



Final Communiqué

Fifth Coordination Meeting of the Heads of delegation
of OIC Member States attending the 32nd Session
of UNESCO General Conference

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Pursuant to the objectives of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization- ISESCO- set out in its Charter; based on the recommendations of the Fourth Coordination Meeting of the Ministers of Higher Education in OIC Member States convened by ISESCO in Paris, on 17 October 2001, alongside the 31st Session of UNESCO General Conference, inviting for the holding of the Fifth Coordination Meeting alongside the 32nd Session of UNESCO General Conference; referring to the resolution of the 29th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in June 2002 in Khartoum, Sudan, praising this initiative and endorsing the decisions of the 4th Coordination Meeting; being keen on supporting joint Islamic action by means of securing coordination of OIC Member States positions to take up the civilizational, intellectual and scientific challenges leveled at the Muslim Ummah as it ushers in the 21st century; and, further, recognizing the distinguished relationships between UNESCO and ISESCO in view of their civilizational mission and given the complementarity of their objectives and the positive results arrived at through joint cooperation whose axes and priorities were charted out by the Fourth Coordination Meeting, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization extended invitation to hold the Fifth Coordination Meeting of the heads of delegation of OIC Member States alongside the 32nd Session of UNESCO General Conference. The Member States responded to the invitation and the meeting was convened on 2 October 2003, at UNESCO headquarters.

The General Director offered a lunch in honor of the Heads of delegation of OIC Member States, which was attended by H.E. Dr. Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director General, who gave an address on the occasion, whereby he praised the outstanding and exemplary cooperation between UNESCO and ISESCO. The latter also invited in his speech the other organizations to follow the model of this cooperation, which is the perfect example of a genuine partnership, benefiting the Member States and contributing to the development of the educational, scientific and cultural move therein.

A- The meeting was attended by H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization- ISESCO- , H.E. Dr. Khaled Alioua, President of ISESCO's 7th General Conference Session, Minister of Higher Education, Executive Staff Training and Scientific Research in the Kingdom of Morocco, H.E. Dr. Marcio Barbosa, UNESCO Deputy Director General, and Their Excellencies the

Heads of delegation of OIC Member States. The meeting was likewise attended by a number of representatives for Arab and Islamic Organizations.

- B- The Meeting was opened by H.E. Dr. Khaled Alioua, President of ISESCO's 7th General Conference, and Minister of Higher Education, Staff Training and Scientific Research in the Kingdom of Morocco, who lauded the practice that has been consecrated by ISESCO for ten years, consisting in holding such meetings for discussing such issues as those of interest to the Muslim Ummah and submitted to UNESCO's General Conference, with a view to coordinating and harmonizing stances on them, particularly in this juncture where blind onslaughts are being staged against Islam. Such onslaughts mix between eccentric individual behavior and the characteristics of Islam as a belief system and as a civilization, which gives them a pretext to wage war on Islam. He also praised the outcome of cooperation between UNESCO and ISESCO.

After he conveyed again the chairmanship's gratitude to ISESCO's Director General for his favorable reaction and purposeful harmonization efforts, he suggested him to ponder on follow-up mechanisms for coordination between Islamic Member States of the UNESCO in all matters relevant to its activities and fields of action, as part of a futuristic and prospective view which is likely to secure the Islamic world a strong presence and efficiency in such international bodies.

- C- In his opening address, H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, first expressed his thanks to the Heads of delegation of OIC Member States for their kind response to the invitation to attend this important meeting destined to coordinate efforts and promote cooperation with UNESCO. He then expressed thanks to the Director General of UNESCO for his keen interest to strengthen and promote cooperation between the two Organizations. The Director General also reviewed the subjects slated for discussion through working documents prepared by ISESCO and UNESCO as well as the major axes of joint cooperation under ISESCO 2004-2006 Action Plan and UNESCO Biennial Plan 2004-2005. He highlighted the efforts exerted by ISESCO in terms of promoting dialogue among civilizations, protecting cultural and civilizational heritage in Iraq, pointing out that the meeting will address the status of educational and scientific institutions destroyed by the earthquake that stroke at the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, in the light of reports presented by the Islamic Organization.

- D- The floor was then taken by H.E. Mr. Marcio Barbosa, on behalf of H.E. Dr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, who thanked the

Islamic Organization for its cooperation and for the coordination of positions taken with respect to some international issues pertaining to the situation of education, science and culture in the Member States. He expressed satisfaction at the level of cooperation between the two organizations as part of an exemplary, balanced partnership combining realism, volition and commitment. He stressed the importance of pooling efforts of the regional and international organizations to help develop an international community based on the values of justice, tolerance and dialogue.

- E- The proceedings were steered by H.E. Dr. Khaled Alioua, President of ISESCO 7th General Conference Session, Minister of Higher Education, Executive Staff Training and Scientific Research in the Kingdom of Morocco. The meeting examined the proposals made by ISESCO in connection with its projected cooperation with UNESCO under the Islamic Organization's Action Plan 2004-2006 and UNESCO Biennial Plan 2004-2005. The heads of delegation also assessed cooperation conducted by the two Organizations over the elapsing period, notably the activities scheduled under the executive plan for the years 2002-2003. They also examined the different items contained in the working documents prepared by ISESCO, chief of which is the document on ISESCO's efforts in terms of promoting dialogue among civilizations, protecting cultural and civilizational heritage in Iraq and heightening awareness about the status of educational and scientific institutions destroyed by the earthquake that stroke at the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

- F- The Heads of delegation underlined the critical importance of coordination among Member States in such a comprehensive edge- cutting method, reiterating their blessing and support to the efforts expended by ISESCO Director General in this respect and affirming the necessity to pursue ahead to have ISESCO keep pace with relevant international conferences and symposia, mandating the Director General to organize coordination meetings of ISESCO Member States alongside those events to optimize complementarity and foster the unity of Muslim countries.

Following deliberations and discussions of the various subjects under review, the meeting issued the following recommendations:

- 1- Adopting the documents presented by ISESCO to the Fifth Coordination Meeting of the Heads of delegation of OIC Member States and thanking the Islamic Organization for these thorough documents and for the successful efforts exerted to promote joint Islamic action, secure coordination among Member States and to boost cooperation with UNESCO.

- 2- Praising the working paper presented by the Islamic Organization on the results and future prospects of cooperation between ISESCO and UNESCO, described as

comprehensive and much to-the-point, endorsing the project submitted by ISESCO on the fields of cooperation with UNESCO for the period (2004-2005), and supplementing the project with the Member States' remarks.

- 3- Inviting for development and promotion of fields of cooperation between UNESCO, ISESCO, ALECSO and the Arab Bureau of Education for Gulf States (ABEGS), as regards fields of common concern.
- 4- Expressing appreciation for the efforts of ISESCO and commending the results of joint cooperation with similar organizations which contributed to achieving quality as regards implementation of the Organization's programmes, by means of intensifying contact with similar Arab, Islamic and international organizations and taking advantage of their vast expertise and large experience at world level, thereby avoiding duplication and securing mutual support and inter-complementarity, while paying heed, all the while, to the specificities of Muslim societies.
- 5- Condemning terrorism in any way, shape or form, and whoever its agent is; calling upon UNESCO to hold, jointly with ISESCO, a special conference to come up with a definition of terrorism liable to put an end to the amalgam enshrouding the concept of terrorism; asserting the principle of Islamic States' opening up to effective dialogue among civilizations, as well as underlining the importance of publicizing Islamic culture, along with our religion and behavior in dealing with others; and appealing to the Member States to support the issuance of an agreement on cultural diversity, in respect for, and in recognition of the specificities of all civilizations and cultures.
- 6- Inviting the Member States to integrate dialogue among civilizations and cultures as a subject matter into their school curricula, with a view to consecrating such values in the minds of the Muslim coming generation, supporting the outstanding experience of Member States aiming at promoting dialogue and redressing the false stereotypes on Islam and Muslims, and publishing as well as generalizing them in the living languages.
- 7- Praising ISESCO's efforts in the field of promoting dialogue of civilizations and cultures, consisting mainly in the holding of numerous international symposia and meetings attended by eminent scholars and experts from inside and outside the Islamic world, the participation in leading conferences convened by parallel organizations like UNESCO and the preparation of studies and strategies highlighting the contribution of migrant Muslim brains in bridging the cultural and scientific gap between the civilizations, as well as the white book on dialogue among civilizations published jointly with the OIC and documenting the resolutions, recommendations, declarations and communiqués issued by regional and international organizations on dialogue among civilizations, along with the reports, working documents and executive plans.
- 8- Stressing the importance of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World in terms of consolidating Islamic civilizational identity, affirming receptivity to other human cultures, regardless of their doctrines or backgrounds, and promoting interaction with

the diverse contemporary issues, as well as coexistence with the human, artistic, literary and cultural creativity, from a position of strength, excellence and distinction, requesting Member States to contribute to the implementation of the cultural projects adopted by the Consultative Council for Implementation of the Strategy.

- 9- Urging Islamic countries to marshal concerted efforts and endeavors, with the view to counter the smear campaign mounted on Islam and Moslems, highlight the Islamic perspective, redress the Islamic cultural concepts and rehabilitate the true image of Islam, and shed light on the contribution of the Islamic civilization in enriching the human civilization and spreading principles of tolerance as well as values of fair and peaceful coexistence among peoples, through drawing up a practical programme in coordination with the Member States, and which is to be implemented by ISESCO.
- 10-Acclaiming the participation of ISESCO in sponsoring and co-organizing a number of international conferences falling within the scope of its competence, which enabled the Islamic Organization to echo the voice of the Islamic world and to explain its attitude as regards the most important issues at hand, calling upon the Organization to consolidate this presence at the international arena.
- 11-Praising the efforts exerted by the Islamic Organization, along with its moves and contacts with UNESCO and the relevant international and regional organizations in order to lay down an integrated and comprehensive action plan designed to protect the Iraqi cultural heritage and retrieve the despoiled items, and inviting these organizations to be a principal partner in implementing this plan.
- 12-Inviting the Islamic Organization to constitute a panel of Moslem experts in order to contribute to restoring and preserving the devastated Iraqi monuments, and to draw up a practical programme for intervening directly in Iraq, in coordination with the Member States and in cooperation with the competent authorities in the Iraqi transitional government, along with other international actors.
- 13- Commending the initiative taken by ISESCO to open a bank account, destined to the fund for rebuilding and equipping educational, scientific and cultural institutions ruined by the earthquake that struck at the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, and calling upon Member States, as well as regional and international organizations, to make contributions to this fund, in order to enable these institutions to resume normal functioning, while emphasizing the need to avoid opening other support funds so as to ensure efficiency and workability, and to avert duplication of work for similar institutions.
- 14-Calling up for assisting UNESCO's programmes geared to the support of educational, scientific and cultural institutions in Palestine; condemning the Israeli violations and aggressions against the educational, scientific and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, the Golan in Syria and the South of Lebanon; calling upon the government of Israel to retract from its decision to build a wall inside the domain of Al-Quds University, which despoils the university of 1/3 of its space area

used to build some faculties as well as administrative, social and cultural facilities; and reiterating solidarity of the Member States with the Palestinian people in their struggle to recover their legitimate rights and build their independent state, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

- 15-Emphasising that action be taken by ISESCO to have implementation, as well as funds allocated to a number of major programmes initiated by parallel regional and international organizations for the benefit of the Islamic world, assigned and entrusted to the Islamic Organization.
- 16-Hailing the outstanding efforts of the Islamic Organization to convene this meeting in the most convenient conditions, as the necessary preparations have been made to organize it in the best way, and commending the efforts exerted by the Director General of ISESCO towards developing programmes of the Islamic Organization and ensuring that the programmes are adapted to the requirements of the Islamic world.
- 17-Lauding the responsiveness of UNESCO's Director General, Dr. Koïchiro Matsuura, to hold this coordination meeting, concurrently with the convening of the 32nd Session of the General Conference of UNESCO; thanking his assistants for their effective collaboration; and inviting ISESCO's Director General to proceed with this outstanding coordination effort.
- 18-Inviting ISESCO's Director General to call for convening the sixth coordination meeting on the occasion of the 33rd session of the UNESCO's General Conference during 2006.