

Final Communiqué

**Final Communiqué of
the 8th Coordination Meeting of the Heads of Delegation
of the OIC Member States Taking Part in the 35th Session
of the General Conference of UNESCO**

(UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 8 October 2009)

In fulfilment of the objectives of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation -ISESCO-; as part of the efforts aiming to support joint Islamic action and coordinate stances of the Member States of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference with regard to international issues in the areas of education, science and culture; and in support of the outstanding relations between ISESCO and UNESCO, which are reflected in the positive outcome of a number of jointly implemented cooperation activities whose axes and priorities were set out by the Ministers of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Member States as well as in the meetings of joint committees between the two organisations;

And based on the decision of the 7th coordination meeting, ISESCO extended the invitation to convene the 8th session of the Coordination Meeting of the Heads of Delegation of the OIC Member States during the 35th session of UNESCO General Conference. The Member States responded to the invitation and the meeting took place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 8 October 2009, under the Chairmanship of his Excellency Dr Hatim Ben Salem, President of the 10th session of ISESCO General Conference.

- A-** The meeting was attended by His Excellency Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of ISESCO; His Excellency Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO; His Excellency Dr Hatim Ben Salem, President of the 10th session of ISESCO General Conference, Minister of Education and Training in the Tunisian Republic; alongside their Excellencies the heads of delegation of the OIC Member States, their Excellencies the Ambassadors of the OIC Member States accredited to UNESCO, and a number of personalities representing Arab and Islamic organisations.
- B-** The meeting was opened with an address by His Excellency Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of ISESCO, who thanked the heads of delegation of the OIC Member States for accepting the invitation to attend the meeting, and expressed his satisfaction at the positive results of the cooperation relations between ISESCO and UNESCO, which set a role

model in international cooperation. He also thanked His Excellency Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director General, for his keen efforts to enhance cooperation relations between UNESCO and ISESCO and for the facilitations offered to ISESCO regional office at UNESCO. In appreciation of the outstanding efforts led by Mr Matsuura in the service of issues of education, culture, science and culture, during his tenure as Director General of UNESCO, and in recognition of his unfailing support and outstanding role to enhance cooperation with ISESCO, Dr Altwajri awarded him **ISESCO's Decoration of the First Order**.

- C-** For his part, His Excellency Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director General, commended the strong cooperation and outstanding partnership between ISESCO and UNESCO and the wide range of activities and projects and programmes they jointly implement for the benefit of their joint Member States. He also underscored the importance of sustaining cooperation between the two organizations within similar fields of competence, and called for pooling efforts together to build a society where the values of justice and tolerance and dialogue prevail. In the same vein, he thanked the Director General of ISESCO for awarding him ISESCO's Decoration of the First Order, and expressed his appreciation for Dr Altwajri's leading action to make of ISESCO one of the major international and regional organizations active in the area of the universal civilizational edification.
- D-** His Excellency Dr Hatim Ben Salem, President of the 10th session of ISESCO General Conference and Minister of Education and Training in the Tunisian Republic, delivered an address in which he expressed his appreciation for ISESCO's initiative to convene this coordination meeting. He also expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of cooperation between ISESCO and UNESCO, which is making increasing achievements in the form of programmes and activities benefitting the Member States. Likewise, Dr Ben Salem expressed the pride the Tunisian Republic takes in the outcome of its cooperation with ISESCO, commending the leading role of ISESCO to promote joint Islamic action and develop education, science and culture in the Islamic world.
- E-** Then, His Excellency the Director General of ISESCO presented the meeting's agenda and debate items as contained in the working papers prepared by ISESCO.
- F-** In their statements, the heads of delegation pointed to the significance of such coordination meetings held alongside major international conferences with the view to coordinate stances vis-à-vis issues discussed in such conferences and to consult on matters of relevance to the Muslim

world. Moreover, they reiterated their support to the efforts of ISESCO Director General in the promotion of joint Islamic action and congratulated him on his re-election for two consecutive terms of office as Director General of ISESCO.

After deliberations and exchange of views about the issues propounded, the meeting issued the following decisions and recommendations:

- 1- Approving the documents and reports presented by ISESCO to the 8th meeting of the heads of delegation of the OIC Member States participating in the meetings of the 35th session of UNESCO General Conference, while taking into account the observations made by the Member States, and thanking ISESCO for its efforts to enhance joint Islamic action and coordinate stances of Member States vis-à-vis a number of issues.
- 2- Praising the outcome of cooperation between ISESCO and UNESCO in the recent years, and stressing the importance of sustaining it, as well as adopting ISESCO-UNESCO proposed cooperation axes for 2010-2011.
- 3- Praising the outcome of cooperation between ISESCO and similar institutions, and the efforts being exerted to enhance quality standards and take advantage of long expertise and international experiences for the purpose of avoiding duplication, in addition to mobilizing the financial and human resources available and calling for bolstering such cooperative action in areas of common interest.
- 4- Commending the efforts ISESCO exerts and the outcome of the specialised conferences and symposia it held with the aim of enhancing dialogue and alliance of civilizations, activating the role of cultural diversity, highlighting the true image of Islam and Muslims, and disseminating the values of tolerance, balance, moderation, consultation, democracy and respect for human rights. The meeting also urged ISESCO to carry on its efforts directed towards such vital issues.
- 5- Welcoming ISESCO's contribution to the action of the United Nations and the OIC towards the promotion of dialogue and alliance of civilizations; also commending the initiative of ISESCO and the International Organization of the Francophonie to convene the international conference on “**Dialogue of Civilizations and Cultural Diversity**”, in Kairouan, in March, as part of the celebration of Kairouan as Islamic Culture Capital for 2009. This conference was attended by a host of leaders of the Islamic world, together with

politicians, intellectuals, prominent journalists and heads of international and regional organizations.

- 6- Lauding the efforts ISESCO exerts in cooperation and consultation with similar international organizations to preserve endangered civilizational heritage in the Member States, particularly in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan, and calling upon the Member States to support ISESCO and the relevant regional and international efforts.
- 7- Lauding ISESCO's initiative to convene the international conference on "**Israel: War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity**" (Rabat: 14-15 February 2009); endorsing its resolutions and recommendations; inviting peace-loving people and the voices of conscience to bring to book those civilian and military Israeli officials involved in war crimes and crimes against humanity, which targeted the defenceless Palestinian people during the war on Gaza, as well as in other illegal practices in all Palestinian territories, and calling upon the Member States to take a unified stance rejecting the tendency to single out the holocaust for celebration, with scant regard of other butcheries and tragedies endured by many peoples in the world on top of which is the Palestinian people.
- 8- Denouncing the aggressive acts perpetrated by the Israeli authorities against Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Al-Quds, including obliteration of the Islamic character of Palestinian sanctities in Al Quds Al-Sharif, demolition of neighbourhoods, deportation of Palestinian populations, and threatening of the natural, human and architectural balance through the continuing construction of the Separation Wall in total violation of the right of the Palestinian people to life and in breach of human rights and international laws.
- 9- Expressing appreciation of ISESCO's efforts and special aid programmes for the educational, scientific and cultural institutions in Palestine; supporting the activities to be implemented as part of the celebration of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the Arab Culture Capital for 2009; appealing to the Member States to extend further support and assistance to confront the Israeli violations and aggressions against the Palestinian educational, scientific and cultural infrastructure; reaffirming solidarity with the Palestinian people to restore all its rights and establish its independent State with Al-Quds as its capital; and calling for extending support to the educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab Syrian Golan.
- 10- Appealing to the Member States as well as specialised regional and international organizations to bring pressure to bear on the Israeli

occupation forces to stop their oppressive measures against educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Palestinian territories as well as in the occupied Arab Syrian Golan, and to provide support to these institutions to enable discharge of their duties in the best possible conditions.

- 11-**Supporting the Member States' entrusting of ISESCO to organize specialized Islamic conferences for education, higher education and scientific research, the environment, and child issues; reaffirming the Member States' commitment to take practical steps to implement the resolutions and commitments of these conferences; expressing thanks to ISESCO for its good organization of these Islamic conferences, and to the Member States who played host to them, and commissioning the president of the 10th General Conference of ISESCO to inform the OIC General Secretariat and Chair of the Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers of the aforesaid.
- 12-**Commending the innovative and high quality activities and programmes implemented by ISESCO as part of its contribution to the implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Action Programme adopted by the third extraordinary Summit Conference in Makkah al-Mukarrama.
- 13-**Lauding ISESCO's efforts in the reconstruction of Iraq, through provision of support to this country's educational, scientific and cultural institutions, contribution to the preservation of the Iraqi heritage and upgrading of human resources; and supporting ISESCO's efforts to convene an international conference on higher education in Iraq, in cooperation with Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, late in 2009.
- 14-**Reaffirming support for ISESCO's Programme on Ambassadors for Dialogue of Civilizations; welcoming the initiative to increase the number of ISESCO's Ambassadors and to expand their duties; and commending ISESCO's Programme on Islamic Culture Capitals as well as its success in publicizing the Islamic cultural heritage in the world and highlighting the role of Islamic civilization in the shaping of universal civilization.
- 15-**Commending Tunisia's hosting of several international conferences and symposia organized by ISESCO with the aim of promoting dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, fighting terrorism and attending to the youth; expressing appreciation and gratitude to His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia for bestowing his patronage upon these conferences; and supporting His Excellency's pioneering initiative to proclaim 2010 an International

Year for the Youth and his call to convene a global conference for the youth in 2010, under the auspices of the UN, and in cooperation with ISESCO and the relevant international and regional organizations.

- 16-**Commending ISESCO's preparations and arrangements for the organization of forthcoming specialized Islamic conferences, namely the 6th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Azerbaijan, 2009), the 5th Islamic Conference of Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Malaysia, 2010), the 4th Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers (Tunisia, 2010), and the Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood (Libya, 2011); and reaffirming the commissioning of ISESCO with the organization of such conferences on a regular basis.
- 17-**Commending the outstanding achievements of Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri, the Director General of ISESCO, and his relentless efforts to develop the Organization, to enlarge its scope of action and to strengthen its presence on the Arab and Islamic and international scene; and welcoming the resolution of the 10th General Conference to re-elect him for two consecutive terms of office as Director General.
- 18-**Welcoming again the setting up of the Islamic Group at UNESCO, following a relevant resolution by the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in its 32nd session (San'aa, 28-30 June 2005), and thanking UNESCO Director General for his constant support to the activities of ISESCO's office at UNESCO, which seek to enhance cooperation relations between ISESCO and UNESCO and to facilitate the implementation of joint activities directed towards the Member States.
- 19-**Commending the efforts exerted by the Director General of ISESCO in coordinating action between the Member States in the fields falling with ISESCO's competence. The meeting also expressed pride at the high rank the Organization has reached at the international scene through a large network of cooperative relations with similar leading international organizations. Such level of cooperation has led to the implementation of hundreds of joint programmes, which has earned ISESCO a well-deserved reputation and confidence and enabled it to secure important additional financial resources.
- 20-** Thanking the Director General of ISESCO for convening the 8th coordination meeting of the heads of delegation of OIC Member States participating in UNESCO 35th General Conference; inviting him to convene the 9th coordination meeting on the sidelines of UNESCO 36th General Conference in 2011; and entrusting the president of the 10th

General Conference of ISESCO to inform the OIC General Secretariat
and Chair of the Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers of the aforesaid.

Paris, on 8 October 2009

On behalf of the meeting: Dr Hatim Ben Salem

President of the 8^h Coordination Meeting

President of the 10th session of ISESCO General Conference

Minister of Education and Training of the Tunisian Republic.