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**Final Report
of the
Eighth Islamic Ministerial Conference on Women**

**“Preserving the Achievements of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in
Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond”**

**Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
8 July 2021
(28 Dhu al-Qi’dah 1442H)**

Final Report

1. The OIC Ministerial Conference on Women held its eighth session in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, on 6-8 July 2021 (26-28 Dhu al-Qi'dah 1442H), at the generous invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt.
2. The Conference brought together delegations of forty-eight (48) Member States of the OIC, along with a host of representatives of the General Secretariat, OIC subsidiary, specialized and affiliated organs and institutions, and invited persons and institutions.

Opening Ceremony

3. The Conference opened with recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, after which Ms H el ene Marie Laurence Ilboudo Marchal, Minister of Women, National Solidarity, Family and Humanitarian Action of Burkina Faso, Chair of the seventh session, made a presentation summarizing her country's efforts towards women's empowerment and gender equality, along with a brief of the intersession activities undertaken in follow-up to the implementation of the resolutions of the Conference's seventh session.
4. She expressed her gratitude to the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the Conference's eighth session at this point of time when the world is grappling with the myriad social, health and economic repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic. She described the Conference as a dual opportunity for the Member States to share their experiences in driving women's empowerment, particularly to address issues of violence against women, and to discuss ways of addressing these issues from a gender equality perspective. The Conference, she went on, is an indication of the dedication and commitment of the Member States to achieve empowerment for all women and girls in all circumstances. In this regard, she stressed that the situation of women in places of asylum and displacement requires the Member States and the OIC organs and institutions to better devote their efforts, under the auspices of the OIC, to ensure protection for women.

Conference Bureau Election

5. Following the statement of Ms Ilboudou Marchal, the Conference agreed on the composition of its Bureau, as proposed by the Senior Officials Meeting, as follows:

Chair: Arab Republic of Egypt.

Vice-chairs:

- Republic of Niger.
- Republic of Maldives.
- State of Palestine.

Rapporteur: Burkina Faso.

6. Afterwards, Dr Maya Morsy, President of Egypt's National Council for Women, took over as elected Chair of the Conference. She delivered a statement welcoming delegations and thanking them for honoring the Arab Republic of Egypt with their presence.
7. She said, "the large attendance during this session is a testimony of the interest that the Member States attach to the theme that Egypt has chosen for it, namely: "Preserving the Achievements of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond." She explained that the choice of this theme for the Conference reflects Egypt's willingness to place gender equality, justice and empowerment for

women at the heart of its policies. The Conference, she added, is an opportunity for the Member States to share views on the issue of gender equality and justice, while thinking of the best ways to preserve the rights of women, identify obstacles and propose solutions. She also expressed her appreciation to the Chair of the seventh session for the work she had accomplished during her mandate.

8. For his part, the Secretary General of the OIC, Dr Yousef Al-Othaimen, placed on record his gratefulness to H.E. President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi for giving his patronage to the Conference and for the support he continues to lend to the OIC. He also expressed gratitude to the government and people of Egypt for the most cordial welcome and hospitality. The Secretary General commended the choice of the theme of the Conference, stressing that preserving the gains in gender equality, justice and women's rights and empowerment, particularly in light of the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, requires closer cooperation among the Member States and relevant institutions.
9. Moreover, he gave a review of the actions made by the General Secretariat and the OIC organs to ensure full implementation of the resolutions of the Conference's seventh session. In this connection, he expressed appreciation for the programs established by the OIC and its organs women's empowerment, in this particular period marked by the coronavirus outbreak and the implications of related travel restriction measures. He also appealed to all the participants to increase cooperation and experience sharing in this area.
10. President el-Sisi's keynote addressed the challenges of gender equality, justice and empowerment for women, and ways to consolidate the gains made by the OIC and its Member States in this area. He called on participants to identify ways to address those challenges, expressing Egypt's readiness, both as Chair of the current session of the Conference and as the host country State of the OIC Women Development Organization (WDO), to contribute to preserving those gains, strengthening the Organization's role in driving empowerment for women, promoting their economic, social, political and cultural status and enhancing their role and participation in decision-making. He also briefed the audience on the measures and actions taken by Egypt for the empowerment of women to take place in the country.
11. Before declaring open the Conference's deliberations, President el-Sisi appealed to the Secretary General of the OIC to continue his activities for stronger Islamic solidarity to enhance women's role in development for the Member States, and to follow up progress on the implementation of the outcome of this Ministerial Conference.
12. The Conference adopted its work program and agenda as submitted to it by the Senior Officials Meeting.

Conference Deliberations

13. Country delegations made presentations on their national efforts and policies in terms of achieving their targets of gender equality, justice and empowerment for women, along with activities to support implementation of OIC Plan for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW), particularly in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. Statements focused on the importance of strengthened cooperation and experience sharing in addressing the social and economic implications of the coronavirus pandemic for women and girls, along with measures to improve women's representation in decision-making bodies and the actions to preserve the gains of gender equality, justice and empowerment for women.
14. Also deliberated were the challenges of limited financial resources and the immense complexity if socioeconomic obstacles. The participants agreed on the need to build up a

stronger political and social will, with a combined effort promote women's empowerment throughout the Member States.

Resolutions

15. The Conference deliberated and passed the following resolutions:
 1. Resolution 1/8-W on "Palestinian Women Development".
 2. Resolution 2/8-W on "Women Protection and Empowerment for Adaptation and Recovery during Pandemic and Exceptional Circumstances".
 3. Resolution 3/8-W on "Ensuring sustainability of gains in women's empowerment and equality between women and men in OIC Member States".
 4. Resolution 4/8-W on "Developing an OIC policy on equality between women and men for the OIC".
 5. Resolution 5/8-W on "Mainstreaming the perspective of equality between women and men in COVID-19 Strategies and Policies".
 6. Resolution 6/8-W on "Women Consultative Council of OIC Ministerial Conference on Women".
 7. Resolution 7/8-W on "Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment".
 8. Resolution 8/8-W on "Directing Religious and Media Discourse towards Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights".
 9. Resolution 9/8-W on "Coordinating, Mainstreaming of the perspective of equality between women and men throughout the OIC System".
 10. Resolution 10/8-W on "Joint Support Action for Refugee and Displaced Women".
 11. Resolution 11/8-W on "Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education".
 12. Resolution 12/8-W on "Mainstreaming Social Protection for Women and Girls".
 13. Resolution 13/8-W on "OIC Women of Achievement Prize".
 14. Resolution 14/8-W on "Date and Venue for the Ninth Session of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Women".
16. The Conference also adopted the Cairo Declaration prepared by the host country.
17. Also adopted was the report of the Senior Official's Meeting preparatory to the Conference.
18. The Conference welcomed the entry into force of the Statute of and effective operation of the OIC Women Development Organization (WDO), and invited the General Secretariat and the relevant OIC organs and institutions to provide the necessary support to the WDO, especially at this founding stage.
19. The Conference paid tribute to Egypt, the host country, for allocating a premises for the WDO and providing it with all necessary equipment and services. It called on the OIC Member States that have not yet ratified the WDO Statute to expedite the completion of the ratification and accession procedures, to help Organization deliver its mandate of promoting empowerment and advancement of women.
20. The Conference welcomed the Concept Paper for the OIC Policy on equality between women and men, prepared by the Women's Consultative Council of the Ministerial

Conference on Women, in association with the OIC General Secretariat and SESRIC. In this regard, the Conference called for holding Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Group meetings to prepare the Draft OIC Policy on equality between women and men for submission to Conference's ninth session. The Conference also welcomed the "Gender Equality and Gender Equity from an Islamic and Human Rights Perspective" study prepared by the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), and invited the General Secretariat to circulate it to advocates across the Member States and to relevant international and regional organizations, in coordination with the IPHRC.

On the date and venue for the Conference's ninth session

21. The Conference welcomed the Islamic Republic of Pakistan offering to host its ninth session in 2023, and mandated the General Secretariat to follow up on and update the Member States of the date to be decided for the Conference, in cooperation with Pakistan.
22. Based on the Member States' submissions for the OIC Women of Achievement Prize, and at the recommendations of the Women Consultative Council, in its capacity as the selection committee, and owing to the limited financial resources of the General Secretariat and the coronavirus-induced travel restrictions in place, the Conference decided to award symbolic certificates to the following recipient persons and institutions as part of the second edition of the prize:
 - ✓ Tunisia's Research, Study, Documentation and Information Centre for Women (Arab region).
 - ✓ The Burkina Faso Association for the Promotion of Gaoua Women (African region).
 - ✓ Ms Shamim Shoul Kashmiri of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Asian region).
 - ✓ Palestinian Sustenance Fund (Palestine).

Closing Ceremony

23. In her closing statement before the Conference, Dr Maya Morsy expressed her gratitude and congratulations to all participants for their deliberative work, commending their keen commitment to promoting women's empowerment across the OIC Member States. She pointed out that the topic chosen for the Conference allowed the various parties concerned to delve into women's empowerment issues as an equally important component of development for the OIC Member States, particularly in light of coronavirus-related social, economic and health implications for women and girls.
24. Furthermore, Dr Maya noted that the topic chosen for the Conference's eighth session speaks volumes for the urgent need for greater efforts to achieve equality and equity between women and men throughout the Member States as a fundamental human right. She concluded by calling on development partners to increase support for countries to achieve common goals.

A Message of Thanks

25. The Conference expressed grateful appreciation to H.E. President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of the Arab Republic of Egypt for lending his support to and honoring the Conference with his personal attendance, which contributed greatly to the success of the Conference's deliberations.

26. The Conference also sent a message of appreciation and gratitude to the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the able organization and hospitable welcome.
27. The participant delegations were invited to a dinner offered by the President of Egypt's National Council for Women, Dr Maya Morsy.

Cairo, 8 July 2021