



**OIC/COMIAC-10/2015/SG/REP/FINAL**

**REPORT  
OF THE  
10<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

**“SESSION OF THE YOUTH AND MEDIA FOR PEACE  
AND STABILITY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD”**

**DAKAR, REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL  
9-10 RAJAB 1436H  
28-29 APRIL 2015**

**Report of the  
10<sup>th</sup> Session of the Standing Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs  
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1. In response to the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Senegal, the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the Standing Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) was held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, on 9-10 Rajab 1436H (28-29 April 2015).
2. List of Participants is annexed hereto.
3. The session was opened with recitation from verses of the Holy Quran.
4. The OIC Secretary General, Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, delivered a speech in which he praised the efforts of COMIAC under the chairmanship of President Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal. He praised the president’s support for COMIAC programmes and activities and his decision to appoint H.E. Amb. Cheikhou Oumarou as coordinator of the COMIAC office to activate its work and for the decision to establish a coordinating office for COMIAC in Dakar. Madani also highlighted the information and cultural programmes and activities accomplished by COMIAC since its 9<sup>th</sup> Session held on 3-5 Zul Qaada 1431H (11-13 October 2010).

The Secretary General stated that the Muslim world faced threats, some of which were external such as the pervasiveness of Islamophobia and the focus of external media on violence in the Muslim World. The internal threats were the Daesh, Boko Haram and Al Qaida movements. He explained that these threats required a tool and a platform to combat them, and suggested that COMIAC constituted such a platform because the Muslim World was in need of effective media organs as well as current and influential cultural expression.

The Secretary General explained that the resolutions adopted by this meeting must be translated into concrete actions to effectively counter the danger of Islamophobia and sectarian fighting within the Muslim world. He reviewed a number of the resolutions to be discussed by the session, notably the question of Palestine. He renewed his call for support for the people of Al Quds and for their steadfastness in confronting the Israeli occupation by visiting the Al Aqsa Mosque. In this regard, he announced that the OIC was in the process of establishing an OIC office in Ramallah.

5. H.E. President Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairman of COMIAC delivered an opening remark which he started with an expression of his happiness for Member States participation in the session, and expressed gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Ibn Abdulaziz for his generous and continuous support of the OIC and for COMIAC.

H.E. Macky Sall referred to what the Muslim ummah was going through as a result of the conduct of a small group in the name of Islam, in a manner that impact negatively on the image of Muslims in general. H.E. said that the holding of the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of COMIAC aimed growing challenges facing the Muslim World highlighted the role of the youth as the hope and promising future of the ummah. He emphasized the need to give the youth the opportunity to prove their positive and constructive role for their society and their ummah. He called for a coalition of youth to spread the culture of peace and participate in projecting the true image of Islam.

President Sall cited examples from the annals of Islamic civilization in the area of cultural and academic exchange starting with the Bait al Hikma (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad to prominent names of Muslim scientists who contributed to the enrichment of human civilization, such as Khuwarazm, Avicenna, Averroes and Al Ghazali, among others. These cultural and scientific resources, he said, should receive the media attention they deserve. He also recalled a bright side of the contemporary situation of the ummah which is signified by the United Arab Emirate's hosting of the EXPO 2020 and the State of Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup.

6. The committee adopted the agenda and work programme and the report of the Senior Officials Meeting held at the General Secretariat in Jeddah on 17-18 Jumada Ula 1436H (8-9 March 2015).
7. The Bureau of the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of COMIAC was elected as follows:

Republic of Senegal	-	Chair
Arabic Republic of Egypt	-	Vice Chair
Islamic Republic of Iran	-	Vice Chair
State of Palestine	-	Vice Chair

8. The Committee decided to consider the speech of H.E. the President of Senegal as a reference document for the Session.

## II. Working Session

9. The Committee took note with appreciation of the report prepared by the General Secretariat on various issues and presented to the Session.

10. Representatives of Member States took turns to deliver statements. They expressed serious concern about the growth of Islamophobia through violent attacks on Islam and its symbols. The participants praised the efforts of the Secretary General and his full commitment to confronting this campaign and affirmed the need for Member States and all well-meaning people to support his efforts specially in the field of Information. The speakers affirmed the need to utilize ideas, evidence and logic to counter opposing views and this does not preclude from taking serious stances when necessary towards parties wishing Islam evil. They also stated that the wicked attack on Islam, their allegations of fascism and terrorism labeled at Islam, and the linking of legitimate resistance to occupation with violence required response from the Islamic Media with evidences and illustrations. The participants also emphasized the importance of adherence to dialogue with the Western World to project Islam as a religion of tolerance and moderation. They mentioned the importance of highlighting this dialogue in Member States' media in order to refute the claims that the media in Islamic countries was out of touch with freedom of expression which-even if sacrosanct-is not absolute. The speakers highlighted the importance of focusing on the positive aspects of the Islamic heritage and radiant image of Islamic civilization in its various epochs by using innovative and modern information media.

The committee expressed its deep gratitude to the Gabonese Republic for hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM) on 19-20 April 2012 and to the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICIM on 3-4 December 2014. It welcomed the decision of the Republic of Tunisia to host the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICIM in 2016.

11. The participants renewed their support for the cause of Palestine and Al Quds and called on all Member States and OIC affiliated institutions to provide all forms of support for the state of Palestine in order to develop the capacities of its information and cultural institutions to exchange programmes and expertise in this field. They praised the initiatives of those states that have signed agreements with the State of Palestine.

12. The meeting expressed its support for the project to launch an OIC TV channel on the internet, and called for a specialized body or consultancy to be mandated to prepare a feasibility study and explore ways of securing sources of financing the project.

13. The meeting expressed its full support for UN Security Council resolution 2216 backing operation Decisive Storm which demands the Houthi militias rebelling against legitimate authority to withdraw from all cities and provinces they occupied forcefully and to return all weapons they seized to the legitimate government authorities.

The meeting also expressed its appreciation of the announcement by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Member States in the coalition to end operation Decisive Storm and commence operation Restoration of Hope (**The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed reservation on this paragraph**).

14. The participants called for COMIAC to become effective in combating islamophobia through media initiatives targeted at strengthening the Islamic values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among various cultures, religions and creeds in cooperation and coordination with relevant OIC institutions.
15. The meeting approved the offer made by the Minister of Information of the Republic Sudan on his country's readiness to host a meeting of news agencies of the OIC Member States to consider ways of supporting the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and developing its work.
16. The Committee emphasized that the theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of COMIAC (The Youth and Media for Peace and Stability in the Muslim World) was a fundamental topic for this session, that there was need to replicate the same on other issues and that the chosen topic must receive the attention and follow up by the General Secretariat.
17. The Committee called for the consideration of the possibility of organizing training sessions for experts representing Member States in order to activate COMIAC such that the trainees would own the policies programmes and priorities of the Committee, and would be requested to translate those policies to programmes, with the outcomes to be reported to the General Secretariat.
18. The Committee expressed its profound gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty King Mohamed VI for his patronage of OIC activities held in the Kingdom of Morocco, his noble message to the participants and for His Majesty Government's continuous support for ISESCO enabling it to carry out its functions optimally.
19. The participants emphasized that Islamic institutions, centers, subsidiary organs, specialized and affiliated institutions must submit biannual reports (in the OIC's three official languages) to the General Secretariat and Member States on their relevant activities and programmes.
20. The participants praised the interventions made by their Excellencies the Directors General and Representatives of OIC's centers, specialized organs and affiliated institutions that participated in the session.
21. The meeting praised the decision of the OIC Secretary General to constitute a task force to consider activating the work of COMIAC, and took note of the paper presented by the OIC General Secretariat in this regard which would be submitted to the task force for discussions.

22. At the end of the general discussions, the Committee adopted the annexed resolutions, and highlighted the need to promote joint Islamic action in the information and cultural domain as strategic, identity defining fields which defend the causes of the ummah.
23. The participants commended the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat and those of the Government of the Senegal aimed at activating COMIAC and supporting its coordination office in Dakar to enable this Committee to carry out its leadership and effective role in following up the activities and resolutions relevant to information and cultural affairs.

### III. Closing Session

24. The closing session was held under the chairmanship of H.E. the Minister of Culture and Communication of the Republic of Senegal H.E. Mr. Mbagnick NDIAYE and in the presence of H.E. the Director General of Cultural, Social and Family Affairs of the OIC Dr. Abdulaziz AlSebail who represented H.E. the Secretary General.
25. H.E. Mbagnick NDIAYE presented the report of the session and the Dakar Declaration adopted by the meeting.
26. H.E. Mbagnick NDIAYE closed the session with a speech in which he expressed his appreciation to the participants for the effective contribution to ensuring the success of the meeting and praised the outcomes achieved in order to promote the information and cultural fields.