



Address by

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At the opening of the
13th General Conference of ISESCO

ISESCO headquarters, Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco: 11-12 October 2018

*All praise be to Allah, peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad,
his kith and kin*

Excellency Mr Abulfas Garayev, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, President of the 12th General Conference of ISESCO;

Excellency Mr Mahmoud Ismaile, President of the Palestinian National Commission for Education, Sciences and Culture, Vice-President of the 12th General Conference;

Excellency Mr Mohamed Laaraj, Minister of Culture and communication of the Kingdom of Morocco;

Excellency Dr Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al-Issa, Minister of Education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Rapporteur General of the Conference;

Excellency Dr Boubacar Doukouré, Adviser to the President of the Republic of Burkina Faso, Chairman of the ISESCO Executive Council;

Excellencies Heads of Delegations,

Excellencies Ambassadors and representatives of regional and international organizations, and members of delegations,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamu alaikum warahmatu Allah wabarakatuh,

It is my pleasure to address you at the opening of the 13th General Conference of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), held at ISESCO headquarters in Rabat the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco.

On this occasion, I have the honor to express my deep gratitude to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, may Allah preserve him, for the generous care he bestows upon ISESCO and for the support and facilitations the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco to the Organization which all allow it to discharge its functions in the best conditions.

I seize the opportunity to gratefully thank His Majesty, may Allah preserve him, and his brothers leaders of Member States beseeching Allah to assist them for achieving the good, progress and prosperity of the Islamic Ummah.

We are deeply grateful to His Majesty, may Allah preserve him, and his Brothers Majesties and Excellencies Heads of Member States, beseeching Allah to help them attain goodness, prosperity and glory for the entire Islamic Ummah.

I am pleased to extend my thanks and gratitude to H.E. Dr Abulfas Garayev, President of the 12th General Conference of ISESCO, for the efforts he exerted during the past three years to support ISESCO and for his coordination with ISESCO Director General in all matters aiming to ensure the success of its action and attainment of its objectives.

I avail myself of this opportunity to praise the massive support of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the generous care H.E. President Ilham Aliyev provides to ISESCO. I also thank H.E. Dr Boubacar Doukouré, Chairman of ISESCO Executive Council, for his support and assistance to ISESCO and for his fruitful contact with the Director General to follow up the implementation of the Action Plan's programmes in the best conditions.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

The agenda of this Conference includes many issues reflecting the preoccupations of Member States in their developmental efforts to ensure a decent future for their peoples on solid educational, scientific, cultural and communication foundations. Among the main themes that the Conference will consider before their adoption are the Three-Year Action Plan and Budget for 2019-2021, which will conclude the twelve Three-Year Action Plans, the Founding Action Plan for 1982-1983 and the Two-Year Action Plan for 1984-1985. The deliberation will also cover the three Medium Term Strategic Plans covering the period 1991-2018 as well as the Draft Medium Term Strategic Plan for 2019-2027 which will usher ISESCO into the third decade of the 21st century.

Based on this thoughtful strategic planning, ISESCO fulfills its missions and contributes to shaping the future of the Islamic world with a new thought that is based on the scientific methods of theorizing, planning and implementation and relies on outlook studies conducted by the General Directorate through a science-based vision to the global changes happening within ISESCO's areas of competence and through a close monitoring of the overall educational, scientific and cultural conditions in the Islamic world, with a view to respond to the requirements of comprehensive sustainable development and open up to the wide prospects of our era with its developments in the fields of education, science and culture.

Moreover, ISESCO, thanks to Allah, over the past three decades has managed to increase the number of its Member States. It has also expanded its action within these countries and among Muslims outside the Islamic world, entered into important partnerships with a large number of regional and

international organizations and set up the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW) which has now 322 member universities from the Islamic world. It has also established consultative councils for cultural development, higher education, scientific research, innovation and for the development of education in the Islamic world. Moreover, ISESCO has set up commissions for archaeologists, Islamic heritage and the ethics of science and technology. In addition, it has reserved prizes for researchers and artists in its fields of competence and appointed its goodwill ambassadors from among outstanding personalities in the Islamic world.

In addition, ISESCO now supervises the organization of five specialized ministerial conferences. It has also set sixteen sectoral strategies and wide-ranging civilizational programmes such as the Islamic Culture Capitals Programme, the Project for the Transcription of Muslim Peoples' Languages in the Standardized Quranic Script, the Programme for Literacy and Basic Training, and other programmes through which ISESCO contributes to the development of the Islamic world.

Thus, ISESCO proceeds on the path of modernization and modernity, keeping up with the new reliable methods being used in developed countries which fall within ISESCO's areas of competence at all levels and using adequate tools for the continuous improvement of its action and of the implementation mechanisms of the consecutive Three-Year Action Plans while being keen to upgrade the Organization's achievements.

The draft new Three-Year Action Plan submitted to this Conference has three characteristics: **creativity** in the philosophy of action and in setting priorities and objectives; **innovation** in performance and implementation methods; and **openness**

to the modern universal human issues that have a far-reaching influence on projects of comprehensive sustainable development.

Therefore, this is an ambitious plan with wide prospects and integrated areas that express the collective will of Member States and reflect the remarkable level ISESCO has attained after more than a third of a century of existence since its foundation in 1982. Accordingly, ISESCO has become the most successful joint Islamic action organization in terms of action and achievements, and enjoys the strongest presence on the international scene.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While the Islamic world today witnesses a critical period of its modern history and undergoes worrisome circumstances as a result of the exacerbation of the threats it faces, the route out of this difficult situation consists in promoting Islamic solidarity through observance of the OIC Charter and the contents of Makkah Declaration. **This requires respecting the sovereignty of countries, non-interference in their affairs, and facing terrorism and sectarianism that threaten the security of Islamic countries more than any other country.**

In this regard, ISESCO's function consists in strongly contributing to the civilizational edification of the Islamic world. Today, it has become evident that the whole world desperately needs to renew the human civilization in this era in such a way as to establish firm bases for a new world order that is human in spirit and ethical in tendency so as to save humanity from the serious risks threatening world peace and security.

As ISESCO takes this path and works hard to sustain Member States' efforts to build a regional order for the Islamic world, at the educational, scientific and cultural levels likely to protect its interests, preserve the unity of its peoples and ensure safety to achieve comprehensive sustainable development, supporting the Organization on a larger scale is indispensable for pursuing the fulfillment of its human and civilizational mission that serves the vital interests of the Islamic world.

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We named this 13th session of this Conference: '**Al-Quds Al-Sharif Session**' because the conspiracy against the Palestinian people has increased amid these difficult circumstances. This conspiracy started with the expansion of the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories; and continued with the imposition of coercive, repressive and unjust policies on the inhabitants of Al-Quds al-Sharif and the occupied Palestinian cities; the unjust relocation of the Embassy of the United States of America to Al-Quds following the US Administration's recognition of this city as capital of Israel; halting the American aid to the Palestinian National Authority and stopping its support to some Palestinian hospitals in Al-Quds, and its contribution to the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA). Furthermore, this conspiracy has concluded with the closure of the Palestinian Embassy in Washington and the revocation of the residence permit of the Palestinian Ambassador, his family and the Embassy's staff. In addition, the International Criminal Court (ICC) also received threats of sanctions in case it seeks the indictment of Israel for committing crimes against humanity in Palestine, in a blatant defiance of the international legitimacy and a clear violation of the international law. This serious escalation of the aggression against the Palestinian people requires us to

stand united with this oppressed people who is deprived of its legitimate rights, especially the right to an independent state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as capital.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was founded pursuant to the Resolution of the First Islamic Summit Conference, held in Rabat 1969, following the arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Therefore, the spirit of Joint Islamic Action was and is still unwaveringly committed to the cause of Palestine and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In closing, I reiterate my thanks and deep gratitude to Your Excellencies Heads of Member States' delegations for your support to ISESCO's civilizational mission and for your generous cooperation with the Organization to ensure and develop its action.

I beseech Al-mighty Allah to help us in our action to achieve the progress and prosperity that our countries seek, and spread justice, peace and security all over the world.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatu Allah wabarakatuh.