

**Final Document of the General Meeting on
Cooperation between the United Nations and
the Organization of Islamic Cooperation**

Istanbul, 20 -22 May 2014

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolutions 50/17 of 20 November 1995 and 67/264 of 17 May 2013, the general meeting on Cooperation between the Secretariats of the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and their specialized organizations and agencies took place in Istanbul from 20–22 May 2014. The agenda, programme of work, and the list of participants are attached as Annexes I, II, and III.

Participation

2. The meeting was hosted by the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) of the OIC in Istanbul, Turkey. It was co-chaired by H.E. Ambassador Hameed Opeloyeru, OIC Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs, and Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Their statements at the opening session are attached as Annexes IV and V.

United Nations System

3. UN participants included representatives of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and World Health Organization (WHO).

Organization of Islamic Cooperation

4. OIC participants included representatives from the OIC General Secretariat, OIC Permanent Observer Mission in New York, OIC Permanent Observer Mission in Geneva,

OIC Liaison Office to UNESCO , Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), Islamic Committee of International Crescent (ICIC), OIC Youth Forum/Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC), Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) and COMCEC Coordination Office.

5. Representatives of the following organizations addressed the opening session in the following order: IRCICA, CTED, ICDT, OCHA, ISESCO, ICCIA, OHCHR, ICHAD, IDB, UNOSSC, SESRIC, UNEP, UNDP, SMIIC, UNODC, UNHCR, UNRWA, WFP, FAO, and UNFPA.

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

6. The meeting reviewed the implementation of the Matrix adopted by the general cooperation meeting held in Geneva in May 2012. The participants welcomed the progress made, discussed the obstacles towards effective implementation of the joint activities, and exchanged views on the way forward. The updated Matrix adopted by the meeting and dated 22 May 2014 is attached as Annex VI. The Matrix also contains timelines for the identified joint activities in the next biennium.

7. During the discussions, participants reiterated their commitment to deepening UN-OIC partnership in all areas of common interest, including peace and security, social, economic and cultural issues, and humanitarian affairs. This strengthened partnership should help address immediate problems in the member states as well as contribute to international peace and stability, sustainable development, and protection of human rights.

8. Participants stressed the need to build on the 28 October 2013 meeting of the UN Security Council on the OIC's role in maintaining peace and security. Both sides acknowledged the continuing dialogue between the UN bodies and the OIC in the fields of peacemaking, preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. They believed that UN-OIC cooperation should be increased on dealing with crisis situations, such as Mali, the Central Africa Republic and Syria, collaboration on Yemen, Myanmar, Somalia and Palestinian issues, fighting terrorism within the international legal framework, strengthening good governance and the rule of law, and promoting and protecting human rights.

9. Participants underlined the importance of addressing social, economic and cultural issues facing OIC member states. They recognized the need for cooperation

between the OIC and UN towards achieving sustainable development objectives as set out by Rio Summit on Sustainable Development and other international conferences (e.g. the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development and the Beijing World Conference on Women). To this end, participants recognized the importance of systematic support for South-South cooperation initiatives between the OIC member states and others.

III. MAIN ITEMS OF DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Conflict prevention

10. The OIC side noted that conflict prevention is a priority. As most of “conflict hotspots” are located in OIC areas, new ideas need to be explored to address the full cycle of conflict, from early warning and conflict prevention, to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In particular, national reconciliation processes should be inclusive. The OIC could play an important role in that regard, including by highlighting and encouraging the role of faith-based and traditional peace-makers as well as through its Islamic Fiqh Academy.

11 DPA considered the establishment of OIC’s Peace, Security and Mediation Unit (PSMU) in March 2013 as an important step in strengthening OIC’s capacity in mediation and in promoting peace and security. DPA would continue supporting the development of PSMU’s capacity and expertise in conflict prevention and provide assistance in mediation. DPA looks forward to building on the steps taken so far towards strengthening its partnership with OIC on electoral matters. In that regard, concrete proposals has been shared with the OIC side during the meeting, and some are expected to be implemented shortly. Together with DPKO and other UN partners, DPA would continue to organize desk-to-desk talks with the OIC on conflict situations, with a view to sharing information, comparing analysis and coordinating efforts.

12. The OIC proposed holding regular political consultation with the UN, at least twice a year – one in New York on the margins of the UN General Debate and one at OIC Headquarters in Jeddah. This proposal will be considered by the UN side.

Maintenance of international peace and security in specific countries

13. The UN and the OIC exchanged views on the situations in the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan and Myanmar. Both called for closer cooperation in addressing these situations.

14. On the Central Africa Republic, the OIC noted its opposition to the relocation of populations, fearing that that could lead to the partition of the country. It also called for a fast deployment of the UN peacekeeping operation before the targeted date of 15 September 2014 and the establishment of a trust fund to compensate the victims of the violence. The OIC proposed that its Special Envoy for the CAR should be given the opportunity to brief the Security Council regarding the OIC's mediation efforts. The UN stressed the need to preserve territorial integrity of the CAR. More needed to be done to protect minority Muslims in the country. MINUSCA had been mandated to play a leading role in international efforts to assist the Transitional Authorities.

15. On Mali, the OIC urged the parties to resume the national reconciliation process, adding that North Mali should be a top priority. It also called on the UN to support its Special Envoy for Mali. The UN stressed the urgency for the reconciliation process between the Government, the armed groups and between northern communities to move forward. The parties need to address the root causes of the conflict.

16. On Somalia, the OIC was of the view that the arms embargo against the country should be lifted completely. The OIC would continue to engage moderate elements of Al-Shabaab in order to promote national reconciliation. It was preparing to transform its current humanitarian office in Somalia into a development office. The UN called for the OIC's continued support to the Federal Government of Somalia's priorities, especially for stability and recovery activities in newly liberated areas.

17. On Sudan, the OIC noted that national reconciliation should continue despite the recent arrest of a prominent opposition leader. The Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remained the valid roadmap to lasting peace. Sudan also needed to address its outstanding issues with South Sudan. Together with Qatar, the OIC was establishing the Darfur Development Bank to support reconstruction efforts.

18. On South Sudan, the OIC noted that while the country was not an OIC member state, developments there could affect several OIC members, including Sudan and Uganda. The war there must end. The UN noted that it was providing support to the AU Commission of Inquiry and that the question of responsibility to protect was of importance. Food security would need to be addressed alongside peace efforts.

19. On Afghanistan, the OIC would monitor the run-off of the presidential election and continue to promote reconciliation, including by convening the second round of the Ulema conference in cooperation with the Afghan High Peace Council. Having noted that the voter turn-out for the 5 April elections was impressive, the UN noted that it was a hopeful step forward in political transition albeit challenges on that road remained. A peace process was critical for long term stability of Afghanistan and regional engagement on the part of OIC member states was critical.

20. On the Middle East Peace Process, the OIC reiterated its long-standing support for the Palestinian people. The current peace talks had stalled because of the Israeli settlement activities. Israel's illegal practices were diminishing the prospects for the two-state solution. The OIC Secretary General would visit West Bank and East Jerusalem soon. The UN noted that despite the danger of the two-state solution falling apart, there was still a window of opportunity for the peace talks. The UN continues to advocate and support efforts towards a lasting political solution.

21. On Syria, the UN noted that while the diplomatic efforts stalemated, the United Nations remained focused on a political solution while seeking to mitigate the impact of the disaster, from delivering humanitarian aid to destroying chemical weapons. The OIC was concerned about the prolongation of the Syrian crisis and its destabilizing impact on the wider region. The OIC supported international efforts towards finding a peaceful, political solution to the conflict. This would be discussed at the forthcoming session of the Council of OIC Foreign Minister in June 2014.

22. On Myanmar, the OIC drew attention to the recent appointment of Mr. Tan Sri Dato Seri Syed Hamid Albar, former Foreign Minister of Malaysia as the OIC Special Envoy for Myanmar. It was alarmed about the atrocities against Rohingya Muslims as this could derail the entire democratic process in the country. The OIC urged the international community to **encourage** the government of Myanmar **to** fulfill its responsibilities **toward the Rohingya Muslim minority**. The UN noted that it had been urging Myanmar to do more to address inter-communal tensions. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Myanmar had advised the Myanmar authorities to engage more closely with the OIC and its member states on the matter.

23. On Iraq, the UN expressed hope that the process of forming a new government following the recent elections would proceed fast. Iraq continued to face serious challenges, including in the area of security. Incitement to hatred should be stopped, sectarian tensions needed to be eased and dialogue must be fostered. The OIC has been supporting the political process in Iraq and continued to support bridging the sectarian divide within Iraqi society. OIC representatives recalled the Mecca Declaration adopted by the Sunni and Shiite leaders under the auspices of the OIC, and noted the OIC intended to follow up on the Declaration.

24. On Yemen, the OIC expressed support for the efforts of the UN Special Adviser in cooperation with the Gulf Cooperation Council, including on the national dialogue and the constitution-drafting. The UN noted that Yemen was having a viable transition process. Still, challenges remained in light of terrorist threats, the southern issue and the Houthis emerging as a belligerent force in the north.

25. On Libya, the OIC and UN expressed deep concern about the deteriorating security situation, particularly the fighting in Benghazi. The UN looked forward to the OIC's increased engagement in the country and dialogue among the political forces.

Combating terrorism and incitement, and enhancing cultural dialogue

26. CTED and the OIC had been working closely together on matters relating to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and, increasingly, on matters relating to Security Council resolution 1624 (2005), which notably stresses that any measures taken by States to implement its provisions should comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, refugee law and humanitarian law. The OIC and CTED held a meeting on countering incitement to terrorism and enhancing cultural dialogue in Jeddah in May 2013. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for OIC member states and regional and international organizations to share information about current and potential challenges in countering incitement to terrorism and violent extremism. The participants also identified possible elements of national comprehensive and integrated counter-terrorism strategies, in general, and of national counter-incitement strategies, in particular, as called for in Security Council resolution 1963 (2010), which states that “continuing international efforts to enhance dialogue and broaden understanding among civilizations in an effort to prevent the indiscriminate targeting of different religions and cultures can help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism and help strengthen the international fight against terrorism.”

27. UNODC continued to help OIC members in Africa and Asia through its regional programme. UNODC was working with partners, including many OIC members, to improve coordination of efforts against drug trafficking, and other forms of transnational organized crime, through a new initiative termed “Networking the Networks.” In the area of terrorism prevention, UNODC and OIC had effectively cooperated in promoting ratification and implementation of the international legal instruments related to terrorism, including through the joint organization of regional capacity building activities. It was emphasized that all measures taken in the fight against crime and terrorism shall be in line with international law, human rights law, and obligations under international conventions. In that connection, the OIC side stressed the importance of utilizing new technologies, including drones, in combatting terrorism in accordance with international human rights law. It also stressed that radicalization and extremism must be dealt with upfront through a comprehensive strategy.

Promotion of democratization, good governance, human rights and the rule of law

28. It was noted that the calls for democratization, good governance, human rights and the rule of law had continued to increase around the world. OHCHR facilitated several study visits by members of the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights

Commission (IPHRC) during the last two years. The purpose of these visits was to enhance the Commissioners' knowledge of UN human rights mechanisms; to meet members and officers servicing these mechanisms; and explore ways of cooperation between these mechanisms and the IPHRC.

29. The OIC was invited to the UN expert workshop in Rabat on the prohibition of incitement to hatred. Looking forward, the two sides agreed to continue cooperating in these areas and to formalize a framework agreement for cooperation that lists details of common priorities and interests in promoting and protecting universal human rights with appropriate funding, including cooperation with UPR process, Treaty bodies strengthening/reporting process, combating discrimination and stereotypes based on race or religion as well as effective and full implementation of Res 16/18 through Istanbul process.

30. In this regard, the OIC acknowledged the crucial role of the OIC Groups in Geneva and New York for the advancement of the human rights issues at the Human Right Council and the Third Committee of the UNGA through the adoption of the consensual resolution 16/18 and other important resolutions on the right of minorities, women and child's rights, the economic, cultural and social rights and the human right situation in Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Disarmament

31. Both sides agreed on the need to work together for promoting the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the establishment of a world free of weapons of mass destruction. In this regard both sides will meet frequently and will also strengthen cooperation and engagement in supporting the consolidation of existing nuclear weapon free zones and establishment of additional such zones including the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Both sides will also strengthen their engagement with regards to conventional arms control issues. The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) will continue to explore further avenues of cooperation with the Organization for Islamic Cooperation in capacity and institution-building as well as in the effective implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) by all UN Member States. Such work relies on cooperation with international, regional and sub-regional organizations that can assist their respective member States in practical implementation efforts.

South-South Cooperation

32. Both sides recognized the increasing importance of South-South and Triangular cooperation among the OIC Member States, as reflected in the growing volumes in

South-South trade, increasing flows of South-South development cooperation, as well as building of institutional capacities in support of South-South cooperation.

33. The UN and OIC agreed to further intensify a concerted action in the field of South-South cooperation building on the Multilateral Support Architecture for South-South Cooperation for the effective implementation of a number of internationally agreed development goals in the framework of post-2015 development agenda.

34. More specifically, parties agreed to further expand systematic activities in support to South-South cooperation agendas of the OIC Member States, such as documenting successful Southern Solutions and South-South trade opportunities, capacity development for the management of South-South Cooperation, as well as South-South Cooperation in people-centered investment promotion.

Sustainable Development, Climate Change, Health and Education

35. The meeting acknowledged the international commitment to sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations. It also acknowledged the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions. The meeting also noted the ongoing intergovernmental consultations on the post-2015 development agenda and committed to contributing to the process. Relevant OIC and UN institutions identified specific activities for advocacy and policy advice, capacity building and sharing of experiences in areas such as economic development, environmental protection, green economies renewable energies, disaster risk management and promotion of education for sustainable development.

36. The meeting assessed the implementation of joint activities in the domain of trade and investment, agriculture and food security, transport and transportation, labour and employment, entrepreneurship and SMEs development as well as poverty reduction. It expressed satisfaction at the level of collaboration between the relevant OIC and UN agencies and identified new activities, which have now formed the basis of the updated Matrix.

37. In this context some of the specific activities include cooperation for implementation of Aid-for-Trade projects, joint organization of business/trade forums and exhibitions, mobilization of funds for joint projects, capacity building programme for trade and agriculture related activities, including accession to WTO and Single Window Modality, and promotion of youth employment schemes as well as Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurship development programmes, among others.

38. While calling for a more regular follow-up of the agreed areas of joint collaboration, the meeting also took note of the development of a unified OIC Halal Standard and the need for a global recognition of this standard.

39. Given the specific water-related challenges faced by OIC Member States, the priority attached to access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the MDGs and the emphasis the issue is likely to receive in the post-2015 development agenda due to its strong linkages with health, poverty, economic development and disaster risk reduction, both sides agreed to work together on sustainable management of water resources. Relevant OIC and UN institutions identified specific activities in terms of facilitating the implementation of the OIC Water Vision including support of capacity building and training programmes, advocacy, policy advice, and information and data sharing.

40. Reaffirming the centrality of health to socio-economic development and well being of the people, both sides agreed to continue their cooperation in this domain. Recalling the close cooperation between the UN and OIC institutions towards the preparation and finalization of the OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action (SHPA), both sides agreed to elaborate a work-plan for its implementation. In this regard some of the specific activities include cooperation for capacity development in relation to promoting universal and affordable access to healthcare; implementation of accelerated plans for ten OIC Member States to reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality; training of trainers focusing on community health workers and mid-wives; and establishment of knowledge sharing network on reproductive maternal and new born and child health.

41. The UN and OIC also agreed to further strengthen their cooperation for the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases. This would include advocacy on issues such as polio eradication, facilitation of national development plans for NCDs and provision of technical support to OIC Member States in tobacco control programmes within the framework of the OIC Tobacco Free Initiative. Moreover, besides continuing their cooperation in relation to the work of relevant OIC entities for the promotion of self-reliance in medicines and vaccines, both sides agreed to explore the possibility of a joint high-level regional event on access and availability of medicines.

42. Recognizing the significance of science, technology and innovation in addressing the challenges of socio-economic development, poverty alleviation, disease, environmental degradation and climate change, both sides agreed on the need for cooperation towards promoting science and technology in the OIC Member States. Specific activities would include cooperation between the relevant OIC and UN entities for STI foresight and mapping in OIC Member States and implementation of the recommendations of such studies as well as promoting a culture through education that values the role of science.

43. The UN and OIC agreed to reinforce their cooperation by enhancing the contribution of education to peace and sustainable development, guided by the principles of a rights-based approach to education; promoting equity and social inclusion in and through education and improving the quality of education and learning. Both sides agreed to continue supporting the countries most at risk of not achieving the education for all goals (EFA) goals by the 2015 deadline, and advocate for the inclusion of education in the post-2015 global development agenda.

Social and Cultural Issues

44. In the area of social and cultural affairs, representatives of the concerned departments /agencies and stakeholders from the UN and OIC, discussed cooperation activities and priorities agreed in the matrix pertaining to their respective areas as well as delved on future areas of cooperation

45. While expressing satisfaction with the overall progress on the content and direction of the planned activities, partners highlighted the continuing nature of these activities as well as the importance of strengthening cooperation between the two sides through training, capacity building and partnerships in respective areas.

46. The UN and OIC acknowledged and stressed the need for working on social and cultural issues with particular focus on strengthening Interreligious and intercultural dialogue, promoting cultural diversity, combating incitement to discrimination based on religion or belief, rights of women and children, human rights education as well as protection and preservation of cultural heritage of mankind in all situations

47. It was emphasized that social and cultural issues have a strong impact on overall development of any society, hence should be given due importance in the deliberation of post 2015 development agenda. Accordingly, it was agreed that both sides would make all out efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation in these areas to achieve desired objectives mentioned in the agreed framework (matrix for 2014-2016)

Humanitarian Cooperation

48. The meeting reaffirmed the need for cooperation and joint activities in the face of crises and emergency situations in order to obtain the best results and outcomes for the affected populations in the short, medium and long term. It was agreed that joint UN-OIC activities in the humanitarian area should aim at three main objectives, namely disaster risk reduction management and emergency preparedness, humanitarian cooperation, and cooperation on refugee and asylum seeker protection while taking into account longer term recovery and resilience aspects.

49. The general framework of cooperation also needed to be enhanced, including through the preparation of disaster risk management & emergency response frameworks for all OIC countries, regular cooperation meetings between OIC and UN operational agencies, support to World Humanitarian Summit preparations in OIC member States, follow-up on the Declaration of the International Ministerial Conference on “Refugees in the Muslim World”.

50. It was agreed that emphasis should be given to strengthening and extending the OIC-OCHA Plan of Action. In that context, OCHA proposed three levels of engagement with OIC: i) policy - developing DRR policies for OIC Member States, to include a high-level working group made up of OIC/ICHAD, several OIC Member States and OCHA; ii) technical - developing a technical working group to support the high level working group and oversee capacity building activities at the organizational level; and iii) organizational - reviewing the ICHAD training needs assessment and translating relevant items into results. In order to support this three-tiered process of cooperation, OCHA and OIC will work together to coordinate more regular meetings with relevant IASC members and UNISDR on joint areas of humanitarian cooperation. These meetings should take place in Geneva with proper communications channels to other UN departments and offices that are working on areas of the joint agreements. The first step to this process will be the formation of the high-level working group.

51. It was noted that a large number of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons in today’s world are hosted by OIC countries. Against this backdrop, the participants recognized that more coordinated action between the UN humanitarian agencies and programmes and the OIC as well as its affiliate organizations should be carried out to address the needs of the displaced populations, in line with the Ashgabad Declaration of 2012. Specifically, the humanitarian and protection needs of Syrian refugees were discussed with the suggestion that the OIC could follow up with its member states to urge for more flexible arrangements with regard to the stay of Syrian nationals on their territory. The participants also agreed that joint advocacy efforts by the OIC and the UN should be undertaken to promote the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees and support its implementation through the Portfolios of Projects developed by Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, in cooperation with UNHCR and other relevant stakeholders.

IV. FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM

52. The meeting underscored the necessity of coordinated implementation of the agreed activities. It was proposed that the Director-General of Science and Technology in the OIC General Secretariat and the Senior Political Officer responsible for the OIC file in the Department of Political Affairs in the United Nations Secretariat act as focal points for OIC and UN respectively to coordinate activities relating to the UN-OIC cooperation.

53. The meeting requested all participating and other relevant institutions to submit quarterly progress reports to their respective focal points for coordination purposes. The focal points would endeavor to put together and analyze these reports with a view to compiling a comprehensive Progress and Evaluation Report thereafter. The meeting also urged all participating institutions as well as the focal points to utilize the dedicated Website created by ISESCO for the purpose of interactive exchanges, records and archives.

54. The meeting also underscored the importance of identifying concrete and actionable activities together with their specific timelines and funding mechanisms to enable proper follow-up, benchmarking and evaluation actions.

55. It was agreed that the next general UN-OIC meeting would be hosted by the United Nations in 2016. The venue and date will be decided upon and communicated in due course.
