

BAKU DECLARATION

**4TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF YOUTH AND SPORTS
MINISTERS**

“SOLIDARITY IN ACTION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT”

**BAKU, REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
17-19 APRIL 2018**

4th Session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers

Baku, Azerbaijan
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We, the delegates of the OIC Member States that have attended the 4th Session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers (ICYSM) held in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan, on 01-03 Sha'ban 1439 A.H., corresponding to 17-19 April 2018 have discussed over the OIC's prioritized youth and sports agenda items within the framework of "***Solidarity in Action for Youth Development***" as the main theme of the Conference, have *acknowledged* the fact that action-oriented solidarity is a testament to development and a prerequisite for welfare, are *reiterating* the call for universal equality and acknowledge the fact that the highest standards to achieve in youth and sports without any discrimination resulting from race, religion, gender, ethnicity, political views, economic or social status are fundamental rights for each and every individual;

Inspired by prioritization by "***OIC 2025 Program of Action***" of youth and sports issues for the global development agenda, particularly in OIC Member States:

Reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of decisions of the 4th ICYSM, especially the OIC Youth Strategy and Plan of Action to Implement the OIC Sports Strategy, while *being committed* to the policy of openness and close cooperation with the world's relevant international organizations operating in the field of youth.

Call for raising the role of the ICYSM as the platform to design policies aimed at the development of youth and sports, while underlining the importance of Member States cooperation and support to the OIC General Secretariat and ICYF-DC and ISSF as the implementing agencies of ICYSM in their respective fields of youth and sports.

Reiterate that Islam is a religion of peace and advocates such principles as the appreciation of human values, tolerance with regard to religion and races and peaceful coexistence of all nations, and *call* the OIC institutions active in the field of youth to implement programs in line with such values and principles towards portraying the true image of Islam.

Acknowledge the important role of youth for intercultural exchanges, preservation and popularization of Islamic historical and cultural heritage, promotion of better knowledge and mutual understanding among civilizations, as well as the role the young people can play in overall improvement of the image of Islam, especially in the wake of growing manifestations of Islamophobia.

Underline the importance of youth development, capacity building and increasing the role of the youth in promoting development, peace and safety in general among the Muslim communities, in line with the findings of the **1st Report on the State of Youth in OIC Member States**.

Welcome the role of the **OIC Youth Capital Programme** being implemented by ICYF-DC and serving the unity and solidarity of the Member States youth, while underscoring the role sports can play for solidarity, in particular by implementation of **OIC Sports Capital Program**.

Condemn the Israeli occupation for hindering the endeavour of the Palestinian people and the youth in particular to build their capacities in a free manner and seeking to undermine the efforts of the State of Palestine in sports fields, and *urge* youth and sports institutions, Olympic committees and sports federations of the OIC Member States to support the position of Palestine in international sports organizations on regional and international levels, including through providing appropriate support for the successful holding of *Al-Quds OIC Youth Capital 2018*.

Express our full support and solidarity with the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its people in their efforts to restore its territorial integrity; and *recognize* the unalienable rights of Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs to return to their homeland. In this line, we invite Member States to fully support international programs on the rights of refugees, including “**Justice for Khojaly**” international civil awareness Campaign, initiated by Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva, ICYF-DC General Coordinator for Inter-cultural Dialogue, and aimed at disseminating historical truth on the genocide of Azerbaijani civilians, perpetrated by the Armenian armed forces in the town of Khojaly (the Republic of Azerbaijan) in February 1992, and *call upon* the Member States and OIC institutions to actively support the Campaign within relevant OIC resolutions.

Boycott all youth and sports related events being organized and held in the occupied territories of the OIC Member States by the occupation powers and forces.

Express our gratitude to the 4th ICYSM’s Organizing Committee composed of the OIC General Secretariat, the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF), and Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC), as well as the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan as the host for their efforts to hold the 4th session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers in a successful manner.

Wish the 4th Session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers to lead to fruitful outcomes for the youth and sports of the Islamic Ummah and hope to see concrete progress in the implementation of resolutions and recommendations made during the Conference and look forward to the 5th Session of the Islamic Conference of Youth and Sports Ministers in Saudi Arabia in May 2020.

Extend a cable of congratulation to His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, on his landslide victory in the presidential elections of 11 April 2018, which shows the unity, support and trust of the people of Azerbaijan on his leadership that is also contributing for Islamic solidarity.

May Allah bless us in the efforts we exert for the benefit of the Islamic Ummah.

Baku, 19 April 2018