Federation and the constructive steps it takes within the framework of implementing the OIC Youth Strategy, in coordination

with all parties concerned with strengthening the sports sector in Member States.

Ambassador Bakheet highlighted that the OIC attaches great importance to sports and the well-being of young people and their physical and psychological health, in line with the OIC Charter and Ten-Year Programme of Action, which call for the promotion of cultural, social and moral values. In this regard, the General Secretariat also valued the efforts by the Federation in empowering Muslim youth with the aim of achieving development and peace and strengthening cooperation and friendship between them with the aim of promoting a culture of peace, dialogue and tolerance and building strong and healthy societies that contribute to strengthening and understanding young people in the Islamic world, as well as rejecting terrorism, racism, intolerance and hatred, as well as strengthening the relationship with young people outside the Islamic world with the aim of promoting peace, dialogue and mutual understanding between cultures and civilizations.

The Assistant Secretary-General indicated that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the 5th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers in September, in Jeddah.



OIC Secretary-General Holds Talks on the Side-lines of Islamic Solidarity Games

H.E. Mr. Mehmet Kasapoglu, Minister of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey, received the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, and his accompanying delegation in Konya, on 10 August 2022, on the side-lines of the Islamic Solidarity Games. During the meeting, bilateral cooperation between the OIC and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Turkey was discussed.

The Secretary-General highly valued the efforts made by Turkey to ensure the success of the 5th session of the Islamic Solidarity Games and appreciated the presence of H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Turkey, in the opening ceremony. In this regard, he pointed out that the president's presence is evidence of the importance Turkey attaches to sports and youth issues. He also thanked H.E. the Minister of Youth and Sports for Turkey's continued support for the OIC General Secretariat in the field of joint Islamic action, particularly in the field of youth and sports.

For his part, H.E. the Turkish Minister of Youth and Sports expressed Turkey's thanks to H.E. the Secretary-General for attending the opening session and reiterated his country's readiness to support the General Secretariat in order to build youth capacities and develop sports in the Islamic world.

H.E. the Secretary-General also met with HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki bin Al-Faisal Al Saud, Minister of Sports of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and President of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation, on the side-

lines of the opening of the 5th session of the Islamic Solidarity Games.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral cooperation between the OIC, the Ministry of Sports of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation. They also discussed arrangements and preparations for holding the following session of the Youth Ministers Conference, which was going to be hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Jeddah. The Secretary-General praised the efforts by the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation under the leadership of HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki to enhance the capabilities of the youth and promote sports in the Islamic world.

OIC Hails Progress in Sports in Baku

The OIC General Secretariat participated in the 3rd meeting of the Permanent Ministerial Council for Youth and Sports hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan on 23 June 2022, in Baku, within the framework of its presidency of the 4th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers. In his speech delivered on his behalf by Dr. Amina Al-Hajri, Director-General of Cultural, Social and Family Affairs, the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, indicated that Azerbaijan's hosting of this meeting prior to the holding of the 5th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers, which was going to be hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in September, was

an opportunity to the Permanent Ministerial Council to assess the progress made in the implementation of the resolutions issued by the previous sessions of the Conference and the implementation of the OIC Youth Strategy and the OIC Action Plan for the Development of Sports, as well as evaluating the efforts of the concerned institutions in the field of supporting Member States in building youth capacities and developing sports, with the aim of making recommendations to the Conference in this regard.

The Secretary-General also praised the efforts by the OIC organs and institutions working in the field of youth and sports, especially the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation and the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum, for their efforts in supporting Member States in building youth capacities and developing sports.

The Secretary-General reviewed the steps taken by the General Secretariat in preparation for the 5th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers, and praised the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the steps it took to ensure the success of the Conference.

It should be noted that the Permanent Ministerial Council was established by the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers with the mission of following up on the implementation of the resolutions issued by the Conference and assessing the progress made in the implementation of the OIC Youth Strategy and the OIC Action Plan for the Development of Sports.



Secretary-General Calls on IIFA to Transform Islam Defamation into an Opportunity to Publicise it

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, addressed, on 28 July 2022, the first meeting of the Bureau of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA) for the current year. The Secretary-General expressed his pleasure to attend the opening of the first meeting of the IIFA Bureau for the current year. He also expressed his great thanks for the IIFA's cooperation and support, and his great appreciation to H.E. Sheikh Saleh bin Humaid, the IIFA President for the support and guidance he provides to the IIFA in order to achieve the noble goals for which it was established.

The Secretary-General also thanked H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, the IIFA Secretary-General for the development witnessed by the General Secretariat of the Academy in all aspects since he assumed his duties, wishing him continued success.

He said that the General Secretariat considers the International Islamic Fiqh Academy one of its most important subsidiary organs, given the paramount importance of unifying and bringing Muslims together, so as to achieve unity and rapprochement among Muslims in all sectors and fields. He also pointed out that political and economic solidarity between Member States increases when it has a balanced intellectual and religious environment that the IIFA works to provide, which is considered the most important goal for which the Academy was

established at Makkah Summit in 1981. This was done in light of the need to unify the efforts of Muslims in matters of ijihad and fatwas, in order to reinforce the approach of moderation, spread a culture of middle stance and tolerance, and avoid extremism

the meeting came at a critical period witnessing an escalation of anti-Islam sentiment in many Western countries

and terrorism trends.

The Secretary-General added that the meeting came at a critical period witnessing an escalation of anti-Islam sentiment in many Western countries and in the midst of a crisis of defamation and smear against the Noble Prophet by some political figures around the world, pointing out that this requires a redoubled effort from the IIFA to formulate a unified position of all religious references in Member States to deal with these offensive provocations and campaigns. He

also said that adopting a collective rational stance and building applicable concepts and policies is the way to stop the libel against Islamic symbols and the Islamic religion in general, and turn these continuous attacks into opportunities to introduce the true values and symbols of the Islamic religion and their great positive impact on humanity.

The Secretary-General concluded his speech by commending the great effort made by the Academy in the Afghanistan file, in order to bring the views of the current authority, the religious references in the Islamic world and the international public closer together. He also underlined the recent visit organised by the IIFA for a delegation of scholars to Afghanistan, which is considered one of the most important practical contributions to help the Afghan people overcome this stage. He also noted that it is considered a great success that will remain in the IIFA's record of accomplishments for decades, and will enhance its role in resolving outstanding issues in many Muslim communities.

His Excellency also extended his thanks and appreciation to the attendees and participants.

In addition, H.E. Sheikh Dr. Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid, the IIFA President, and H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, the IIFA Secretary-General, addressed the meeting of the Bureau of the Fiqh Academy, which was held virtually.



Hissein Taha Underlines the Importance of NHRIs OIC Celebrates Human Dignity Day on 5th August

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, emphasised that the work carried out by National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) is rather complementary to that of international and regional mechanisms in monitoring and investigating human rights abuses and doesn't substitute it. He also called on the NHRIs to collaborate closely with the relevant UN, regional and global human rights mechanisms, as these entities have the advantage of focusing on specific human rights issues and standards particular to the relevant Member States.

In his inaugural statement at the opening ceremony of the 19th regular session of the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), held on 24 May 2022 at the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah, which was delivered on his behalf by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Sengendo, the Secretary-General highlighted the importance of NHRIs in strengthening the human rights situation in the OIC Member States.

In addressing the session's thematic debate on "the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the OIC Countries", Mr. Taha noted that the IPHRC has done significant work in the last decade in offering coherent recommendations to the Member States on various topics aimed at ensuring that universal human rights and fundamental freedoms flow together with Islamic

values. He also stressed that the valuable contributions of the Commission are duly acknowledged and appreciated both by the OIC and the international human rights community.

The Secretary-General also noted that a total of 34 OIC Member States have established NHRIs to promote and protect human rights. He also highlighted that as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, these institutions are making significant contribution to increase integration of human rights-based approach in policy making at the national and local levels, so as to ensure the application, monitoring and protection of the international human rights norms and standards at the national level. Mr. Taha also highlighted the dire need for ensuring effectiveness of NHRIs in promoting human rights and offering recommendations that would ensure their credibility. The opening ceremony witnessed the signing of a MoU between the OIC-IPHRC and the Human Rights Commission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and another MoU between the OIC-IPHRC and the National Human Rights Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan to enhance technical and institutional cooperation.

On another note, the OIC published a statement, in which it highlighted that the Islamic world celebrates on August 5th every year the Islamic Day for Human Rights and Dignity as per the resolution adopted by the

48th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), held in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in March 2022 that designated August 5th a "Day for Human Rights and Dignity in Islam."

On this occasion, the OIC General Secretariat called on all Member States, the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), and the relevant organisations to commemorate this day in solidarity with the Islamic peoples under foreign occupation, and out of respect for the fundamental human rights of these peoples. "This day should be seized to take concrete measures to promote and elevate human rights in terms of dialogue, cooperation, education, and awareness, in accordance with the Islamic teachings and values.", it emphasised. It is worth noting that such a celebration comes in adherence to the eternal teachings of Islam related to freedom, justice, peace, brotherhood, and equality among human beings, and awareness of the universal nature and comprehensiveness of Islam's rulings on human rights, the lofty status granted to human beings, dignity, and rights guaranteed by Islamic law for all humankind.

The celebration of this day also is in line with the objectives stipulated in the OIC's Charter to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people and to affirm the civilisational and historical role of the Ummah.

S. G. Stresses the Need for Comprehensive Economic Recovery for OIC Member States

In his speech at the opening session of the 47th Annual Meeting of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group, which was held in Sharm El Sheikh, the Arab Republic of Egypt, on 2 June, 2022, H.E. Mr. Houssein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, emphasised the importance of implementing coordinated and comprehensive economic recovery strategies in the OIC Member States in the face of social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the damage from the ongoing conflicts in the various parts of the world.

Drawing on the experiences of OIC and its specialised organs, including IsDB Group, in supporting national development efforts, the Secretary-General called for enhanced cooperation to ensure comprehensive and flexible economic recovery of OIC Member States. Within this context, the Secretary-General highlighted the need to support the most affected and the most vulnerable



segments of the society, increase support for the 22 Least Developed OIC Member States, boost the capacity in some specific OIC Member States to produce the vaccines, and develop a programme to support the rural farmers, who grow the bulk of the food in most OIC Member States. Also, in order to face the looming global food crisis, the Secretary-General called upon the Member States to urgently implement the OIC's

resolutions on establishing food reserves as well as carrying out the OIC Programmes on strategic food commodities such as wheat, rice and cassava.

The Secretary-General also drew attention to the need to mobilise additional funds to the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development with a view to enabling the Fund to expand its activities towards alleviating poverty and improving social services and infrastructures in OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General also highlighted the importance of the firm relationship between the OIC General Secretariat and the IsDB Group in supporting the socio-economic development efforts of OIC Member States. The 47th Annual Meeting of the IsDB Group started on 1 June 2022, in Sharm El Sheikh, and concluded on 4 June 2022. The meeting discussed the administrative, financial and operational activities of the IsDB Group.

Discussion on Coordination between OIC and ISF

H.E. Dr. Mahamat Adoum Koulbou, Director-General of the OIC Secretary-General's cabinet, paid a visit to the headquarters of the Islamic Solidarity Fund, an OIC subsidiary organ, on 21 June 2022.

Dr. Koulbou met with H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Al-Khuzaim, ISF Executive Director, in the presence of Mr. Abdur-Raziq Mohammed, ISF Project Manager. The two sides reviewed areas of common interest, as well as areas of coordination and cooperation between the General Secretariat and the ISF. Dr. Koulbou



also listened to a briefing about the ISF activities and projects in various states. He also made a tour of all the facilities of the Fund, and commended the major role played by the ISF in financing humanitarian, social and health projects in many countries around the world.

At the end of the meeting, the ISF Executive Director presented the General-Director of the OIC Secretary-General's cabinet with the ISF Shield.

MoU between ICDT and ATO



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Houssein Brahim Taha, and the President of the Arab Tourism Organization (ATO), Dr. Bandar bin Fahd Al Fahid, supervised the signing of a MoU between the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT), an OIC subsidiary organ, and the Arab Tourism Organization (ATO), on tourism development in the Member States.

The MoU was signed on the side-lines of the 11th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, in Baku, Azerbaijan, by Mrs Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, ICDT Director General, and Dr. Ahmed Abou Amer, Adviser to ATO President.

The MoU aimed at promoting joint activities that would enhance tourism in the Member States.



Calling on Private Sector to Invest Resources in Strategic Commodities

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, hailed the contribution of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the private sector stakeholders, in general, in rebuilding the economies of OIC Member States that were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The remarks were made in a statement by the Secretary-General, delivered on his behalf by Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, during the opening ceremony of ICCIA's 38th General Assembly, held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, on 17-18 July 2022.

The Secretary-General emphasised that the worsening food security situation world-

wide, including within many OIC Member States, especially the least developed ones, has led to starvation and urgent need of food help. He also highlighted the importance of putting into action OIC's Programmes for growing the three strategic commodities – i.e. wheat, rice and cassava, and establishment of food reserves at the national and regional levels.

H.E. Mr. Hissein Taha welcomed the initiatives of ICCIA and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey in establishing the OIC Arbitration Center, and the "Family Bank", which will provide financial participation opportunities for people of the five Sahel Region countries. In the same connection, the Secretary-General thanked

the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for financing the Family Bank, and expressed hope that the Family Bank model will be extended to other Least Developed OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General also urged the Chambers of Commerce and the entire private sector in OIC Member States to participate in forthcoming OIC Investment Forum in Africa as well as the OIC Private Sector Forum which are planned to be held later this year. ICCIA is a key catalyst to mobilising investments, drawing up economic policies, and launching various initiatives for the development of the private sector through the Chambers of Commerce of OIC Member States.

Chad Signs Statute of IOFS



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received in his office on 27 July 2022, H.E. Mr. Zakaria Fadoul Kittir, Ambassador of the Republic of Chad to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Chad's Permanent Representative to the OIC.

The Secretary-General commended the role of the republic of Chad in support of the OIC activities and the Joint Islamic Action.

Both sides discussed bilateral relations between the OIC and the Republic of Chad, ways to enhance them, and issues of common interest.

On his side, the Chadian Ambassador hailed the Secretary-General's efforts in coordinating the activities of the OIC General secretariat.

At the end of the meeting, H.E. the Ambassador signed the Statute of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), an OIC specialised organ, based in Nur-Sultan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the presence of the OIC Secretary-General.

OIC Attaches Great Importance to Social Development Issues

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, addressed the workshop hosted virtually by the Statistical, Economic, and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), on 2- 4 August 2022, in Ankara, Turkey, to strengthen the capacities of social development national institutions in OIC countries.

The workshop was opened by H.E. Ms. Derya Yanik, Minister of Family and Social Services of Turkey, Chairperson of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Social Development, H.E. OIC Secretary-General, and Dr. Nebil Dabour, Director-General of SESRIC.

The Secretary-General stressed that the OIC attaches great importance to issues of social development, in general, and social protection, in particular, pointing out that the promotion of policies aimed at strengthening family and social security and providing and facilitating effective and reliable social services for the family, children, the elderly, and people with special needs is one of the objectives of its ten-year programme 2025 (OIC-2025).

The Secretary-General indicated that the 14th Islamic Summit Conference, held in

Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 2019, affirmed that “the social dimension is essential in achieving sustainable development, and that investing in social protection is a means to achieving development goals.” Also, the First Ministerial Conference on Social Development, hosted by the Republic of Turkey in Istanbul, in 2019, highlighted the importance the OIC attaches to social development issues.

The Secretary-General stressed that holding this workshop is part of the OIC efforts to support its Member States in this regard and follow up on the implementation of the resolutions of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) and the resolutions and recommendations adopted by the First Ministerial Conference on Social Development.

The Secretary-General thanked the Republic of Turkey for its efforts in chairing the first session of the Conference and its continuous support for the General Secretariat in following up on the implementation of its resolutions. He also thanked the Arab Republic of Egypt for its efforts to host the second session of the Conference in 2023. He also thanked the OIC partners and work-

shop organisers.

The Secretary-General also underlined that countries are continuing their efforts to support vulnerable groups to face the social and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, praising the efforts made and still being made by the OIC organs and institutions to support the Member States, especially the least developed ones, to confront those repercussions through initiatives and programmes for rapid response to the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretary-General stressed that this workshop constituted an opportunity to discuss the social issues and challenges prevailing in the Member States and to analyse the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the obstacles faced by national institutions in the field of social development. He also underlined that the workshop was an opportunity to highlight the OIC’s efforts, through its relevant organs and institutions to face outstanding challenges to social development and identify opportunities for inter-organisational cooperation in this field.

Secretary-General Receives WDO Executive Director



The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, on 1 August 2022, in his office, Dr. Afnan bint Abdullah Al-Shuaibi, Executive Director of the Women Development Organisation (WDO) in OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General commended the WDO’s important role in women advancement and empowerment and preservation of their rights in the Islamic world. He also praised the WDO’s effort and activity under

the leadership of its Executive Director in achieving remarkable progress and tangible achievements within a short period. In the same connection, he underlined that the OIC General Secretariat aspires for the WDO to achieve a qualitative leap that meets the aspirations of women in Member States, regardless of their conditions, and leads to a positive approach and more effective efforts in addressing and resolving women’s issues, interests and aspirations.

In addition, the Secretary-General expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to the Arab Republic of Egypt, the WDO host country, for supporting the issues of women empowerment and promoting their status in the Islamic world, and for its continuous efforts to support all OIC activities, in general, and its efforts to promote and support the WDO’s work, in particular.

The Secretary-General also affirmed the General Secretariat’s keenness to continue providing support to and coordinating with the WDO and all OIC organs and institutions, in order to achieve common goals in supporting women’s issues and advancing women. For her part, H.E. Dr. Afnan Al-Shuaibi, stressed the WDO’s keen interest in achieving the desired goals. She also stressed the important role played by the OIC General Secretariat in providing technical and advisory support for the WDO to start its work after achieving its quorum. She also underlined the continued cooperation with the General Secretariat to support the work of the WDO.

ICESCO Explores Cooperation Opportunities in Building Youth's Capacities with 10 African Countries

Dr. Salim M. AlMalik, Director-General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), received on 21 July 2022, at ICESCO Headquarters, ministers of youth and sports, representatives of several African countries and leaders of the African Youth Union (AYU), who participated in the first edition of the Annual Consultative Dialogue of African Youth Leaders, held in Rabat. The meeting was an opportunity to explore ways to strengthen cooperation between ICESCO and their countries in qualifying youth and building their capacities.

After welcoming ICESCO's guests, Dr. AlMalik noted that as part of its vision and strategic orientation, ICESCO accords special attention to youth, and implements several ambitious programmes and projects aimed at building youth's capacities, supporting them in the field of entrepreneurship, and training them in leadership for peace and security, in coordination and cooperation with the competent authorities in the Member States.

ICESCO Director-General underlined the Organisation's openness to unlimited cooperation, in order to implement practical and beneficial programmes and projects, and help build prosperous Muslim communities. He also underlined that the Organisation's Charter allows non-Member States to join



ICESCO as Observer States and that the Organisation's General Directorate welcomes any suggestions or ideas enriching its action.

He noted that ICESCO prioritises strengthening the values of coexistence, peace and civilisational dialogue, encourages its Member States to invest in space sciences and artificial intelligence to contribute to the development of all fields and valorises heritage in the countries of the Islamic world, by inscribing it on ICESCO's Lists of Tangible and Intangible Heritage.

During the meeting, which was attended by Dr. Abdelilah Benarfa, ICESCO Deputy Director-General, and several Heads of Sectors and Advisors at the Organisation, ICESCO's

guests commended the Organisation's roles in serving its Member States and its openness to cooperate with non-Member States. The meeting was attended by Dr. Fathallah Al-Zani, Minister of Youth and Sports of the State of Libya, Mr. Mohamed Bangura, Minister of Youth of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Mr. Tumiso Rakgare, Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture of the Republic of Botswana, Ms. Juliana Ratovoson, former Minister of Youth of Madagascar, the Kenyan Deputy Minister of Finance, a representative of the Ministry of Youth in Central Africa, the President of the National Youth Commission of Ghana, AYU's President from Burkina Faso and a member of the Union's Executive Council from Cameroon.

ICESCO Participates in UNFPA Meeting



The Human and Social Sciences Sector of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) took part in the planning and coordination meeting held by the representative office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to the African Union, with the participation of the Fund's regional offices in Africa, the African

Union (AU) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

During the meeting, which was held on 29 July 2022, via videoconference, Ms. Ramata Almamy Mbaye, Head of ICESCO's Human and Social Sciences Sector, reviewed the Organisation's programmes and activities in the areas of peace and security, women

and youth empowerment, and combating violence against women. In the same connection, she underlined ICESCO's efforts to counter the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic through its project encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship among women and youth.

Ms. Mbaye also highlighted the programmes of ICESCO's Center for Civilizational Dialogue that are geared towards fostering peace and coexistence, and the Culture Sector's programmes that are aimed at preserving heritage and harnessing its potential to promote peace and development. She also underscored the programmes of the Science and Technology Sector, through which the Organisation seeks to achieve youth development in the Islamic world,

ICESCO Hosts International Children for Peace Festival



As part of the celebration programme of Rabat as Culture Capital in the Islamic world for 2022, the headquarters of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) hosted the closing ceremony of the 14th edition of the International Children for Peace Festival, organised by Bouregreg Association in the Kingdom of Morocco, with the participation of over 400 children from 31 countries, with the view of entrenching the culture of peace and coexistence among the children of the world.

At the outset of the ceremony, which coincided with the beginning of the new Hijri year, and which was organised within the framework of ICESCO's objective to foster peace values through practical programmes and activities that place it at the forefront of effective international organisations, Dr. Salim M. AlMalik, ICESCO Director-General, delivered an address, in which he stressed the importance of peace, which is essential to achieving development. He also expressed his pride in all the children that participated in the Festival as ambassadors of peace, who draw a new splendid picture of the world and convey messages that say "No to wars, no to abuse, no to injustice and no to hatred, and fill the world with beauty, joy, happiness, love and hope, calling them "Birds of Peace".

Dr. AlMalik affirmed ICESCO's belief in the

instrumental role of children in preserving lofty values, protecting the environment from pollution, and promoting tolerance and coexistence to make the world a better place.

ICESCO Director-General also announced that as part of ICESCO's endeavour to encourage and support children to become messengers of peace and ambassadors of love, the Organisation will establish an annual award for best children initiatives called "Birds of Peace," and will organise an annual ceremony to showcase their outstanding creativity.

For his part, Mr. Mustapha Taimi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication in the Kingdom of Morocco, commended ICESCO's work and the distinguished activities it fosters, as part of the celebration of Rabat as Culture Capital in the Islamic world for 2022, hailing the Organisation's efforts to foster a culture of peace.

On another note, Dr. Salim M. AlMalik received Dr. Speciose Hakizimana, representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the Kingdom of Morocco. During the meeting, they explored ways to foster cooperation between the two Organisations in areas of common interest.

Dr. AlMalik also reviewed the key programmes and projects being implemented

by ICESCO, in light of its vision and strategic orientations, in cooperation with the competent authorities in its Member States, to ensure inclusive access to quality education for all, reduce school dropout rates, entrench the values of peace and civilisational dialogue, and encourage investment in modern technology, so as to achieve sustainable development.

The meeting touched upon the new developments in the existing cooperation between ICESCO and UNICEF and discussed a set of potential joint practical programmes on childhood support and education, training, and empowerment opportunities for girls and youth.

For her part, Dr. Hakizimana commended ICESCO's role in assisting the efforts of Member States in its areas of competence, emphasising UNICEF's keenness to cooperate with the Organisation in implementing childhood support programmes.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the two sides agreed to hold technical meetings between the two organisations at the level of experts.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Barry Koumbou, Head of the Education Sector, Ms. Ramata Almamy Mbaye, Head of the Human and Social Sciences Sector, and Ms. Amira EL Fadil, Head of the Partnerships and International Cooperation Sector.

Encyclopaedia of Hajj and Umrah Issued by IIFA

The International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA), an OIC organ, issued a book (Encyclopaedia of Hajj and Umrah) in Arabic and English, authored by Professor Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, IIFA Secretary-General. It is the first modern and accessible encyclopaedia of its kind. The publication is the fourth edition in 2021. It was printed by International Mufakirun Publication House for Publishing and Distribution in Cairo, Riyadh and Rabat.

The book is printed in medium-length pages, and consists of 472 pages that deal with detailed definition of the various terms and provisions of Hajj and Umrah. It includes 453 terms, including Ihram, Hajj rituals, travel for Hajj, the pillars of Hajj, days of Tashreeq, the use of umbrellas, the Sacred House, power of attorney, etc., in addition to answers that provide the reader with comprehensive knowledge of Hajj and Umrah and ways to perform the rituals.

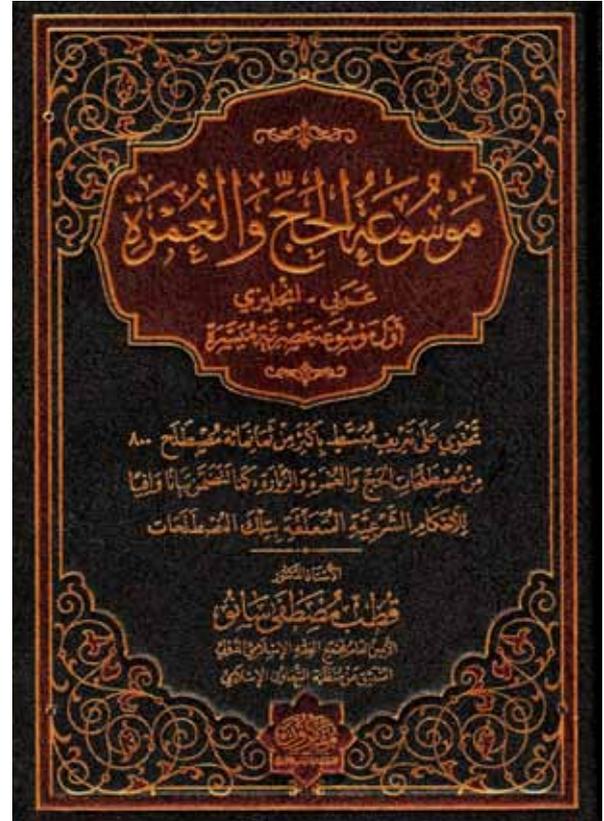
In the introduction to the encyclopaedia, the author says that it is aimed at simplifying the meanings and terminology of Hajj, as well as the legal rulings related to them for the contemporary Muslim. He also expressed his hope that the pilgrim will be able to comprehend those meanings and provisions without fatigue or difficulty.

He also underlined that clarifying the rulings, purposes, and meanings of Hajj to pilgrims is one of the most successful ways to alleviate the difficulties that pilgrims face as a result of not knowing those rulings and purposes.

In the same connection, he emphasised that communicating those divine meanings and secrets behind this ritual that combines the spiritual dimension, the physical dimension, and the financial dimension, will help realise the supreme goal of achieving complete servitude to Allah Almighty, assimilating the truth of monotheism, and bringing about unity to face the challenges and crises sweeping the nation east, west, south and north.

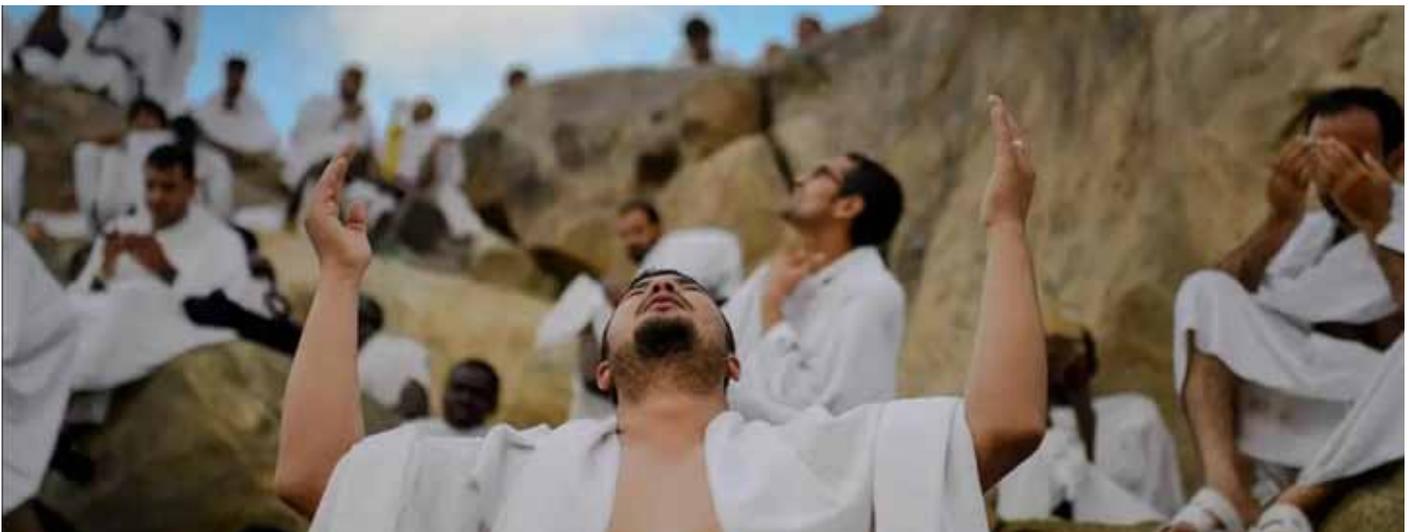
The author also noted that he believes that the more aware the pilgrims of the meanings and goals of Hajj and Umrah, the more disciplined they are when performing the rituals, because the behaviour is a reflection of what has settled in the heart and mind.

He also explained that the idea of writing this encyclopaedia came to him in 1421 AH, while he was performing Hajj, and was the emir of a group of scholars, including professors from the International Islamic University in Malaysia, and the deans of its colleges. During this trip, no regular scholarly meeting was devoid of questions and inquiries about the meanings, the rulings and the underlying provi-



sions of many of the terms of Hajj and Umrah; hence the decision and the covenant with Allah Almighty in the Sacred House in that year was that this encyclopaedia be written and collected. After continuous reading of several jurisprudence and hadith blogs and modern and old literature on Hajj and Umrah, this encyclopaedia was written under its current title.

The IIFA Secretary-General highlighted that the encyclopaedia used the method of comparison between several definitions and meanings of the terms of Hajj and Umrah. He added that he tried very hard to collect quite a few definitions in order to choose from among them the clearest. He also explained that definitions were also formulated for those terms for which contemporary definitions could not be found.





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Legal Expert at the General
Secretariat

*launching the process
of international
criminalisation of
Islamophobia first
begins with spreading
international aware-
ness about it*

The International Criminalisation of Islamophobia

The unanimous adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of March 15 of each year as the International Day for Combating Islamophobia, based on a proposal by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), is a clear evidence of the OIC's international weight, and that it's able to impose its stance when it comes to respecting and protecting the interests of the Islamic peoples in the international arena.

Resolution A/76/L.41 of 8 March 2022, of the 76th session of the General Assembly, includes a second paragraph calling for intensifying international efforts to foster a global dialogue on the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace at all levels, based on respect for human rights and for the diversity of religions and beliefs. The third paragraph also calls on international and regional organisations, and civil society, to organise various high-visibility events aimed at effectively increasing awareness at all levels about curbing Islamophobia.

The call contained in the second and third paragraphs of the aforementioned resolution represents an opportunity that the OIC can take to embark on a legal quest to conclude an international agreement at the United Nations level to criminalise and punish Islamophobic acts, whether they are committed by individuals or entities. The path will not be paved with roses and the quest will face fierce opposition, due to the insane spread of Islamophobia that has prevailed in most Western countries with the blessing and participation, at times, of some political parties and organisations, on one hand, and the graveness of the crimes committed in the name of Islamophobia, including individual and mass killing, and the destruction of public and private property, including homes, mosques, places of worship and the Qur'an, on the other hand.

Like all the bad phenomena for which the international community has succeeded in putting in place legal frameworks to combat, launching the process of international criminalisation of Islamophobia first begins with spreading international awareness about it through international fora and symposia launched by the OIC at the level of the United Nations and major international organisations, as happened during the process of establishing the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of discrimination against women, which was preceded by several United Nations conferences and symposia in 1949, 1967 and 1975 to diagnose the phenomenon of discrimination against women and develop appropriate scenarios to address it. Those efforts culminated in the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 18 December 1979.

As was also the case during the adoption of the 1984 United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which was the result of several years of work, following the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1975. Between 1975 and 1984, numerous seminars and round tables were held on the subject until States were convinced of the need to establish an international legal framework for the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

The crime of Islamophobia is no less serious than the crimes of torture and cruel treatment, and its effects are no less sensitive than the effects of discrimination against women. Rather, it is characterized by subjective characteristics that make a crime begets a counter-crime. The crime of Islamophobia may cause reactions from the victims or from extremist Islamic groups, which may cause the world to enter into a cycle of crime and counter-crime.

What strongly supports the need for an international legal framework to combat the crime of Islamophobia is the absence of national legislation to deter this phenomenon, which is being obscured behind broad terms such as "coexistence", "freedom of belief" or "contempt". So far, there is no national legal text that mentions the crime of Islamophobia in its real name and sets appropriate penalties that would deter it. All that exists are some scattered general texts that were not originally designed to address the phenomenon of Islamophobia as much as they were aimed to punish some misdemeanours of the public right, in addition to the obstacles that face the implementation of such texts, with regard to the protection of freedom of expression or freedom of opinion or the absence of a serious will to punish the perpetrators of Islamophobic crimes.

Filling this void will not be possible without the establishment of a binding international agreement that stipulates the necessity of enacting explicit national legislation to criminalise the various manifestations of Islamophobia by naming them by their name, defining them comprehensively and accurately, and setting deterrent penalties for their perpetrators.

Côte d'Ivoire

Capital: Yamoussoukro
Area: 322,460 square kilometres
Official languages: French
Currency: West African Franc



Côte d'Ivoire is a country in West Africa. It is bordered by Ghana to the east, Guinea and Liberia to the west, Mali and Burkina Faso to the north, and it overlooks the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean from the south. Its political capital is Yamoussoukro, while its largest city and economic centre is Abidjan in the south near the coast. Its most important cities are Bouake and Gagnoa. The official language of the country is French. Its name goes back to the fact that African traders were collecting elephant tusks and offering them for sale in heaps on its coasts, hence it took its name from the ivory trade.

Côte d'Ivoire is a member of the African Union and the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation. Its total area is estimated at 322,462 km². as for its population, it is estimated at 19,997,000 according to 2009 census. In 1843, Côte d'Ivoire went under French protection and in 1893, it became a French colony. It gained its independence on 7 August 1960.

Côte d'Ivoire has political and economic relations with its neighbours in West Africa. It also maintains close relations with the countries of the world.

Côte d'Ivoire's economy is largely dependent on agriculture. Its main crops are coffee and cocoa.

The land of Côte d'Ivoire consists of coastal plains, accounting for one third of its area, and extending next to its beaches, with fertile soil allowing for the growth of forests. After the plains, the land gradually rises to the west. In this area, we find an ancient Granite plateau, whose northern part is covered by savannah gardens. Many rivers cut through Côte d'Ivoire from north to south. The country is also home to Mount Nimba Natural Integrated Reserve.

The climate of Côte d'Ivoire is sub-tropical, with increased temperature and humidity. The south of the country experiences two rainy seasons separated by two dry seasons. As for the north, it has a tropical climate with less rain and heat than the south.

Côte d'Ivoire is also called the "Land of Eburne", which refers to the land areas of the country's forests. The first human presence in Côte d'Ivoire was difficult to trace, because human remains were not well preserved in the country's wet climate. However, the newly found pieces of weapons and tools (particularly polished axes cut by shale and the remains of cooking and fishing tools) were interpreted as a possible indication of a large human presence during the Upper Palaeolithic period (15,000 to 10,000

BC), or at least in the Neolithic period.

The first inhabitants of Côte d'Ivoire left traces scattered throughout the region. Historians believe that they were either displaced or enslaved by the ancestors of the present-day indigenous people, who migrated south into the region before the 16th century.

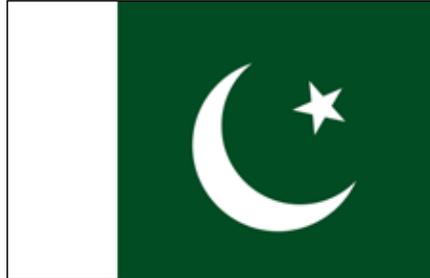
Muslims there adhere to the Maliki school of thought.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the population. The northern part of the country is devoted to the production of agricultural food yields such as rice, corn, yam and bananas, while the southern part produces rubber, cocoa and coffee. The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is the third in the production of coffee and the fifth in the production of pineapple and bananas, cotton and sugar cane. Also, Côte d'Ivoire is rich in timber, which constitutes a fifth of its exports. Also, tin, iron, manganese, gold and diamonds are excavated from the mines of Côte d'Ivoire.

The Districts of Côte d'Ivoire are the first level of administrative division in the country. The districts were created in 2011. The number of these districts is 14, including two independent districts, namely, the district of Abidjan and the district of Yamoussoukro.



Islamic Republic of Pakistan is hosting
the 48th Session of the Council of Foreign
Ministers, Islamabad, March 2022



The capital city of Islamabad, located on the Pothohar Plateau
in the northern Punjab, is one of the oldest human settlement
sites in Asia.



Augmenting Islamic cultures • Combating poverty
 Protecting the rights of Muslim minorities • Promoting Science and Technology
 Preserving Islamic heritage • Joint Islamic solidarity
 Strengthening International relations • Promoting development
 Combating terrorism • Achieving economic and trade cooperations
 Encouraging dialogue among cultures and religions
 Boosting Economic and Trade cooperation
 Defending the Palestine Cause • Defending the rights of Muslims



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