



OIC/ACM/CG-MUSLIMS-EUROPE/REP-2022/FINAL

REPORT

**OF THE OPEN-ENDED MEETING OF THE OIC CONTACT GROUP
ON MUSLIMS IN EUROPE**

**HELD ON THE SIDELINES OF
THE ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF
THE OIC MEMBER STATES**

**NEW YORK, USA
19 SEPTEMBER 2022**

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1. The Contact Group on Muslims in Europe of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held an open-ended meeting on the sidelines of the Annual Coordination Meeting, on 19 September 2022, in New York, under the Chairmanship of His Excellency the Secretary General, Hissein Brahim Taha;
2. The Secretary General, in his statement, expressed OIC's concerns regarding the surge of anti-Muslim sentiment in some European countries and called for further efforts to enhance a constructive dialogue in order to promote intercultural harmony and mutual understanding, tolerance and respect;
3. Statements were made by members of the OIC Contact Group on Muslims in Europe on challenges facing Muslims in Europe and the need for tangible actions to address them;
4. The Meeting reviewed the overall situation of Muslims in Europe since the last meeting of the Contact Group, which was held on 22 March 2022 in Islamabad, and reaffirmed their unwavering support for the Muslim communities, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned;
5. The Meeting referred to the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the OIC, to safeguard the rights, dignity and religious and cultural identity of Muslim communities and minorities in non-Member States, as well as the Charter of the United Nations and other international documents, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;
6. The Meeting called for the OIC and its Member States to continue to maintain close interest and attention to the conditions of Muslims across Europe;
7. The Meeting called upon all States to respect the freedom of religion of all Muslims; not restrict the fundamental human rights and freedoms of Muslims, including in particular not denying them the right to exercise their civil and cultural rights;
8. The Meeting expressed deep concern over the worrying trend of anti-Muslim sentiment, hatred against Islam, Islamophobia, hate speech and right-wing extremism and the trend of violent incidents against Muslims in some European countries driven by hate speech and pervasive discrimination; and firmly rejected the radical right's divisive, intolerant and exclusionary political rhetoric;

9. The Meeting stressed the importance of addressing issues related to intolerance, racism and Islamophobia in various countries of the world, taking urgent measures for this, and promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue at the national and global levels;
10. The Meeting called upon the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe to establish an observatory to monitor acts of religious hatred, hostility and violence against Muslims and report regularly to the relevant policy organs;
11. The Meeting firmly rejected all presumptions of guilt or attributions of potential crimes, extremism and terrorism to ordinary Muslims, who sincerely adhere to, express and follow the basic requirements of Islamic tenets and teachings and abide by the laws of the countries they live in;
12. The meeting further reiterated the principled position of the OIC that vigorously denounces all acts of terrorism and violent extremism in all forms and manifestations;
13. The Meeting called upon all States to fully implement the existing domestic legal and administrative framework and/or adapt new legislation, if needed, in consistence with their obligations under international law, norms and standards; to take serious and effective measures to promote inter-faith dialogue, tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, particularly through education, media and civil society, to protect all individuals and communities against hate and violence based on religion and faith; and to ensure the protection of places of worship;
14. The Meeting reiterated the call upon the Islamic Summit Chair, Council of Foreign Ministers Chair and Secretary General to continue constructive dialogue with the United Nations, European Union, Council of Europe, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the governments of countries hosting Muslim minorities and communities, in order to devise ways and means that contribute to intercultural harmony, to enhance mutual understanding, respect and tolerance in line with the Final Communiqué of the Open Ended Emergency Meeting of the OIC Executive Committee held at the level of Foreign Ministers Istanbul, Republic of Türkiye, 22 March 2019;
15. The Meeting commended the Secretary General for engaging a constructive dialogue with the European Union, and other international organizations, political leaders and civil society to raise awareness over the dangers of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim rhetoric, hatred and intolerance;
16. The Meeting called on the Secretary General to work with European countries to strengthen dialogue on issues of concern to Muslim communities in those countries;
17. The Meeting welcomed the unanimously decision, on 15 March 2022, of the UN General Assembly proclaiming 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia and called upon the UN Secretary General and international community to organize high-level events on that occasion;
18. The Meeting requested the Secretary General for more engagement with international actors, organizations and institutions, including the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, to raise

global awareness of the affliction of Islamophobia and hatred and intolerance against Muslims and to effectively prevent and counter the phenomenon;

19. The Meeting appealed to all Member States, OIC financial institutions, particularly the IDB, and other OIC institutions to provide necessary assistance for development of programs for Muslims in Europe, particularly for the youth and women, in coordination with the countries concerned;
20. The Meeting invited all OIC Member States to combat the persistent misinformation and misconceptions about Islam and the phenomenon of Islamophobia;
21. The Meeting called upon the General Secretariat and OIC Observer Missions in Brussels and Geneva to engage with Muslims in Europe and urged all parties to intensify their efforts in this regard;
22. The Meeting called upon the General Secretariat and OIC Observer Missions in Brussels and Geneva to continue to comprehensively document incidents inspired by Islamophobia to better understand the trends and to come up with effective strategies and tangible actions;
23. The Meeting invited all Member States within the framework of their bilateral relations with European countries to raise the challenges facing Muslims in Europe and contribute to the efforts to address them;
24. The Meeting called for regular convening of the Contact Group and underscored the need to consider the possibility of holding some of its meetings in Brussels and Geneva;
25. The Meeting called upon institutions such as ISESCO and IRCICA to take necessary actions to identify, preserve and protect the Islamic cultural heritage of Muslims in Europe;
26. The Meeting underscored the important role of Muslim communities in Europe in contributing to efforts to combat Islamophobia, including through coordination between the OIC and Islamic and its affiliated bodies to provide training courses or programs directed to Muslim communities to assist their integration into European societies and their contribution in spreading tolerance, dialogue and coexistence;
27. The Meeting called on Muslim community leaders in Europe to intensify efforts to engage with all relevant stakeholders, including Muslim youth and women, to promote peaceful coexistence, tolerance and inclusivity, harmony and mutual respect and understanding.
