

ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

ORGANISATION DE COOPERATION ISLAMIQUE
SECRETARIAT GENERAL



منظمة التعاون الإسلامي
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**REPORT
OF THE FIRST SESSION
OF THE OIC INDEPENDENT PERMANENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
(IPHRC)**

Jakarta on 20-24, February 2012

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1. The Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened its first session on 20-24 February, 2012 in Jakarta, capital city of the Republic of Indonesia.
2. The meeting was attended by the following IPHRC experts:
 - Dr. Raihanah Binti ABDULLAH
 - Dr. Oumar ABOU ABBA
 - Amb. Ilham Ibrahim Mohamed AHMED
 - Amb. Mostafa ALAEI
 - Dr. Mohammad Mamduh Madhat AL-EKER
 - Dr. Saleh Bin Mohamed AL-KHATLAN
 - Mr. Adel Issa AL-MAHRY
 - Dr. Zuhtu ARSLAN
 - Mr. Wael Mohamed ATTIYA
 - Amb. Ousmane Diao BALDÉ
 - Dr. Siti Ruhaini DZUHAYATIN
 - Amb. Mohammed Kawu IBRAHIM
 - Mr. Al-Bachir Ibrahim MAHAMAT
 - Mr. Mohammed RAISSOUNI
 - Mr. Mohammed Lamin TIMBO
 - Amb. Abdul WAHAB
 - Mrs. Asila WARDAK
 - Mr. Med S.K. KAGGWA (Absent with apology)
3. The meeting started with the recital of verses from the Holy Quran. In his welcome address, the Indonesian Vice- Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. Wardana, enumerated the expectations of the Muslim World from the Commission and pledged his government's support to IPHRC towards discharging its functions in an independent manner. Messages on behalf of the chair of the Council of Foreign

Ministers and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights were also read out at the inaugural session.

4. In his inaugural statement H.E. Dr. Emeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC highlighted the establishment of the Commission as an event of profound historical significance. He emphasized the high degree of expectation from the Commission as a paradigm shift that would contribute to the visibility and credibility of OIC. The Secretary General suggested five elements of complementarity, introspection, prioritization, incremental approach and credibility as the guiding principles for the Commission's work. He identified removal of the misperception regarding Islam's incompatibility with the human rights as the main challenge for the work of the Commission and invited the Member States to make full use of its potential.
5. Following the inaugural session, the Secretary General and the Commissioners were received by H.E. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia. He emphasized his full support to the works of the commission in advancing human rights within the Islamic countries as well as eliminating misperception between Islam and human rights to the rest of the world. Indonesia is the home for the moderat Islam which can be the basis for negotiating Islam and universal human right principles.
6. The Commission elected Dr. Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin (Republic of Indonesia) as its interim Chairperson.
7. During the interactive dialogue with the presence and participation of International Experts including Dr. Ibrahim Salama, Mr. Doudou Diene and Mr. Rafendi Djamin, the Commission discussed ways and means of effectively translating the Statute into action based on prioritization of issues and with a view to establishing credibility with both the Member States and the outside world.
8. Following the adoption of agenda and program of work (copies annexed), the Commission considered draft Rules of Procedure prepared by the General Secretariat. Each of the rules under consideration was thoroughly discussed with a view to ensuring clarity that would enable smooth functioning in accordance with the OIC Charter and the IPHRC Statute. In view of the paucity of time, the Commission decided to establish an inter-sessional working group with Ambassador Abdul Wahab, Mr. Wael Attiya, Ambassador Mohammed Kawu Ibrahim and Dr. Zuhtu Arslan as members to prepare inputs for consideration at the next session.

9. The Commission had an exhaustive discussion on the different aspects of the human rights situations in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. The discussion was assisted by the two international Experts from the Arab and the African region. In view of the unanimous acknowledgment of the importance of the issue and the fact that the sufferings of the Palestinians persists as a result of the occupation by the Occupying Power, the Commission decided to make the issue a permanent item on its agenda. The Commissioners, during their interventions, reflected on the multiplicity and continuity of human rights violations in the occupied territories.
10. During discussion on the agenda item four, facilitated by the General Secretariat and the two international Experts, the Commission identified prospective priority areas for its work in terms of assisting the Member States in their efforts to promote and protect human rights within their jurisdiction and enhance compliance with their international obligations. The need to address, structurally, the added value of Islamic principles as well as establishing a think tank within the complementarity aspect on some related priority issues were also discussed by some Commissioners.
11. The Commission also took note of the human rights situations and issues on OIC agenda with a view to making substantive contributions towards enhancing the human rights content. The Commission acknowledged the vision of the Ten-Year Program of Action and the Charter geared towards mainstreaming the human rights dimension across the programs and activities of OIC.

Conclusion and recommendations

12. The Commission also expressed concern on the recent incident of burning copies of the Holy Quran in Afghanistan and the ensuing loss of lives and called for avoiding recurrence of such incidents of discrimination and incitement to violence on grounds of religion or belief.
13. The Commission expressed deep concern on the ongoing human rights violations in Syria, and called upon all concerned parties to end the bloodshed.
14. The Commission offered assistance to Member States in important areas including meeting the reporting requirements of the Treaty Bodies and the second round of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the UN Human Rights Council.

15. The Commission also encouraged Member States to utilize the full potential of its expertise by referring matters pertaining to human rights and corresponding legislation for advisory opinion.
16. The Commission established a Working Group on the collation and harmonization of inputs on its draft Rules of Procedures during the inter-sessional period.
17. The Commission identified the rights of women and of the child the Right to Development, the Right to Education as well as encouraging research with a view to, *inter alia*, identifying and elaborating on certain Islamic notions and perspectives as priority areas of its work over the next year.
18. The Commission expressed deep concern at the deteriorating human rights situations in Palestine, with particular reference to the worsening living conditions of people in view of the continuing Israeli occupation, requesting Member States to explore all possible avenues of assistance with a view to improving these conditions.
19. The Commission took note of the proposal to establish a working group on the permanent agenda item entitled “*human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories*” to work during the inter-sessional period with a view to charting out roadmap for work in this important area.
20. The Commission requested the Council of Foreign Ministers to take note of the list of signatures and ratifications by OIC Member States (copy enclosed) of international covenants and human rights instruments with a view to requesting the Commission to facilitate updating of the list during the course of its substantive work.
21. The Commission requested the Council of Foreign Ministers to ensure provision of adequate financial, infrastructural and human resource support for optimal discharge of its functions under the Statute including grant of such privileges and immunities as may be necessary for its independent functioning. In this regard, the Commission recommended that the Council of Ministers might consider referring to the privileges and entitlements of the Commissioners of the African Commission on Human and People's Right as a guide.
22. The Commission expressed its support for the work of the *Islamophobia* Observatory at the OIC General Secretariat and called for the institution of a similar international mechanism, preferably at the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights,

with a view to monitoring incitement to hatred, and violence as well as discrimination on religious grounds aimed at ensuring respect for all religions as well as their sacred symbols and personalities.

23. The Commission indicated a clear preference to stay away from politicization and selectivity and the political content of the wide ranging issues on the OIC agenda and restrict its work only to the extent of the human rights dimension. In this regard, the Commission agreed to accord particular importance to issues including *Islamophobia*, combating intolerance, discrimination and incitement to violence and hatred on religious grounds and situations of Muslim Minorities and communities.
24. Ambassador Mostafa Alaei, both in his capacity of human rights expert and in his personal capacity, stated that he does not recognize the State of Israel as a legitimate government considering it to be an occupying regime. He further stated that he disassociates his self from any selectivity and politicization in the field of human rights particularly within the IPHRC.
25. Dr. Saleh Bin Mohamed AL-KHATLAN proposed that, until the Commission's draft rules of procedures are finalized, meetings of the Commission may be held, to the extent possible, at the OIC headquarters, in Jeddah, and encouraged member-states to contribute towards financing the meetings' expenses.
26. The Commission welcomed the proposal by Dr. Zuhtu Arslan that the next session of the IPHRC may be held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey.
