

REPORT
OF THE
THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION
OF THE
COUNCIL OF
FOREIGN MINISTERS

(SESSION OF ENHANCING ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY)

DAMASCUS, SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
(23-25 MAY 2009)

1. At the kind invitation of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (Session of Enhancing Islamic Solidarity), held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, from 28 Jamadul Awal - 1 Jamadul Thani, 1430 H (23-25 May 2009).
2. The Meeting was opened with a recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an.
3. The Meeting was addressed by the President of the Syrian Arab Republic, H. E. Bashar Assad. Due to the importance of its content, the text of the President's speech is enclosed to the report and will be issued as an official document of the meeting.
4. His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda and Chairman of the 35th CFM delivered a speech in which he highlighted the activities and achievements that were accomplished during the chairmanship of his country.
5. Addressing the opening session, H.E. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the OIC Secretary-General highlighted the major issues and activities of the OIC during the last year. The text of Secretary General's statement is attached to the report.
6. The Meeting then unanimously elected H.E. Mr. Waleed Mo'allem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic as Chairman of the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers. It also approved the composition of the Bureau as follows: Malaysia, Republic of Guinea and the State of Palestine as Vice-Chairs, and Republic of Uganda as Rapporteur.
7. The Meeting listened to a welcome address by His Excellency Mr. Mo'allem, Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic who expressed his gratitude for the election of his country as the chair of the 36th CFM and reaffirmed his willingness to promote the Joint Islamic Action and strengthen the solidarity and cooperation among the Islamic Ummah.
8. The representatives of the three geographic groups, the Foreign Minister of Iraq for the Arab Group, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for the Asian Group and the Foreign Minister of Guinea for the African Group thanked Syria for hosting the Meeting, providing excellent facilities to hold a successful meeting and extending generous hospitality to all the participants.
9. The Syrian Arab Republic, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Cameroon signed the OIC Charter.
10. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between the OIC and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

11. During the general debate in the plenary Session, statements were made by heads of delegation who highlighted the various issues that remain the preoccupation of Member States and current issues affecting the interest and the well-being of the Islamic Ummah.
12. The Council adopted the report of the preparatory Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) for the current session, held in Jeddah from 9-11 Jamadul Awal 1430H (4-6 MAY 2009). It commended the work done by the SOM as well as the Special Committee which was established on the sidelines of the Council to consider pending issues referred to it by the Senior Officials Meeting.
13. A wide range of issues of interest to Member States were discussed and resolutions were adopted by the Council related to the Cause of Palestine and the Middle East; Political Affairs; Ten-Year Program of Action (TYPOA); Statutory, Organic and General Matters; Legal Affairs; Conditions of Muslim Minorities and Communities in Non-OIC Member States; Information Affairs; Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the OIC; Administrative and Financial Affairs; and Humanitarian Affairs.
14. The Council commended the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for organizing a special brainstorming session with active participation of the Member States during the 36th CFM on the future role of the OIC in maintaining security, peace keeping and conflict resolution in the Member States. It appreciated the Secretary General for his praiseworthy initiative on this matter.
15. The Council further commended the initiative of the Syrian Arab Republic in collaboration with the OIC General Secretariat, COMSTECH, ISESCO and IDB to host, on 24 May 2009, Science and Technology Conference with the theme “New and Emerging Technologies in the OIC Region”, and took note of the outcome of the above-mentioned conference.
16. The Council welcomed the offer of Burkina Faso to host the Economic Forum of Western Africa next October as well as the proposal made by Cameroon to organize the Economic Forum of Central and East Africa by the end of 2009 in conformity with the various resolutions of the OIC.
17. The Meeting considered the request made by the Government of the Philippines to obtain OIC observer status. The Filipino request was supported by a considerable number of OIC Member States, while many other Member States expressed reservation on the consideration of the Filipino request before the OIC agrees on criteria for the approval of new observers in accordance with the provisions of the OIC Charter. The following recommendations were adopted:
 - Calling upon the OIC General Secretariat to prepare a proposal on the criteria of observer status for states in accordance with the OIC Charter.

- This proposal shall be submitted to an Expert Group Meeting preparatory to 37th Session of the CFM.
 - The 37th CFM Meeting shall consider these proposals.
18. The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed reservation on resolution No.5/36-ORG on strengthening the role of the OIC General Secretariat in coordinating the work of the OIC subsidiary organs, specialised and affiliated institutions and holding sectoral ministerial conferences.
 19. The delegation of the State of Qatar expressed reservation on resolution No.2/36-ORG on the rules procedure for obtaining full membership of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.
 20. The Council decided to hold the 37th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in Dushanbe, the Republic of Tajikistan in 2010. It further reiterated its support for holding the 38th CFM in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan, in 2011.
 21. The Council welcomed the offer made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia to host the 14th Session of the Islamic Summit in 2017 and decided to refer it to the next OIC Summit for approval.
 22. On behalf of all the participants, H.E. Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC, addressed a cable of thanks to H.E. Bashar Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, for hosting by his country of the CFM and for the facilities extended to the delegates, which highly contributed to the success of its 36th Session.

Damascus, 25 May 2009