

**ISFAHAN DECLARATION**

We the Ministers responsible for Tourism of the OIC Member States, gathered in Isfahan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, declare the following:

- *Inspired by the sublime teachings of Islam which calls for promotion of solidarity, understanding, tolerance and exchanges,*
  - *Committed to work for a better future for all nations by ensuring peace, security and economic development, through dialogue and popular participation.*
  - *Mindfull of the objectives and purposes of the OIC Charter and the OIC Summit Decisions, as well as provisions of the OIC Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation Among the Member States.*
1. **Decide** to boost cooperation among Member States in tourism, through promotion of public awareness, education, training, investment opportunities and involvement of private sectors;
  2. **Express** our firm determination to cooperate jointly to develop tourism in the OIC countries, as an important mean to present and preserve the richness of the Islamic civilization and culture;
  3. **Support** joint actions at bilateral and multilateral levels to strenghten and expand tourist activities among the member countries and beyond;
  4. **Recognize** the contribution of tourism to economic growth and development, social justice, poverty alleviation and provision of job and investment opportunities;
  5. **Underline** the need to preserve and protect the Islamic monuments, sites and places, which constitute the common cultural heritage of the world;
  6. **Condemn** the attempts and illegitimate actions by Israel to destroy or otherwise change the identity of holy Islamic and historical places, in particular Al-Quds Al-Sharif and, in this respect, call on the international community to take appropriate measures to put an end to these actions;
  7. **Decide** to set up a follow-up committee with a view to pursuing resolutions and decisions of the ministerial meetings and coordinating the activities of the Member States, as well as concerned specialised and affiliated institutions and subsidiary organs of the OIC in tourism;
  8. **Decide** further to improve the existing procedures and arrangements so as to facilitate development of tourism by removing the obstacles, with due respect to the national laws;
  9. **Call** for better cooperation among the OIC Secretariat, concerned specialised and affiliated institutions and subsidiary organs of the OIC, as well as relevant intrnational organizations in tourism.

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18. There were a number of additional proposals emerged from the deliberations of the Conference, which are as follows:
- i) *Establishment of a tourism organization of the OIC Member States with the objectives, inter alia, of facilitating exchange of information, expertise, resources and related facilities.*
  - ii) *Setting up a permanent committee of the OIC Member States to ensure adequate follow up action in the field of tourism.*
  - iii) *Setting up a Council for Tourism under the auspices of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the development of investments in the private sector.*
  - iv) *Regular holding of tourism festivals and fairs in various OIC Member States for promotion of intra-OIC tourism as well as international tourism.*
  - v) *Arrangements for joint tourism packages with the participation of neighbouring OIC Member States.*
  - vi) *Setting up a fund for maintenance and upkeep of historical and cultural monuments, religious shrines and sites of pilgrimage in the OIC countries.*
  - vii) *Establishment of a regulatory framework through conclusion of appropriate Protocols among the OIC Member States setting up a special regime for facilitating movement of transnational tourists among the OIC Member States so that the existing obstacles are removed.*
  - viii) *Setting up an OIC Mission comprising of tourism experts for exploring the feasibility of financing projects on tourism in the OIC Member States, possibly in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank*