



OIC/POL-03/EX-COM/2023/FC

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

***Open Ended Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Executive
Committee to Express the OIC's Common Stance Against the
Recent Burning and Desecration of the Holy Qur'an in Sweden,
the Netherlands, and Denmark***

***Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
31 January 2023 (09 Rajab 1444)***

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

At the invitation of the Republic of Türkiye, the Executive Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened an extraordinary meeting on 9 Rajab 1444 AH, corresponding to 31 January 2023, at the headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah, to discuss the recent desecration of the Holy Quran Al-Kareem in Sweden, the Netherlands, and Denmark.

The Executive Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation,

Guided by the principles and objectives enshrined in the OIC and UN Charters and other international documents, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;

Reaffirming the commitment made by all States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage universal respect for the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, gender, language or religion;

Recalling the various UN General Assembly's resolutions calling for global efforts to promote tolerance, peace and dialogue among civilizations,

Noting with concern that Islamophobia is on the rise in many parts of the world as evidenced by the mounting numbers of recorded incidents of religious intolerance, negative stereotyping, hatred and violence against Muslims;

Deeply worried about the resurgence of racist movements and far right extremism in multiple regions of the world;

Recalling relevant resolutions and declarations by the Islamic Summit Conference and Council of Foreign Ministers, in particular the Final Communiqué of the 14th Islamic Summit, held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, on 31 May 2019; as well as Resolutions adopted by the 48th Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad on 23 March 2022, in particular Resolution No. 32/48-POL on '*Combating Islamophobia and Eliminating Hatred and Prejudice against Islam*', Resolution No. 34/48-POL on '*Combating Defamation of Religions*', and Resolution No. 35/48-POL on '*Condemnation of Desecration of the Holy Quran*'.

Recalling the UN General Assembly resolution 66/167 and the UN Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 of March 2011,

Recalling the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 76/254 designated 15 March as the "International Day to Combat Islamophobia",

Stressing the need to ensure that the right of freedom of expression should be exercised by all, with responsibility and in accordance with the relevant international human rights laws and instruments,

Reiterating the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations for peace and harmony in the world;

1. ***Strongly condemns*** the recent despicable aggressions against the Holy Qu'ran Al-Kareem in Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark, ***and calls upon*** the respective governments to take effective actions to prevent recurrence of these vile acts,

2. **Deplores** the global rise and number of incidents or racial and religious intolerance and violence, including Islamophobia and urges all the UN Member States to implement paragraph 150 of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action;
3. **Condemns** all attempts to denigrate the sanctity of the Holy Qu'ran Al-Kareem as well as other sacred values and symbols of Islam, including Holy prophet (may peace be upon Him), under the garb of freedom of expression, which is contrary to the spirit of Articles 10 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); and **Calls upon** the international community to stand against these attempts;
4. **Invites** the ambassadors of the OIC Member States in the respective capitals where vile acts against the Holy Quran Al-Kareem and other Islamic holy symbols take place, to collectively make efforts with respect to the national parliaments, media, civil society organizations as well as the governmental institutions, in order to express the OIC's stance and to induce the relevant authorities to take the necessary legislative actions in order to criminalize such attacks, cognizant of the fact that the exercise of freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities;
5. **Calls on** all the OIC Overseas Missions (New York, Geneva and Brussels) to take the initiative to address, in the respective international organizations, which are accredited to them, these acts of hatred against Islam and its sacred symbols in the interpretation of the relevant conventions as well as the formulation of new international legal texts to this end.
6. **Encourages** Muslims who hold citizenship of those countries where Islamophobic attacks against the Holy Quran Al-Kareem and other sacred values take place, to resort to local courts and exhaust domestic remedies, with the guidance of professional legal counsel, before taking their cases to international judiciary bodies, where applicable.
7. **Commends** the first meeting of the contact Group on Peace and Dialogue, which took place in Jakarta, the Republic of Indonesia, on 29-30 July 2019, resulting into a Draft 'Plan of Action for Combating Islamophobia' which was subsequently adopted in New York on the sidelines of the 74th Session of UNGA, by Ministers of OIC countries Members of the contact Group on Peace and Dialogue, and calls upon the General Secretariat to expedite its implementation.
8. **Calls on** all Member States to review the progress on the implementation of the eight action plan unanimously agreed upon under Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 and reiterates its significance as an important step in the efforts by the United Nations to counter incitement to hatred, discrimination, stigmatization and violence based on one's religion or belief and calls for all out efforts to preserve international consensus on this important OIC initiative;
9. **Reaffirms** the essential role of political commitment at the highest level for full and effective implementation of UN HRC resolution 16/18 and encourages States to pay particular attention to the importance of criminalizing incitement to violence based on religion or belief while recognizing the positive role of open, constructive and respectful debate and interfaith dialogue in this regard;
10. **Calls upon** all Governments to fully implement existing domestic legal and administrative framework and/or adapt new legislation if needed consistent with their obligations under international law, norms and standards; to protect all individuals and

communities against hate and violence based on religion and faith; and to ensure the protection of places of worship;

11. **Recalls** UN Human Rights Council Resolution 34/36 of 24 March 2017, in which the Council requested the Chair-Rapporteur of the Ad hoc Committee on the elaboration of Complementary Standards to the International Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to ensure the commencement of the negotiations on the draft additional protocol to the Convention criminalizing acts of racist and xenophobic nature such as Islamophobia;
12. **Emphasizes** the importance of promoting dialogue, understanding and cooperation among religions, cultures and civilizations while shunning hatred and extremism in order to achieve peace and harmony in the world; these are the principles highlighted by Amman Message
13. **Requests** the OIC General Secretariat to engage with international actors, organizations and institutions to raise global awareness of Islamophobia, hatred, and intolerance against Muslims; and to effectively counter the phenomenon in coordination with national and international organizations;
14. **Calls on** Member States and the OIC Secretary General to take immediate steps to strengthen the Islamophobia Observatory in the General Secretariat, by transforming it into full-fledged Department and by allocating resources necessary for the effective functioning of the Observatory, to implement concrete programs on the ground, and to facilitate networking with other Islamophobia centers and mechanisms around the world.
15. **Requests** the Secretary General to implement Paragraph 9 of Resolution No. 68/48-POL by appointing a Special Envoy on Islamophobia, within the existing resources, to lead collective effort on OIC's behalf.