

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



OIC/COMIAC-9/2010/REP./FINAL

**Report of  
The Ninth Session of the Standing Committee for  
Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC)**

**Dakar – Republic of Senegal**

**3-5 Dhul Qeada 1431H (11-13 October 2010)**

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1. Upon the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Senegal, the Ninth Session of the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) was held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, on 3-5, 1431H (11-13 October 2010).
2. Attached is the list of participants.

**I- Opening Session:**

3. The Session opened with a recitation from the Holy Quran.
4. The Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu delivered a speech in which he expressed thanks and gratitude to His Excellency Maitre Abdoulaye WADE, Chairman of the Islamic Summit and Chairman of COMIAC, recalling the importance of the Dakar Summit which adopted the new OIC Charter. He congratulated Maitre Abdoulaye WADE on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Senegal, wishing the people of Senegal further progress and prosperity under his wise leadership. The Secretary-General underscored the high standing and respect enjoyed by the Organisation at the international arena, pointing out that the UN Secretary General recently described the OIC as a strategic partner in the resolution of intractable international problems.

The Secretary General reviewed the important issues on the agenda of the meeting in the cultural, social and family-related fields. He highlighted the OIC's eagerness to discharge its responsibilities in these fields, particularly as regards combating Islamophobia, and commended the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz for Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue.

He also highlighted the major achievements in family-related fields, including women, children and the youth, qualifying them as pioneering. These achievements include in particular the establishment of the Department of Family Affairs, the adoption of the Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women, the establishment of a women's center in Cairo and holding regular conferences on women and children.

The Secretary General stressed the need to mobilize all means to build a knowledge and information society in the Islamic countries; establish a digital network to disseminate Islamic ideals and the Organisation's

activities in the Member States and beyond; launch an effective training programme to enable media personnel to counter the smear campaigns and attacks against the Ummah; and work towards development of the OIC Observatory on Islamophobia into a powerful tool capable of raising public awareness about the dangers of this phenomenon. He also stressed the importance of showcasing the cultural heritage through exhibitions and cultural events around the world, and emphasized the need to pay attention to vulnerable categories in Islamic societies, including women, children and the youth, in addition to the consolidation of cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized organs in this field.

5. His Excellency Maitre Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairman of the 11<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit Conference and the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC), delivered an opening statement in which he expressed his happiness for the wide participation of Member States in this session and expressed thanks and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, for his valuable and uninterrupted support for the OIC, COMIAC and recently for the Conference of Scholars held in Dakar in June 2010. He also commended the Secretary-General for his wise leadership of the OIC and for his commitment, stating that he is proud to see him in charge of the Organisation's affairs with unwavering determination to advocate the causes of the Muslim Ummah.

Speaking about the huge floods which hit Pakistan recently, he expressed the Ummah's solidarity with the Pakistani people and commended the efforts of the OIC Secretary General, calling for more support for them in order to help them overcome these difficult times. He also called for a mechanism to immediately address such catastrophes. He stressed his country's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, highlighting the importance of preserving the Islamic character of the City of Al Quds Al Sharif. His Excellency also affirmed his support for the Republic of Yemen, its unity and stability against all forms of violence, extremism and irresponsible behaviour.

His Excellency President Abdoulaye WADE reviewed the information, cultural, educational and social issues on the agenda of the meeting, stating that they are strategic and extremely important in today's world on account of the overlap in concepts and values, the accelerating changes and the need to address the challenges and develop exchanges in the domains of culture and information. He stressed the need for the OIC to have a broadcasting and communication tool in order to disseminate Islamic values by launching a satellite channel similar to the African Broadcasting Corporation which he is in the process of launching in the Senegalese capital in multiple international and local languages. He also highlighted the importance of the cultural and artistic production in publicizing the Islamic cultural heritage.

In conclusion, he stressed the importance of dialogue, since Islam is a religion of dialogue in the best manner possible, stating Islam's rejection of violence and terrorism which run counter to its eternal values and noble principles. His Excellency the President called upon the OIC to support the initiative of holding an international conference on cultural industries in Dakar on a date to be determined later in agreement with the UNESCO.

At the end of his statement, he invited the OIC and its various institutions to participate at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the World Festival of Negro Arts which will be hosted by the Senegalese capital on 10-31 December 2010, and will be an opportunity for artists and intellectuals from the African continent and from the Diaspora to showcase the positive contribution of the negro peoples to human history and heritage.

6. The representatives of the three geographical groups (Republic of Kazakhstan representing the Asian Group, Republic of Gambia on behalf of the African Group, and the Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Arab Group) addressed the meeting. They expressed thanks to the Government of the Republic of Senegal for hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMIAC, and for the warm welcome, hospitality and the excellent organization of the session. They also expressed the Member States' readiness to work hard with the COMIAC Chairmanship with a view to achieving the results sought and to advancing joint Islamic action in the fields of information, cultural, social and family affairs.
7. His Excellency Abdul Aziz bin Mohyeddin Khouja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, addressed the meeting. He conveyed to the participants the greetings and best wishes of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince and His Royal Highness the Second Deputy for the success of the meeting. He called for integration and interaction among the Member States. He also stressed that Islam is a religion of tolerance, peace and coexistence and, highlighted the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for interfaith and intercultural dialogue as an embodiment of his eagerness to see all nations live in peace rather than violence and terrorism. He expressed the Kingdom's support for COMIAC under the chairmanship of H.E. Maitre Abdoulaye WADE, and the hope that the resolutions of this session will translate into concrete actions that would benefit the Muslim Ummah. He also commended the OIC Secretary General for his efforts and uninterrupted endeavours aimed at reinforcing the active role of the OIC in the international arena.
8. The Committee adopted its draft agenda and the work programme of the session and the report of the Senior Officials Meeting.



The participants underscored the importance of focusing on the positive aspects of Islamic heritage and the shining image of Islamic civilization in all its manifestations using innovative and state-of-the art media.

The participants highlighted the need to benefit from the accelerating progress in ICT to build the information and knowledge society. They hailed the initiative of His Excellency Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairman of COMIAC to establish the Digital Solidarity Fund as a special mechanism to bridge the digital divide which may lead to the exacerbation of the discrepancy between the developed world and the developing world to which most of the Islamic countries belong. On the other hand, the participants insisted on the need to give due attention to social and family issues, including in the field of children and the youth.

14. The Committee expressed its sincere gratitude to the Kingdom of Morocco for having hosted the 8th Session of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers in Rabat in January 2009. It underscored the need to work hard for the implementation of the resolutions of the session. The Committee also welcomed the Republic of Gabon's hosting of the 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers in Libreville in 2011.
15. The Committee took note with appreciation of the establishment of the Department of Family Affairs at the General Secretariat in implementation of the provisions of the Ten-Year Programme of Action and the relevant resolutions, considering it a positive development which proves the interest that the Ummah gives to the family as the basic component of society.
16. After the general debate, the Committee adopted the attached resolutions, highlighting the need to promote joint Islamic action in information, cultural, social and family-related domains as strategic domains that shape identity and defend the causes of the Ummah.
17. The Committee welcomed once again the decision of the Government of Senegal to establish a permanent national secretariat to follow up the activities and resolutions of the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs.

### **III. The Closing Session:**

18. The closing session was chaired by His Excellency the State Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Senegal, Mr. Madeke NIANG, and was attended by His Excellency the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Senegal as well as H.E. the Director General of the Department of Cultural and Social Affairs in the OIC General Secretariat representing H.E. the Secretary-General.

19. The Minister presented the Session's report which was adopted unanimously.
20. His Excellency the State Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Senegal closed the session with a statement in which he expressed his appreciation of all participants for their effective contribution to its success, commending the results achieved in the fields of information, culture, and social and family affairs.
21. The participants decided to address a letter of thanks and appreciation to His Excellency President Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairman of COMIAC.

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