

**Organization of the Islamic Conference**  
**Islamic Educational, Scientific**  
**and Cultural Organization -ISESCO-**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council  
**First Session – First Meeting**

**Rabat, 28-29 Moharram and 1 Safar 1403**

**(15-17 November 1982)**

The first meeting of the first session of the Executive Council of ISESCO (Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) was held, following the invitation of the Director General, in Rabat (Kingdom of Morocco) on 28-29 Moharram and 1 Safar 1403 (15-17 November 1982) with the participation of:

- Mr. Ahmed Zafr Farouqui  
Secretary General of the Education  
Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- Mr. Salah Bawazir  
Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in UNESCO  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. Abou Al-Caba Touré  
Professor in the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Dakar  
Republic of Senegal
- Doctor Mohammed Sherif Ahmed  
Director General of Religious Information and Orientation  
Republic of Iraq
- Mr. El Hadj Mamadi Keita  
Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
Republic of Guinea
- Dr. Mahmoud Maw'id  
Director of the Education and Higher Education Department of the Palestinian Liberation Organization  
Palestine, Arab Republic of Syria
- Mr. Mohamed Bin Bachir  
Secretary General of the League of Islamic Universities  
Morocco
- Mr. Omar Saad Touré  
General Inspector of the Arab Language and Director of the Centre for the Promotion of the Arabic Language  
Republic of Mali
- Mr. Zain Al Azman Zain Al Abidine  
Counselor, chargé d'affaires of the Malaysian Embassy in Rabat  
Malaysia
- Dr. Tawfiq Chaoui  
Secretary General of the International Union of Arab-Muslim Schools  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Dr. Ekmelddin Ihsanoglu  
Director General of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art, and Culture
- Dr. Ali Kettani  
Director General of the Islamic Foundation for Sciences, Technology and Development

Absent to the meeting were:

- Dr. Azzedine Ibrahim  
President of the United Arab Emirates University
- Dr. Fouat Sezgin  
Director of the Centre of the History of Arab and Islamic Sciences
- Mr. Wareth Eddine Muhammed  
Sheikh Ali Jah Mohammed Mosque

ISESCO Director General, Prof. Abdelhadi BOUTALEB and his collaborators took part to this meeting, in addition to Mr. Mohammed El Fassi, head of the coordination centre between Arab Commissions of Education, Science and Culture in Rabat.

The agenda of the meeting comprised the following:

1. Annual Report of the Organization since its Founding General Conference presented by the Director General;
2. Constitution of the Bureau of the Council,
3. Approval of the agenda;
4. Review of the draft Internal Regulations of the Executive Council;
5. Review of the project of expanding the powers of the Executive Council;
6. Review of the draft Internal Regulations of the General Conference;
7. Review of the draft Personnel Regulations of the Organization;
8. Review of the Financial Regulations of the Organization;
9. Symposium on the Role of ISESCO in serving Islamic Thinking;
10. Date of the next meeting of the Executive Council.

The Council held four sessions, in addition to the opening session during which the Director General presented his report on the activities of the Organization since the Founding General Conference.

The meeting was declared open by Mr. Hachimi Filali, Minister of Habous and Islamic Affairs of the Kingdom of Morocco, on behalf of Dr. Azzedine Laraki, president of the Founding General Conference.

After welcoming, on behalf of the Government of Morocco, the members of the Executive Council, Mr. Filali pointed out to the efforts deployed by ISESCO since its Founding General Conference, and underlined the important role played by the Executive Council for the preparation of the Organization's action plan and the path to follow in laying down actions of the Organization. The Minister also paid tribute to the expertise, experience and dynamism of Prof. Abdelhadi BOUTALEB, ISESCO Director General and praised his distinguished qualities. After noting the great experience of the members of the Executive Council, he pointed out that

ISESCO is hoping for effective support from the Organization of the Islamic Conference and affiliated organizations.

Mr. Hachimi Filali reaffirmed the commitment of Morocco, under the leadership of his Majesty King Hassan II, for the support of the Organization, especially in this early stage, and announced that his Majesty has given away a piece of land to the Organization in Rabat in order to build its future headquarters. He stated that HRH Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed would put the first stone of this edifice, on behalf of his father, during this session. The speech of the minister was then concluded by wishes of full success for the proceedings of the Council.

ISESCO Director General, Prof. Abdelhadi BOUTALEB presented the annual report for the period starting from Rajab 11<sup>th</sup>, 1402 to Moharram 30<sup>th</sup>, 1403 (May 5<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>, 1982).

At first, he expressed his satisfaction on the organization of this first session, dedicated to the structuring of ISESCO. He then indicated that the difficulties met during the launching of the Organization did not prevent it from starting the implementation of the annual action plan, adopted by the Founding General Conference.

Among these difficulties:

1. **The headquarters of the Organization:** the very first headquarters of ISESCO were modest offices, before it moved out to a new building, hired in Rabat. The Director General recalled that the Kingdom of Morocco donated a piece of land for building ISESCO's future permanent headquarters. Prof. BOUTALEB also recalled that his Majesty King Hassan II donated 600.000 US dollars to support the organization in dealing with its financial problems, and that another grant of 50.000 US dollars was given by the Islamic Solidarity Fund.
2. **Structuring of the Organization:** ISESCO, as indicated by the Director General, adopted the general principle which stipulates that the nature of task is what determines structures and not the opposite. Therefore, the Organization relied on a group of experts and administrative agents for the implementation of the current action plan. Their role is based on design and programming. In addition, the Organization will request the service of contractual personnel, and for the implementation of its decisions, it will request assistance from specialized international and regional organizations.

The Director General indicated that, under the concern of performing its activities within an appropriate legal framework, ISESCO has laid down the necessary statutes and regulations. Therefore, ISESCO elaborated the Personnel Regulations, the Financial Regulations, the Internal Regulations of the Executive Council, and the Internal Regulations of the General Conference. All these texts were written in the three working languages of the Organization, and were submitted before the General Conference which will present them to the General Conference for approval.

### **Use of Technical Means:**

Mr. BOUTALED indicated that the Organization has resorted, in the accomplishment of its tasks, to modern techniques, and is planning to purchase a computer for setting up the Centre of Islamic Data. And due to the prevailing financial circumstances, ISESCO requested from the Moroccan government to have access to the services of the National Documentation Centre in Rabat: the Organization will acquire one terminal that will be installed in ISESCO's headquarters and will be connected to the computer of the centre to allow storing, processing and receiving information, until the Organization would have purchased its own computer.

### **Implementation of projects approved by the Founding General Conference:**

In this regard, the Director General pointed out that the action plan includes two types of projects:

#### **a) Information projects:**

The Organization will get informed on great projects implemented or scheduled within the framework of its powers;

It will get informed on brochures, periodicals, and specialized journals;

Since July 1982, the Organization was informed of library resources and documentation references of the different specialized organizations, addressed questionnaires to governments of states, and contacted embassies of Member States in Rabat as well as several databank across the world.

#### **b) Action plan:**

Holding a symposium on the role of ISESCO at the service of the Islamic Thought and publishing a periodical of the Organization.

Concerning the symposium, the Director General highlighted the overall vision and the administrative and financial terms of the Organization. The symposium will address action plans of the next two years, priority actions, means to be implemented for the achievement of the set objectives, and human, material and funding resources.

Concerning the periodical, the Director General informed the Council that the layout of the first issue of the journal "Islam Today" was completed, and which will be edited regularly by ISESCO.

### **Third Conference of Ministers of Islamic Affairs:**

The Director General took part in this conference, held in Niamey (Niger). He presented an exposé on the activity and first steps of the Organization. During the conference, the Republics of Bangladesh, Djibouti, and Sierra-Leone signed ISESCO's statutes.

The conference adopted a resolution related to coordination of the action of OIC-affiliated organizations and entrusted the Secretariat General of this Organization of its application.

The conference charged ISESCO with implementing a number of projects such as setting up liaison with the Oum Al Qura University's International Centre of Islamic Education. The conference requested to collaborate with ISESCO in designing education and Islamic education programmes. ISESCO contacted the Centre and invited it to share opinions on the best ways for collaboration between the two organizations.

The conference requested from the Organization to include illiteracy elimination and information in rural areas in its priorities. In implementation of this decision, the Organization charged one of its best experts in illiteracy elimination to prepare a preliminary study on programmes of illiteracy elimination of the governments and organizations of Islamic countries in order to select the most economic and most profitable approaches.

Moreover, the Organization charged one of its experts, specialized in information issues, to carry out a study on ISESCO's role in terms of information, especially for providing proposals on the action to be undertaken in this field with best chances of success.

### **Cooperation with international organizations:**

The General Director indicated that the cooperation plan is based on two main axes:

1. Getting informed on the achievements and projects of the different organizations in order to benefit ISESCO from its experiences,
2. Adopting the principle of the conclusion of bilateral agreements with major cultural organizations.

While waiting for the design of the draft conventions, Prof. BOUTALEB underlined that ISESCO contacted a number of organizations such as UNESCO, ALECSO, the Arab Education Bureau for the Gulf States, and the League of the Muslim World in Mecca, in order to ensure cooperation in fields of common interest.

### **Visits to Member States:**

In September 1982, Prof. Abdelhadi BOUTALEB visited some Arab States to raise their awareness on the role of ISESCO, propose its statutes, and request them to respond to the questionnaires, and contribute to the budget of the Organization.

Concerning his report, the Director General stressed out that ISESCO is expecting the contribution of all parties in the implementation of its action, especially members of the Executive Council. He indicated that the executive apparatus is ready to facilitate the task of the Council for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Organization.

At the beginning of the second session, the Council appointed its bureau as follows:

President: Lr. Salah Bawazir  
Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Vice-President: Mr. Oumar Saad Touré  
Representative of the Republic of Mali  
Mr. Ahmed Zafr Farouqui  
Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Rapporteur: Doctor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu  
Director General of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture in Istanbul

The Council adopted its agenda, and added an item relating to the review of the consequences of the Israeli intrusion in Lebanon and its repercussions on scientific and education institutions and Holy sites of the Palestinians.

The Council examined the draft Internal Regulations of the executive Council, presented by the General Directorate of the Organization. The Director General indicated in this regard, that it was deemed necessary, in light of the statutes of the Organization, to expand the powers of the Council. The proposal of expansion will be presented to the General Conference. The Council decided to review the draft Internal Regulations in details, and focused on the role entrusted to it in reviewing questions which are submitted to it.

In addressing the issue relating to the appointment of the members of the Financial Control Commission, which has the power to appoint members of the Executive Council, the Council concluded that it was not obligatory that this Commission must be made up of five members representing their respective countries in the Executive Council, but instead it can be constituted from five members representing Member States and who are specialists in financial and accounting issues.

Taking into consideration time constraints, the Council opted for constituting two sub-commissions.

One of these sub-commissions will have as a mission the examination of draft Internal Regulations of the Executive Council, and the expansion of the powers of the Executive Council. This sub-commission is made up of representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Mali, Palestine, and the Republic of Iraq. Mr. Mohamed Fassi Fihri represents the General Directorate of ISESCO.

The second sub-commission is in charge of studying the draft Financial Regulations and the Personnel Regulations of the Organization. It is made up of some members of the Executive Council, including the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Guinea and the Republic of Senegal, as well as from Dr. Ali Kettani and Tawfiq Chaoui, and the representative of ISESCO's General Directorate, Mr. Boubker Sqalli.

In the third session, Mr. Mohammed Belbachir (Kingdom of Morocco) presented an exposé on the works of the first sub-commission. After discussion, it was decided to postpone discussing the expansion of the powers of the Executive Council to the next meeting of the Council.

Mr. Belbachir read the document adopted by the sub-commission on the draft Internal Regulations of the Council. The Council adopted some changes to the form of the text of the sub-commission, after discussions that included the Observer status of the Organization.

At the fourth session, the Council completed the examination of the issues of the Internal Regulations and it brought several changes to it. Then, the Council adopted its International Regulations.

Afterwards, the Council discussed the review of the draft Internal Regulations of the General Conference. After discussions, the Council requested more details on the position of the General Directorate. Shall be there a legal gap, in case the Council, due to time constraints, is unable to examine completely the regulations? The Director General answered that the main gap is constituted by the Internal Regulations of the Executive Council, of which there is no equivalent in the Organization of the Islamic Conference. However ISESCO may adopt the other similar texts in force within the OIC, before setting up its own regulations.

The Council proposed that the General directorate should review texts prepared by the sub-commission, translate them into the other working languages, and submit them to members of the Organization. Observations on these texts must be returned before December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1982 in order to distribute them among all the parties concerned.

The Council examined the item concerning the symposium on the role of ISESCO in the service of Islamic thought. In that respect, the Director General made a presentation wherein he announced that the symposium will take place in Fez (Morocco), in accordance with the Founding General Conference's resolutions. He added that the symposium would primarily seek to come with a conception of the role of ISESCO and the drafting of its action plan. Will ISESCO be a sort of an Islamic UNESCO, that is an organization that plans and implements activities – This requires considerable human and material means; or will it be just a think tank which submits its conclusions to the governments of Muslim States, or even a combination of the two previous forms? The Director General underlined that, as concerns the participants to the symposium, ISESCO has taken certain criteria such as the geographical distribution and the diversity of competence. Thus ISESCO invited Muslim scholars specialized in scientific thought, economics and administrative science, in order to make for a better answer to the Founding General Conference's aspirations. Mr BOULATEB informed the Council's members that they were invited to take part in the meetings of the symposium due to convene on 26-27 Rabi'a I 1403 (11-12 January 1983).

The Council's members examined the possibility of holding their second meeting by the end of the symposium in order to study the conclusions and draw on them to draft an action plan of ISESCO for the two coming years, and to submit it to the General Conference. The Council decided to meet immediately after the close of the symposium on 30 Rabi'a I-1 Rabi'a II 1403 (15-16 January 1983).

The Council heard the clarifications of the Director General concerning the convening of the upcoming General Conference in April 1983, as decided by the Founding General Conference. The Council entrusted the Director General with conducting talks with the State which will host the conference, in order to arrange for the date and venue.

Finally the Council examined the Israeli incursion into Lebanon and the Zionist wrongdoings in the occupied territories. It adopted a resolution on that respect (see annex).

Before the close of the proceedings, the rapporteur read out a message addressed by the Council's members to His Majesty King of Morocco, in which they expressed the grateful thanks of the Organization for the king's attentive care.

Director General

Chairman of the Executive Council

Abdelhadi BOUTALEB

Dr Salah BAWAZIR

## **Annex: Resolution**

### **The Executive Council,**

Having considered paragraph b of article IV concerning the objectives of ISESCO: “to consolidate Islamic culture, protect the independence of Islamic thought against cultural invasion and distortion factors, and safeguard the features and distinct characteristics of the Islamic civilization,”

Having considered the action plan of ISESCO which was decided on by the Founding General Conference concerning the holy Muslim sites in the occupied Palestine and which includes “recommendations to the Member States to lend material and moral support to the cultural and educational institutions of the Palestinian people,”

Strongly condemns the occupation of Lebanon by the Israeli Zionists who perpetrated heinous, savage acts against innocent people (including women, children and the elderly) that took toll of thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians, displaced many families, damaged cultural, educational and scientific Palestinian institutions based in Lebanon, and caused thousands of arrests among intellectuals and teachers whose fate is still unknown.

Strongly condemns the racist Zionist practices in the occupied territories such as the expropriation of lands, obliteration of the cultural and historical Islamic heritage, recurrent aggression on the holy sites, curtailing the freedoms of writers and intellectuals, imposing martial laws on educational institutions and expulsion of tens of university teachers.

Requests from ISESCO, represented by its Director General, as well as from the governments of the Islamic Conference to use all adequate means of the international organizations in order to put an end to the inhumane wrongdoings, restore to the Centre of Studies as well as to other Palestinian organizations all cultural and scientific properties and historical documents, free the intellectuals, teachers and students and integrate them in their universities.

Calls for providing support in order to reconstruct the devastated cultural institutions, facing up to the consequences of the Zionist occupation and its implications on the Islamic cultural heritage, denouncing at all levels the appalling crimes committed by Israel, and safeguarding the endangered Muslim holy sites through restoration of the sites already damaged.

Finally, the Executive Council urges the General Directorate to give priority to the drafting of a plan for safeguarding and protecting the institutions of education and Islamic culture in the occupied territories (Palestine, Lebanon and Gabon).