

OIC/ICIM-9/2012/FC/FINAL

ORIGINAL:

**FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ
ISSUED BY THE
9TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF
INFORMATION MINISTERS (ICIM)**

***(SESSION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE
SERVICE OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT)***

**LIBREVILLE, GABONESE REPUBLIC
19 – 20 APRIL, 2012
(27 - 28 JUMADA AL-AWAL 1433H)**

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- I.** At the kind invitation of the Gabonese Republic, the 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers (ICIM) under the theme “Information Technologies in the Service of Peace and Development” was held in Libreville, Gabonese Republic on 19 and 20 April, 2012 under the distinguished patronage of H. E. Ali Bongo ONDIMBA, President of the Gabonese Republic.
- II.** The following Member States participated in the Meeting:
- Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
 - State of the United Arab Emirates
 - Republic of Indonesia
 - Islamic Republic of Iran
 - Islamic Republic of Pakistan
 - Brunei Darussalam
 - People’s Republic of Bangladesh
 - Republic of Benin
 - Burkina Faso
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Republic of Chad
 - Republic of Togo
 - People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria
 - Republic of Djibouti
 - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
 - Republic of Senegal
 - Republic of Sudan
 - Syrian Arab Republic
 - Republic of Sierra Leone
 - Republic of Iraq
 - Sultanate of Oman
 - Gabonese Republic
 - Republic of Guinea
 - State of Palestine
 - Union of Comoros
 - State of Qatar
 - Republic of Cameroon
 - Republic of Cote d’Ivoire

- State of Kuwait
- Republic of Lebanon
- Libya
- Malaysia
- Arab Republic of Egypt
- Kingdom of Morocco
- Islamic Republic of Mauritania
- Republic of Niger
- Republic of Yemen

(List of delegations in Annex 1).

III) The following specialized and subsidiary organs of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) participated in the Conference:

- International Islamic News Agency (IINA)
- Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU)
- Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA)
- Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)
- International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA)
- Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

IV) The Conference opened with recitation of verses from the Glorious Qur'an.

V) H. E. Mr. Blaisse LOUEMBE, Minister of Digital Economy, Communications and Post of the Gabonese Republic, delivered a statement in which he welcomed participating delegations in the 9th Session of the ICIM and reiterated his country's support to the Palestinian cause and to the reconciliation agreement signed in the Qatari capital Doha. He underscored the importance of the information issues on the agenda of the 9th ICIM, insisting on the need to support to the initiative of dialogue, solidarity and consultation among the Member States and their media organs. He also highlighted the need to address Islamophobia through diplomatic dynamism the achievement of peace, dialogue and tolerance and to launch awareness raising campaigns to eliminate violence advocated by some extremist movements. The Minister expressed his country's readiness to consider the implementation of the projects and resolutions emanating from the present session.

VI) His Excellency Mr. Mustapha Khalfi, Chairman of the 8th Session of the Islamic Conference of Information Ministers and Minister of Communication of the Kingdom of Morocco, delivered a statement at the beginning of which he requested participants to rise and recite Surat Al Fatiha for the soul of the Maghreb leader and former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Belah. He also conveyed sincere thanks to the Gabonese Republic for hosting the 9th ICIM, commending Gabon's efforts to hold the session in the best conditions possible.

In his speech, Minister Khalfi warned of Israel's attempts to target Al-Quds city and the Aqsa Mosque and the campaigns targeting the image of Islam and Muslims in international media due to the mounting trend of Islamophobia, which raises the amount of the responsibility on media institutions in the Islamic world. He praised the revolution in modern ICT, whose attributes include enabling the Islamic world to correct misperceptions, and highlighted the importance of international action within the UN and the OIC to combat defamation of languages, including OIC's success in issuing a resolution in this regard in December 2010. The Minister called on Member States to work towards having the present session constitute a new beginning to Islamic joint media action both within and outside the OIC and in the handling of top priority issues.

VII) The Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, delivered a statement which he started by expressing profound gratitude to the Gabonese Republic and the wise leadership of His Excellency President Ali Bango Andimbam who continued on the path of his late father El Haji Omar Bango in the fields of development, reform and progress which has made the Gabonese Republic a modern and prosperous country. He lauded the efforts of the Gabonese Republic in making excellent arrangements for the 9th Session of the ICIM. The Secretary General stressed the continuous support of the OIC for the question of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Shareef which is a top priority for the OIC. He condemned the judaization of the city of Al-Quds, the construction of Israeli settlements and the continued unjust blockade of the Gaza Strip which flout all international laws. The Secretary General touched upon the issue of Islamophobia which fuelled by misconceptions about Islam and Muslims and incites hatred and discrimination against them on religious and ethnic grounds. He emphasized the initiatives of the OIC and the UN in this regard. He underscored the need to come out with innovative ideas for the restructuring the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU) which represent OIC's media arm. On the other hand, the Secretary General insisted on the need to attach special importance to the African continent from the media, commending the proposals made to the session in this regard. The Secretary General called upon the Member States to support the different other draft resolutions submitted to the session for consideration.

VIII) His Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, then delivered a statement in which he welcomed the participants on the 9th Session of the ICIM held in the Gabonese Republic for the first time. He commended the role of OIC Secretary General in holding the present session in Gabon and expressed his appreciation of the efforts of the Secretary General in managing the OIC. President Bongo stated that the present session is of utmost importance as it focuses on sensitive media issues. He expressed his support for the Palestinian cause, calling upon the Member States to pay more diplomatic and political attention to this cause and to support the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle. In addition, the President drew attention to the looming dangers of Islamophobia and the growing hatred of Muslims in the Western media. In this

regard, he commended the initiative of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia on inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue which is deeply rooted in the glorious Quran. President Bongo called for a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism, extremism and radicalism, stating that Islam and Muslims are the first victims of this phenomenon.

IX) The Conference elected its Bureau as follows:

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| - Gabonese Republic | | - Chair |
| - State of Palestine | } | - Vice Chairs |
| - Islamic Republic of Mauritania | | |
| - People's Republic of Bangladesh | | |
| - Kingdom of Morocco | | - Rapporteur |

**X) The Conference adopted its Draft Agenda and Programme of Work as proposed by the preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials.
(Documents No.:OIC/ICIM-9/2012/DA and OIC/ICIM-9/2012/DR.WP)**

XI) The speakers stressed in their statements the need to focus on the role of the media in the current dispensation and in continuing to expose the barbaric acts perpetrated by Israel in its despicable aggression against the Gaza Strip so that the Islamic and international world opinion can be mobilized in support of the Palestinian cause. They also focused on the importance of coordination among media circles of Member States in order to project the real image of Islam and stand up against media attacks against Islam, its symbols and sanctuaries. The speakers also emphasized the urgent need to benefit from the information and communication revolution being witnessed in the world.

XII) The Director General of IRCICA, the Secretary General of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA) and the representative of Director General of the ISESCO delivered statements to the Conference.

XIII) Based on the report forwarded to it by the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials (Document No.:OIC/ICIM-9/SOM-REP/FINAL), the Conference adopted the following resolutions:

1. The Media in OIC Member States and its Role in Supporting the Cause of Al Quds Al Shareef and the Blessed Al Aqsa Mosque

The participants underscored the special circumstances under which the 9th Session of the ICIM is being held, in the light of the movement and changes going on in the Muslim world and of the plight of the Palestinian people caused by the continued Israeli occupation, the growing aggression and the persistent Israeli violations in the Palestinian territories, including the city of

Al-Quds. The Participants condemned this barbaric aggression and commended the widespread international denunciation of the act as well as the support of Islamic states and peoples for the Palestinian cause as expressed at various international fora and occasions. They also commended UNESCO's recognition of the State of Palestine and affirmed their support for Palestine's quest for full membership of the UN.

In their interventions, the participants stressed the need for continued widespread coverage to expose the Israeli policies against the Palestinian people. The participants directed an urgent appeal to the media in the Member States to continue and intensify media coverage in order to highlight the destructive effects of the Israeli aggression, human rights violations and war crimes committed by Israel in its aggression. They called for special media attention on the city of Al-Quds by dedicating the last Friday of Ramadan every year for providing complete media coverage of this holy city. In this regard, the Conference adopted resolution 1/9-INF on "*The Media in OIC Member States and its Role in Supporting the Cause of Al Quds Al Shareef and the Blessed Al Aqsa Mosque*"

2. External Media Action by Developing a Comprehensive Media Plan with the Contribution of Member States and Ambassadors' Groups in key World Capitals.

The meeting commended the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat in interacting with external media, including through the organization of a workshop on the subject: "Defamation of Islam and Muslims in Western Media" in the Belgian capital Brussels on 15-16 February 2012, with the participation of civil society representatives, media specialists, intellectuals and academics from both the Islamic world and the West. The meeting called for the implementation of the proposals of the workshop as included in the paper submitted to the Session under the title "*Draft Media Strategy of the OIC to Combat Islamophobia.*"

The Meeting recommended the activation of the resolution adopted by the 7th ICIM which called for the establishment of a mini-ministerial committee and called on it to convene as early as possible at the invitation of the Chairman of the 9th ICIM to prepare a comprehensive plan to reach out to the outside world and address it in the languages it understands and in the methods conforming to its logic and mental structure in order to correct the image of Islam and clarify its noble mission and lofty values. In this regard, the Meeting recommended the activation of the proposal submitted earlier by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to allocate a total budget of US\$ 25 million to the Fund on Interaction with External Media to which all Member States shall contribute. The establishment of the fund is necessary for effective interaction with foreign media for the benefit of the Muslim world. In this regard, the Conference adopted the draft resolution No. 2/9-INF on "*External Media*

Action by Developing a Comprehensive Media Plan with the Contribution of Member States and Ambassadors' Groups in key World Capitals.”

3. Supporting the Restructuring Process of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU)

The Conference stressed support for restructuring of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU). The Conference voiced its support for the process of restructuring these two organs, and called on all Member States to pay their mandatory contributions to the budgets of the two institutions. It adopted draft resolution No. 3/9-INF on “*Supporting the Restructuring Process of the International Islamic News Agency (IINA) and the Islamic Broadcasting Union (IBU)*”.

4. Coordination in the Information Field in the Framework of the OIC in Order to Give a Comprehensive Picture of Joint Islamic Action.

The Conference discussed the issue of coordination of information affairs among media institutions and departments in charge of media affairs in different OIC institutions. It lauded, in this regard, the role of these institutions and departments and invited them to contribute to highlighting their actions in different media outlets.

The Conference recommended the need for coordination among various information institutions, departments and the Information Department of the OIC General Secretariat in order to highlight the media activities of the institutions and acquaint the Muslim world with their important role in supporting joint Islamic media action. In this vein, the Conference adopted the draft resolution No. 4/9-INF on “*Coordination in the Information Field in the Framework of the OIC in Order to Give a Comprehensive Picture of Joint Islamic Action.*”

5. Establishing an OIC Journalists Forum.

Within the reinforcement of communication between media actors and the OIC General Secretariat, the participants in the Conference expressed their support for the need to reinforce communication and to establish a mechanism of coordination among media specialists in the Muslim world and the OIC General Secretariat. The Conference supported the proposal of establishing the “*Journalists' Forum*” within the OIC to unite journalists and foster communication between them so that it becomes a forum for facilitating cooperation and developing specific mechanisms in Joint Islamic media action. In this regard, the Conference adopted the draft resolution No.5/9-INF on “*Establishing an OIC Journalists Forum*”.

6. Proposal of a Special Media Programme Highlighting Africa’s Position and Role in the Muslim World

The Conference commended the proposal of implementing a media programme for Africa highlighting its position and role in the Muslim world, particularly in light of Gabon’s chairmanship of the 9th ICIM. The participants underscored the importance of the proposal which will contribute to projecting the significance of this continent and its economic, cultural, tourism and natural potential, thus reflecting its bright image in local and international media. In this context, the Meeting adopted the draft resolution No. 6/9-INF on “*Proposal of a Special Media Programme Highlighting Africa’s Position and Role in the Muslim World,*” which details the media programme for Africa.

7. Opening of Media Offices.

Pursuant to paragraph 7 of the Ten-Year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Islamic Ummah in the 21st Century adopted by the 3rd Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference which highlighted the need to interact with external media efficiently in order to enable the Muslim world to present its views on world developments, and in light of the 8th ICIM ‘s call on the OIC General Secretariat to take all appropriate measures and elaborate the needed mechanisms with a view to highlighting OIC’s programmes and activities in the framework of joint Islamic action to project the true image of Islam, and to open media coordination offices in some countries, the Conference discussed the draft resolution on opening of media offices, considering the importance of linking and coordinating joint Islamic media action with many key capitals and Member States, and in OIC Offices abroad. These offices will enable the OIC General Secretariat to implement media plans in order to achieve stated and specific objectives in OIC conferences and official meetings on many important issues. In this regard, the meeting adopted the draft resolution No. 7/9-INF on “*Opening of Media Offices.*”

8. Launching an OIC Satellite Channel.

Aware that the OIC which represents the official system of all Member States lacks an official media outlet which could help it to reach out to the Islamic public opinion and convey its noble message consistent with its Charter, the Conference considered Gabon’s proposal of the launching of an OIC satellite channel under the umbrella of the OIC. The Conference noted that the project of launching the satellite channel comes in response to the calls and requests received by the OIC from its Member States, private institutions and civil society organizations, on the need for the OIC to adopt the project of an international satellite channel. The participants emphasized the importance of

the OIC having a specialized satellite channel that raises awareness about the OIC, its members and activities, as well as all issues which could serve the Member States and promote knowledge of their political, cultural, economic, artistic and tourism activities. The channel would also highlight the commonalities of the Ummah. In this regard, the Conference called for the organization of an open-ended meeting at the headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah to discuss this matter. The Conference adopted the draft resolution No.8/9-INF on “*Launching OIC Satellite Channel.*”

9. Ensuring Implementation of Resolutions of Previous ICIM Sessions.

The Conference discussed the elaboration of a clear mechanism for following up the implementation of the resolutions of previous sessions of ICIM and COMIAC, given the importance of these resolutions for the joint Islamic media action of the Member States. The Conference insisted on holding a meeting of the supervision and follow up committee in the various ICIM sessions to consider the actions implemented and identify the obstacles preventing Member States from completing the implementation of resolutions in coordination with the General Secretariat. The Conference emphasized the pressing need to provide the Information Department of the OIC General Secretariat with information on the implementation by the Member States of the resolutions of ICIM sessions in order to circulate them to the Member States. The Conference thus adopted the draft resolution No. 9/9-INF on “*Ensuring Implementation of Resolutions of Previous ICIM Sessions*”.

10. Activating Cooperation between the OIC and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (GDSF).

The Conference urged the Member States which have not yet joined the Digital Solidarity Fund to do so as soon as possible and to contribute to its financing, in application of the 1% principle for digital solidarity, and to support the Fund’s project which consists of providing 500000 computers to the least developed countries among the OIC Member States. Commending the signature of the MoU between the OIC General Secretariat and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund, the Conference called on the two parties to cooperate in order to implement the relevant resolution adopted by the 11th Islamic Summit Conference held in Dakar in March 2008. The Conference then adopted draft resolution No. 10/9-INF on “*Activating Cooperation between the OIC and the Global Digital Solidarity Fund (GDSF)*”.

11. OIC Member States Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (IBRAF).

Considering the principled approval by the 9th Session of the Standing Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, on 10-13 October 2010, of the proposal submitted by the Republic of Turkey to establish the OIC Member States Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum, and the recommendations of the kick off meeting of the Forum held in Istanbul on 17-18 November 2011, the Conference adopted resolution No. 11/9-INF on “*OIC Member States Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities Forum (IBRAF)*”.

12. Cooperation within the OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT).

The meeting considered supporting the OIC Computer Emergency Response Team (OIC-CERT) which enjoys the status of an affiliated institution, and called on the Member States to take the necessary measures to urge the Computer Emergency Response Team and similar organs in those states to cooperate with the OIC-CERT for the establishment of a complex to provide support and respond to computer security incidents. The Meeting urged the Member States which have not yet joined the OIC-CERT to do so and to provide it with the needed support to enable it to continue its activities aimed at achieving peace and cooperation in the field of information and communication technologies (ICTs) which have become a crucial factor of development and stability. The Meeting approved draft resolution No. 12/9-INF on “*Cooperation within the OIC Computer Emergency Response Team(CERT)*.”

- XIV)** The Conference noted the utmost importance of the recommendation made by the Kingdom of Morocco on Countering Defamation of Religions and called on OIC Member States to support tabling the proposal at the UN so that a draft recommendation could be adopted calling on all States to respect the image of religions in all the various media and not to cause prejudice to religious symbols and sanctuaries, in demonstration of Islamic solidarity.
- XV)** The called for the return of calm, peace and security to the Sahel and Sahara region and, in this regard, emphasized its condemnation and rejection of any attempts to undermine the security and stability of the Republic of the Sudan and stressed the OIC’s commitment to the security, safety and inalienable sovereignty of the Republic of Mali over its internationally recognized borders.
- XVI)** The Conference discussed and lauded the proposal submitted by the OIC General Secretariat upon the request of the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) on the adoption of the “Draft Course in Training Journalists to Counter Stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in Western Media”. It called upon the Member States to implement the course in coordination with the OIC General Secretariat and ISESCO.

- XVII)** The Meeting decided to form a supervision and follow up committee for the 9th Islamic Conference of Information Ministers which shall consist of the current, the previous and the next chairmen of the ICIM and the OIC Secretary General or his representative. The committee shall meet at least once during the current session and whenever the need arises upon the invitation of its chairman and in coordination with the OIC Secretary General.
- XVIII)** The Conference welcomed the proposal of the Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 10th ICIM in 2014.
- XIX)** The ICIM extended great appreciation and H.E. Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, for his high patronage of the Conference. The ICIM also thanked the Government of the Gabonese Republic for its kind hospitality, and expressed its gratitude to H.E. the Minister of Communication, Post, and Digital Economy of the Gabonese Republic, His Excellency Blaise Louembe, for the commendable organization of the Conference and for his prudence. The ICIM extended thanks to the staff of the Presidency of the Gabonese Republic and of the Ministry of Communication, Post and Digital Economy for their efforts in ensuring proper organization of the Conference.
- XX)** The ICIM praised the efforts exerted by the OIC Secretary General and the close coordination with the authorities concerned in the Gabonese Republic in order to ensure that the conference is held under the best conditions possible, which in turn ensured its anticipated success to further serve joint Islamic media action.
