

Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development

The First Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers held in Jeddah, on 29 Rabia I - 1st Rabia II, 1423 A.H. corresponding to 10-12 June 2002 A.D,

- Recalling Resolution 11/9- E issued by the 9th Islamic Summit Conference on environment from an Islamic perspective, whereby the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization- ISESCO- was mandated- in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and all relevant international and regional organizations- to prepare an action programme representing the Islamic perception of environment and development, to be presented at the Earth Summit in Johannesburg, in 2002;

- Having taken cognizance of the results arrived at by the First World Forum on Environment from an Islamic perspective, held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 26-28 Rajab 1421A.H/ 23-25 October 2000, and the Jeddah Declaration issued by the Forum, the Abu Dhabi Declaration on the Future of Environment Action in the Arab World (2001), the Rabat Declaration on Investment Opportunities for Sustainable Development (2001), as well as the Tehran Declaration on Religions, Civilizations and Environment (July, 2001) and the Resolution of Oman Forum on Environment and Sustainable Development (Muscat, December 2001);

- Recalling further Resolution 11/28- E on Environment from an Islamic Perspective adopted by the 28th Islamic Conference of Foreign Affairs Ministers (Session of Peace and Development), held in Bamako, on 4-6 Rabia II 1422 A.H/ 25-27 June 2001, which affirmed the afore-mentioned resolutions and tasked the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to make necessary contacts with OIC Member States and regional and international organizations with a view to holding the First Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers;

- Referring to the Arab Declaration on sustainable development issued by the Arab Environment Ministers (Cairo, October 2001), and the African Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Development (Nairobi, November 2001) as well as the Joint Ministerial Declaration by the Executive boards of the Arab and African Councils of Environment Ministers;

- Committed to the Islamic approach built on promotion of man's dignity and achievement of his lieutenancy mission on earth through good deeds that conduce to sustainable development, foster social solidarity, raise the care to orphans and the have-nots, induce edification of civilization without any plundering or dilapidation and affirm the organic relationship between man and the earth in terms of existence and development;

- Supportive of the regional and international efforts exerted to promote the standard of the life of all humans through sustainable development of all social, economic, cultural, environmental and health aspects, the ultimate purpose being to achieve a decent human life in a sound environment;
 - Keeping in line with the general orientations embedded in the comprehensive study prepared by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on environment, health and sustainable development, as part of contribution to the Earth Summit due in Johannesburg, on 26 August - 4 September 2002;
- Proclaims the following:

Article 1: Honour bestowed on man

Man is the lieutenant of Allah on earth. He is mandated to build civilization and held responsible for the harnessing and protection of environment. The Muslim, in particular, is duty-bound to take care of the environment, in the general acceptance of the term, and to make every personal and possible effort to achieve sustainable development for the general well-being of each and everybody.

Article 2: Responsibility of man

Indeed, the most beloved by Allah are the pious and the charitable, and the most hated by Allah are the one who wreck havoc in earth. Charity is every good deed that benefits to people and takes care of the environment in which they live. It may be an act of social solidarity, a contribution to the restoration of peace and security or the eradication of poverty and unemployment, in a bid to achieve justice and equity through collective participation in the development enterprise, motivated by religious, cultural and humanitarian drives.

Article 3: Environment from an Islamic perspective

The environment is a gift donated to man by Allah. Therefore, individuals and communities are, all, duty-bound to take care of it and promote all its natural resources, including air, climate, water, seas, flora and fauna, and refrain from any act likely to cause pollution or damage the eco-system or disturb the balance thereto.

Article 4: Human right to environment

The right to education and to a decent life shall be recognized as well as the right to a sound, hygienic environment. The State and the society shall secure these rights to enable the individual to fully enjoy his humanness and contribute to the sustainable development of his community. Women shall also be recognized as full partners in the sustainable development action.

Article 5: Major constraints of sustainable development

Despite the significant progress made during the period of after the Rio Declaration, in the field of environment and sustainable development in the Islamic countries, there still exist some constraints facing many of those

countries in adopting sustainable development plans and programmes, chief among these constraints are :.

a- Poverty is responsible for many health and social, as well as psychological and moral problems. The local, national and international communities need to devise development policies and plans for economic reforms in order to address those problems, by offering job opportunities, ensuring natural, human, economic and educational development of the poorest and most underdeveloped regions, and eradicating illiteracy.

b- Debts: Public debts, natural disasters, including drought, desertification and social backwardness resulting from ignorance, diseases and poverty all constitute the major constraints that stand in the way of successful sustainable development plans and adversely affect poor communities most particularly and the international community at large. Everyone is duty-bound to be supportive, in order to surmount these difficulties and spare humanity these hazards.

c- Wars, armed conflicts and foreign occupation, which have a harmful effect on environment and environmental safety and necessity to lay down legislation and commitments that forbid and penalize polluting the environment or cutting trees or exterminating animals; and observing the principle of dignity in dealing with prisoners according to international law, and not maiming the death or destroying houses or civil facilities or water sources.

d- Over population, particularly in cities of developing countries and the deterioration of living conditions in shanty towns and an increase in the demand for resources, health and social services.

e- Deterioration of natural resources basis and their continuous over utilization to bolster local production and consumption patterns which add to the depletion of natural resources and hampers sustainable development in developing countries.

f- Absence of modern technologies and technical expertise necessary for the implementation of sustainable development programmes and plans.

g- Insufficiency of expertise necessary for Islamic countries to allow them to fulfil their commitment towards world environmental issues and to participate with international community in the efforts designed to work out solutions to those issues.

Article 6: Twenty-first century challenges

a- Secure funding sources necessary for sustainable development in developing countries and commit industrialized countries to stepping up support to developing nations (to stand at 1,5% of GNP).

b- Elaboration of developmental, health and educational programmes for the least developed countries for state, local, regional and national communities, as well as relevant organizations share responsibility, albeit in varying degrees, in elaborating . They are also required to help care for childhood and motherhood, build infrastructure and facilities, by financing sustainable development

programmes and by designing active political plans in this area. The qualification and competence of all those parties are gaged in the light of services they extend in these vitally important fields, as well as in the light of the consideration they give to developing programmes for developmental action at the governmental, community and institutional levels.

c- Achieving complementarity and promoting internal and foreign investment by putting in place genuine partnership between advanced countries and developing countries and by offering better and greater opportunities for their products to compete in local and world market places through the World Trade Organization.

d- Finding out novel funding means to boost development efforts of the developing countries.

e- Transfer of environment-friendly technology, encouraging research workers and scientific action as they constitute some of the prerequisites for enhancing developmental action, including raising greater awareness about scientific thinking and research in the fields of sustainable development, developing working means in this area and consequently helping society move to advanced levels of development and progress with greater speed and less cost.

f- Preservation of the civilizational heritage given its cardinal role in sustainable development, for it contributes to entrenching the cultural identity, preserves its specificities, protects it from melting, helps shape an independent personality of individuals and groups, provides a powerful impetus to the developmental action to defend the national and religious personality and safeguard the common future, and stresses the spiritual and moral dimensions advocated by the heavenly religions has a positive impact in respect of pushing development towards the good, righteous deeds and social solidarity.

g- Highlighting the prejudice caused to Islamic countries as a result of the measures taken by the international community to face world environment issues and the international community's responsibility in providing assistance to affected Islamic countries.

h- Securing full and effective participation of the developing countries in decision-making and shoring up their presence at international economic institutions, rendering thereby the mechanisms of global economy more transparent, equitable and respectful of the rules and regulations in force, to enable the developing countries to take up the challenges posed by globalization.

Article 7: Islamic perception of sustainable development

Administrative and legal management:

a- Achieve justice advocated by Islam between peoples and between all social categories through a just world system enabling regional and international institutions to discharge their responsibilities and allowing for equitable

implementation of international resolutions, termination of foreign occupation and preservation of world peace and security .

b- Building a world system for administrative and legal management to serve as a basis for countries to set up their national systems that promote active participation of all sectors of society in planning and achieving sustainable development.

c- Achieving justice among peoples and promoting the role of United Nations agencies, and stimulating a climate suitable for the establishment of a genuine partnership between countries through a just system for world trade to replace the debt system that is depleting the resources of developing nations.

d- Necessity for the international community to rein in the practices, policies and conducts that affect badly the environment and man, and hamper the development of individuals and groups; and which include killing people, destroying houses, threatening natural resources, polluting the environment with deadly weapons, depleting water sources, deliberately breaching international laws and universally recognized customs, and utilizing the natural resources basis for the sake of promoting unsound consumption patterns.

e- Educating righteous youth having a sense of responsibility towards the environment, and the preservation of religious and moral values that hold the family and society together and keep them away from extremism or discrimination on grounds of race, religion or culture.