



Draft Final Communiqué of

the 7th Coordination Meeting of the Heads of Delegation of the OIC Member States Taking Part in the 34th Session of UNESCO General Conference

Paris, 18 October 2007

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General Conference of UNESCO**

(UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 18 October 2007)

In fulfilment of the objectives of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation -ISESCO-; as part of the action aimed to support joint Islamic action and coordinate stances of the Member States of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference towards international issues in the fields of education, science and culture; and in support of the outstanding relations between ISESCO and UNESCO which materialised in a number of jointly implemented cooperation activities whose axes and priorities were set out by the Ministers of Education in the Member States and the meetings of joint committees between the two organisations;

And based on the decision of the sixth coordination meeting, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation convened the 7th session of the Coordination Meeting of the Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference during the 34th session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The Member States responded to the invitation and the meeting took place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 18 October 2007.

- A-** The meeting was attended by His Excellency Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of ISESCO, His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Sayyad, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Cooperation, representing His Excellency Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, His Excellency Ambassador Ba Bakar Ba, who represented His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, alongside their Excellencies the heads of delegation of the Member States of the OIC, their Excellencies the Ambassadors of the OIC Member States accredited at UNESCO, and a number of personalities representing Arab and Islamic organisations.
- B-** The meeting was opened by His Excellency Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of ISESCO, who made an address wherein he 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 have become a model for others to emulate. He also thanked His Excellency Mr. Kichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director General, for his keen efforts to enhance cooperation relations between UNESCO and ISESCO and to facilitate measures to open the regional office of ISESCO at UNESCO. Dr. Altwajri also welcomed the representative of His Excellency the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference whom he thanked for the efforts he exerts to support the activities of ISESCO as well as to promote joint Islamic action and to develop its institutions.

- C-** ISESCO Director General also reviewed the agenda of the meeting and the items scheduled for discussion in the working papers prepared by ISESCO.
- D-** For his part, His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Sayyad, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Cooperation, commended the strong cooperation and outstanding partnership existing between ISESCO and UNESCO and the wide range of activities and projects and programmes benefiting cooperating Member States. He also underscored the importance of enhancing cooperation between organizations with the same fields of competence, and called for pooling efforts together to build a society where the values of justice and tolerance and dialogue are prevalent. He also welcomed the setting up of a delegation of ISESCO at UNESCO, the aim being to boost cooperation relations between the two organisations and to facilitate coordination in the implementation of joint activities.
- E-** In the address he read out on behalf of His Excellency Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, His Excellency Ambassador Ba Bakar Ba, the representative of the OIC Secretary General, expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of cooperation between ISESCO and UNESCO. In this regard, he expressed his keen interest in boosting this partnership for the benefit of education and culture and sciences in the Muslim world, and he called for drawing on the Ten-Year Plan of Action of the OIC to identify cooperation fields between ISESCO and UNESCO. He also conveyed to the meeting the satisfaction and appreciation of the Secretary General of the OIC for the outstanding efforts undertaken by ISESCO, under the direction of its Director General, to enhance educational, scientific and cultural action in the Muslim world.
- F-** Their Excellencies the heads of delegation pointed out 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 welcomed the opening of a delegation of ISESCO at UNESCO. They also pledged support for the efforts made by ISESCO Director General to this end and stressed the importance of pursuing action in this regard.

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

- 1- Approving the documents and reports presented by ISESCO to the 7th meeting of the heads of delegation of the OIC Member States participating in the meetings of the 34th session of UNESCO General Conference, while taking into account the observations made by the Member States, in addition to thanking the Organization for its efforts to enhance joint Islamic action and to coordinate stances of Member States vis-à-vis a number of major issues.
- 2- Praising the outcome of cooperation between ISESCO and UNESCO in the recent years, and stressing the importance of sustaining it.
- 3- Assessing the outcome of joint cooperation between ISESCO and parallel institutions, and the efforts exerted to enhance quality standards and to avail of outstanding expertise and international experiences for the purpose of avoiding duplication, in addition to mastering the financial and human resources available and calling for need to bolster such cooperative action in fields of common interest.
- 4- Calling upon Member States to mainstream dialogue among civilizations and the culture of justice and peace and tolerance and the principles of human rights in their curricula, and inviting ISESCO to draw up a strategy to enhance just and equal dialogue among cultures and civilization, mindful of the specificities of human societies and international changes.
- 5- Commending the efforts exerted by ISESCO and the outcome of specialised conferences and symposia held by the Organization for the purpose of enhancing dialogue and alliance of civilizations and activating the role of cultural diversity as well as highlighting the true image of Islam and Muslims, disseminating the values of tolerance and balance and moderation and consultation and democracy and the respect for human rights. The meeting also urged on ISESCO to carry on its efforts directed towards such vital issues.
- 6- Expressing satisfaction at the resolution of the United Nations to involve the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in its efforts aimed to bolster dialogue and alliance of civilizations in its capacity as the party which the Organisation of the Islamic

Conference entrusted with the task of implementing programmes on dialogue among civilizations in the Muslim world, in addition to commending the initiative taken by ISESCO to convene an international symposium on the theme of “Human Cultures and Civilizations: From Dialogue to Alliance”, which was attended by a host of personalities from the realms of politics and culture and media alongside heads of regional and international organizations. The symposium was held in the capital city of the Tunisian Republic, in January 2006, under the high patronage of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, and it issued the “Tunis Declaration on the Alliance of Civilizations”.

- 7- Lauding the efforts ISESCO exerts in cooperation and consultation with parallel international organizations to preserve endangered civilizational heritage in the Member States, particularly in Palestine and Iraq and Afghanistan, and calling upon the Member States to support ISESCO and the action led at the regional and international levels in the same direction.
- 8- Denouncing the acts perpetrated by the Israeli authorities which consist in obliterating the Islamic character of Palestinian sanctities in Al Haram Al Qudsi (The Noble Sanctuary), demolishing neighbourhoods, deporting Palestinian populations, and disturbing 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- Stressing that the Muslim world rejects all manifestations of hatred, extremism, racism, segregation, and aggression against human dignity and rights, and that it denounces all forms of torture, ethnic cleansing and genocide which were committed and still continue to be committed in several parts of the world; while calling upon the Member States to draw lessons and conclusions from these violations which affected humanity throughout history, such as the Holocaust against the Jews and the affliction of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Israeli occupation.
- 10- Acknowledging ISESCO efforts and projects in the field of providing support to educational, scientific and cultural institutions in Palestine and Al Haram Al Qudsi Al Sharif. The meeting also called upon the Member States to provide further support and assistance to stop Israeli violations and aggressions targeting the basic facilities of those institutions, and to reaffirm solidarity with the Palestinian people in

their struggle for recovering their legitimate rights and building their independent state with Al Quds as its capital, while calling for extending support to educational and cultural institutions in the occupied territories of the Golan.

- 11-**Commending the contents of the technical and legal report illustrated with maps and photographs of the excavation works undertaken by the Israeli occupation forces around the Al Aqsa Mosque in Al Quds Asharif, which report was released by the symposium the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization held in Amman (Jordan) in April 2007.
- 12-**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.
- 13-**Welcoming the initiative to set up the Forum of Arab Parliamentarians for Education in collaboration between ISESCO, UNESCO, ALECSO and the Arab Bureau for Education in the Gulf States. The forum will offer an adequate framework to promote cooperation and partnership between educational institutions in the Member States and the organizations operating in the areas of education, science and culture, in addition to supporting the initiative by ISESCO Director General to establish the Forum of Parliamentarians of the Islamic World, the aim being to enlarge scope for such leading experience to benefit all the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.
- 14-**Reaffirming its appreciation of ISESCO for its good organization of the various specialised Islamic conferences in the fields of education, higher education and scientific research, culture, and the environment, in addition to affirming the commitment of the Member States to taking practical measures to implement the resolutions and pledges given in those conferences. The meeting also expressed thanks and recognition to the Member States playing host to the Islamic conference that took place.
- 15-**Commending ISESCO for holding and organizing the regular meeting of the points of contact between the institutions of the OIC and the UN systems at the permanent headquarters of ISESCO in Rabat in July 2006, which meeting took place in July 2006 for the first time in a Muslim country outside the offices of the United Nations. The heads of

delegation of the Member States participating the 34th session of UNESCO General Conference also praised the decisions and recommendations made in the meeting, especially as regards holding an international conference to counter terrorism.

- 16-Commending the initiative of ISESCO to hold “the international conference on terrorism: dimensions, threats and countermeasures”,** in collaboration with the UN, the OIC and the Tunisian government (Tunis, 15-17 November 2007) with the participation of a host of world leaders, politicians, intellectuals, media personalities and heads of international organizations. The meeting also decided to extend ample thanks and recognition to His Excellency Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali for consenting to have this conference hosted in the Tunisian Republic under His Excellency's patronage.
- 17-Stressing the key importance of the strategies prepared by ISESCO for the benefit of the Islamic world, such as the 'Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World', the 'Strategy for Developing Sciences and Technology in Islamic Countries', the 'Strategy for Developing Education in the Islamic Countries', the 'Strategy for Bringing Muslim Madhahibs Closer Together', the 'Strategy for Islamic Cultural Action in the West', and the 'Draft Strategy for Cultural Takaful to Serve Muslim Developmental and Civilizational Causes'.** The meeting also called on Member States to join efforts with ISESCO to execute those strategies for the purpose of achieving development and progress for the Islamic world in the educational, scientific and cultural fields.
- 18-Supporting the candidacy of the Moroccan Kingdom for hosting the World Expo 2012 in Tangiers, and the candidacy of the Republic of Turkey to host the World Expo 2015 in Izmir, while calling upon Member States as well as Arab and Islamic organizations to coordinate efforts to back up those two candidacies.**
- 19-Commending the outstanding achievements of Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, 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.** The meeting also called for endorsing the decision of the 28th Executive Council of ISESCO to nominate the Director General for a new term of office at the head of the General Directorate of the Organization. It also expressed thanks and gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for responding to the request made by the Executive Council to this end and for the noble order he gave that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should nominate Dr. Abdulaziz Othman

Altwaijri for a new term of office at the head of the General Directorate of ISESCO. The meeting also called upon the General Conference of ISESCO to approve this decision in its 10th session to be held in 2008.

- 20-** 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 the Director General of UNESCO for his kind cooperation with the Director General of ISESCO to complete the measures relating to the inauguration of ISESCO Office at UNESCO in Paris, which office started in May 2007 to discharge its coordination mission aiming to enhance cooperation relations between ISESCO and UNESCO and to facilitate the implementation of joint activities directed towards the Member States.
- 21-** Commending the efforts exerted by the Director General of ISESCO in the area of coordinating action between Member States in the fields falling within its ambit. 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 enabled the implementation of hundreds of joint programmes, which has earned ISESCO a well-deserved reputation and confidence and enabled it to secure colossal additional financial resources.
- 22-** Expressing thanks and gratitude to the Republic of Senegal, its President, Government and People for hosting the upcoming 11th session of the Islamic Summit in March 2008, while calling upon States as well as Islamic and international organizations to support holding this Conference and to contribute to succeeding its proceedings.
- 23-** Inviting the Director General of ISESCO to convene the 8th coordination meeting on the sidelines of the 35th session of UNESCO General Conference in 2009.