



Eighth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers

Final Report

Al Madinah Al Munawwarah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

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(20-22 Rabi' I 1435 A.H./21-23 January 2014)

1. With the help of Allah, the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers held its eighth session in AlMadinah AlMunawwarah, the Islamic Culture Capital for the year 1434 A.H/2013, under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, on 20-22 Rabi'a I 1435 A.H./21-23 January 2014, on the theme “**Toward Cultural Rights Promotion in the Islamic World to Foster Dialogue and Peace**”, with the participation of the Member States and in the presence of the representatives of Islamic, Arab and international organizations and invited personalities.
2. The Conference’s opening session was attended by HRH Prince Faisal Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, Governor of Madinah Region; H.E. Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, the Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO); HE Mr Abulfaz Garayev, Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Vice-Chair of the Seventh Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; Mr Rabeh Hamdi, representative of the Minister of Culture of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria, Chair of the Conference’s Seventh Session; and H.E. Mr Abou Bakr Baqader, representative of the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Also in attendance were a host of ministers from the Member States, representatives of Islamic, Arab and international organizations, heads of participating delegations and several prominent personalities.
3. After recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, the Conference was addressed by H.E. Dr Abdul-Aziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He conveyed to the participating delegations the greetings

of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and his trustworthy heir Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (may Allah preserve them). Dr Khoja said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was pleased to play host to the Conference's eighth session in Al Madinah Al Munawwarah, under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques (may Allah preserve him), and hailed ISESCO Director General's dedicated efforts to promote Islamic culture and joint Islamic cultural action and achieve the goals set for ISESCO's programmes, thus raising the Organization to the highest standards of achievement, both regionally and internationally. He also said that ISESCO is actively engaged, within its ambit, to advocate the Muslim world's strategic vision, bring comprehensive development, boost dialogue among people from different religions and cultures and alliance of civilizations, and spread peace, mutual understanding and cooperation between peoples and nations.

The Conference, Dr Khoja underlined, gives another signal, through its topic, of ISESCO's keen efforts to promote cultural rights in the Muslim world and put them at centre stage in the effort for human rights' promotion in the Member States. He also stressed the importance of cultural rights in the Islamic world in fostering dialogue and peace. He went on saying that it is a wise choice by ISESCO reflecting the Member States' interest in engaging in the Ummah's civilizational advancement. Dr Khoja further commended the level of cooperation between the Ministry and ISESCO in relation to the "Al Madinah Al Munawwarah – Capital of Islamic Culture 2013" celebration, particularly with regard to the successful implementation, both in Saudi Arabia and beyond, of the celebration activities scheduled by ISESCO.

Besides, he lauded the choice of the Conference theme “**Toward Cultural Rights Promotion in the Islamic World to Foster Dialogue and Peace**” and the relevant documents, while stressing the necessity of coming up with practical recommendations to support the cultural rights that will enable the civil society and the governmental institutions in the Member States to develop appropriate cultural policies and relevant executive programmes.

In addition, Dr Khoja commended the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for Dialogue among the Followers of Religions and Cultures which was the subject matter of the study conducted by ISESCO and adopted by the Seventh Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers. This effort was further enhanced at the eighth session of the Conference with the preparation of the Executive Plan. In this regard, he said that the document and its plan reflect the vision of the Muslim world in the relevant fields and constitute an integrated project featuring a set of conceptions and mechanisms that would activate the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for Dialogue among the Followers of Religions and Cultures.

Moreover, Dr Khoja proposed that the Conference adopt two Islamic cultural projects namely:

- The project of the Web Portal of Al Madinah Al Munawwarah on Culture in the Islamic World, which would enable every Member State to present its cultural landmarks and announce its own cultural programmes;
 - The project of a web-based bibliography of creative literary and artistic talents in the Islamic world containing their CVs along with their photos and contact details.
4. For his part, ISESCO Director General HE Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri made an address in which he first expressed his deepest gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Patron of the Conference, and to Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence (may Allah preserve them), for so generously hosting the Conference's eighth session and for the unstinting efforts exerted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to boost joint Islamic action and Islamic solidarity and to support ISESCO, while imploring Allah the Most High to grant progress and prosperity to this generous country under the wise leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. He also pointed out that the choice of the Conference theme "Toward Cultural Rights Promotion in the Islamic World to Foster Dialogue and Peace" is in harmony with the resolutions and recommendations of the previous Conference session held in Algiers in 2011, which adopted the document on the "**Cultural Roles of Civil Society in the Promotion of Dialogue and Peace**", inspired actually by the "**Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World**". He went on saying that it is in this context that the document on the "**Cultural Rights in the Muslim World: Realities and Development Prospects**" is presented to this Conference to serve as a groundwork for the "**Draft Islamic Declaration on Cultural Rights**".

Besides, Dr Altwaijri stated that it is within this integrated framework that ISESCO is directing its efforts to follow up on the "**Strategy for Islamic Cultural Action outside the Islamic World**" and the "**Strategy for ICT Development in the Islamic World**".

In addition, ISESCO Director General stressed that the Organization was keen on placing on the Conference's agenda the Draft Executive Plan for the "**Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques: Achievements and Future Prospects**" which was approved at the coordination meeting of ISESCO's heads of delegation to UNESCO's 37th General Conference, last October in Paris.

Moreover, he underlined that the topic of the ministerial roundtable on "**Cultural Rights Promotion in the Islamic World to Foster Dialogue and Peace**" takes centre stage in the action led by ISESCO, for the world needs more than ever before to sustain a culture of dialogue and mutual understanding as an effective platform to combat racial cleavage, hatred, extremism and terrorism and bring peace to all humanity, and because ISESCO is keen on developing, through this conference, an enlightened Islamic perspective on cultural rights.

At the close of his address, Dr Altwaijri reiterated his deepest thanks and sincerest appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the spearhead of Islamic solidarity, for playing host to this Conference and providing all the tools necessary to bring it to a successful conclusion.

5. Then, HE Mr Abulfaz Garayev, Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan, read out the address of the Chair of the Seventh Conference of Culture Ministers wherein he first expressed his thanks to the King, government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for generously hosting this Conference. He also pointed out that a multitude of events, changes and mutations have taken place in the interval period between the seventh and eighth sessions. This, he stressed, calls for concerted efforts and coordinated action in order to overcome these crises. Besides, he stated that the current session of the Conference would study the document on the “**Cultural Rights in the Islamic World: Realities and Development Prospects**” which constitutes, together with the document on “**The Cultural Roles of Civil Society for the Promotion of Dialogue and Peace**”, the roadmap for cultural development in the Islamic world.

At the close of this address, Mr Garayev commended the remarkable efforts exerted by ISESCO Director General Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri to supply the successive sessions of this Conference with a set of important documents.

6. Afterwards, HE Mr Abou Bakr Baqader read out an address on behalf of HE Mr Iyad Madani, the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), wherein he expressed his gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as to the government and people of the Kingdom on the occasion of the selection of AlMadinah Al Munawwarah as Islamic Culture Capital for 2013 which is a natural choice that confirms the special spiritual importance Muslim peoples attach to this city.

In addition, he stated that one of the current huge challenges is the rise of Islamophobia. He went on saying that this phenomenon which is a matter of deep concern for the Organization calls for concerted efforts in the cultural, educational and information areas. In the same vein, he said that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is exerting steady efforts to investigate this phenomenon and undertake the necessary measures in this regard.

Furthermore, he pointed out that the OIC welcomes all good initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue of civilizations, cultures and followers of religions and expressed the Organization's active engagement in the initiative of alliance of civilizations. He added that the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz for Dialogue among Followers of Religions and Cultures together with its Executive Plan have opened up promising prospects for joint international action.

By the same token, Mr Baqader pointed out the risks threatening the cultural heritage in Palestine, in general, and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, in particular, as a result of the Israel's continued occupation and the despicable acts perpetrated by the Israeli authorities. In the same vein, he called on the international organizations and UNESCO in particular to protect and safeguard the cultural and historical landmarks in Al-Quds.

At the close of his address, Mr Baqader commended the efforts deployed by ISESCO and its Director General amidst the considerable cultural, scientific and educational challenges faced by the Muslim world. He also hailed the existing cooperation among specialized Islamic institutions in these areas, particularly ISESCO which he invited to strengthen this cooperation in such a way as to advance joint Islamic action.

After the opening addresses, a documentary film on the celebration of Al Madinah Al Munawwarah as Islamic Culture Capital for 2013 was displayed. At the close of the opening ceremony, ISESCO Director General, H.E Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, presented the celebration's Shield to HRH Prince Faisal bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Governor of Al Madinah Region, Chairman of the Supreme Committee for the Programmes of the Celebration of Al Madinah Al Munawwarah as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2013.

7. At the beginning of the first working session, Mr Rabeh Hamdi, representative of the Chair of the Seventh Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers, lauded the choice of AlMadinah AlMunawwarah as the 2013 Islamic Culture Capital while recalling the choice of Tlemcen as the Islamic Culture Capital for the year 2011. He also reviewed the cultural achievements made in Tlemcen hoping that Constantine will achieve the same success on the occasion of its selection as the capital of Arab culture for the year 2015. Mr Hamdi ended his address by expressing his country's willingness to cooperate with the Islamic Culture Capitals for the year 2014.

The Conference adopted its draft agenda and draft programme.

8. The bureau of the Eighth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers was composed as follows:

- **Chair:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- **Vice-Chairs:**
 - Kingdom of Morocco.
 - Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam.
 - Republic of theGambia.
- **Rapporteur:** People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

9. ISESCO Director General presented his Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, pointing out that more than 200 activities in the areas of culture and communication have been carried out over the last two years by ISESCO, with special focus on safeguarding Islamic cultural heritage, promoting Member States' cultural policies, reinvigorating the role of civil society in developing these policies for optimal benefit, fostering respect for cultural diversity, activating dialogue of cultures and alliance of civilizations, addressing Islamophobia, protecting cultural rights for women, the youth and children, facilitating rapprochement of Islamic schools of thought (*madhahib*), promoting Islamic cultural action outside the Muslim world, advancing the ICT sector in the Member States, developing programmes of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, following up the project on the transcription of Muslim peoples' languages using the standardized Quranic script, and supporting the Islamic Culture Capitals' programme as an outstanding cultural event reflecting the rich and diverse aspect of the cultural and artistic landscape of the capitals celebrated.

These activities included conferences, symposia and experts' meetings, training sessions, seminars and workshops. As well as developing various specialized studies, research, guides and reports, ISESCO dedicated prizes to stimulate literary and artistic creativity. The Consultative Council in Charge of Implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, at its 11th and 12th meetings, played an active role in achieving the sought objectives of these activities through the directions and proposals it articulated in this connection.

In terms of the **preservation of the cultural and civilizational heritage in the Islamic world**, ISESCO pursued its efforts, via the Islamic World Heritage Committee, towards preserving the human civilizational heritage in the Member States through the inscription of Islamic heritage sites on the Islamic World Heritage List, extending the necessary support to the competent parties in the Member States for the inscription of heritage and natural sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List, organizing training courses in favor of workers in the field of architecture and museums, and publishing scholarly and documentary books on Islamic civilizational landmarks.

As part of its sustained action towards **safeguarding the endangered cultural and civilizational landmarks in Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif**, the Organization convened the 5th and 6th meetings of ISESCO's Archeology Experts Commission on the new Israeli violations in the vicinity of Al-Aqsa Mosque (4-5 March 2012 and 29-31 January 2013), in Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

As regards the **promotion of dialogue among cultures and alliance of civilizations**, ISESCO focused its attention on formulating a comprehensive and well-balanced

perception of dialogue based on mutual respect, justice and equity, rejection of bigotry and hatred, and dissemination of the values of middle stance and moderation.

In this regard, ISESCO implemented a number of activities within the framework of its action plans and the cooperation programmes it has concluded with a number of Arab, Islamic and international organizations and institutions. These activities included the organization of a number of meetings and symposia and the preparation of a number of strategies focusing on inter-Islamic dialogue and optimization of the role of Muslims in building human culture, as well as the publication of a number of important authoritative works addressing the subject.

Within the framework of its **programme on Islamic Culture Capitals**, ISESCO in 2012 celebrated Niamey, capital of the Republic of Niger, and Dakha, capital of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, as Islamic Culture Capitals for the African and Asian regions, respectively. In the same vein, Al Madinah Al Munawwarah was celebrated as the 2013 Islamic Culture Capital, on the occasion of its being the host-city of the 8th Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers. Ghazni, Afghanistan, was also celebrated as the 2013 Islamic Culture Capital. Due to special circumstances, the Republic of Iraq requested to postpone the celebration of Najaf as the 2012 Islamic Culture Capital. Similarly, the Republic of Lebanon requested to push back the launch of the celebrations of Tripoli as the 2013 Islamic Culture Capital.

In its keen efforts to carry on implementation of its **Programme of Action to Refute Media Smear Campaigns against Islam and Islamic Civilization**, ISESCO organized a number of activities inside and outside the Muslim world which included expert meetings and seminars on ways to counter Islamophobia, and address stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in western media. It also conducted training sessions for media professionals in the Member States and beyond in using modern ICT to disseminate true information about Islam and its civilization.

Keeping in mind the educational needs of Member States, and in recognition of the efforts being made by some countries to **improve the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language**, ISESCO pursued its support to the efforts of these countries by endeavoring to build their capacities in terms of designing curricula and improving the pedagogical performance of educational staff, with special focus on improving the ability of local educational counselors and trainers to shoulder the responsibility of building the pedagogical capacities of teachers of Arabic as a foreign language, and qualifying the officials in charge of Arabic and Islamic education departments and curricula developers to devise curricula and educational programmes that are well suited to the local contexts.

Based on the guidelines of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, and being aware of the importance of heritage in safeguarding next generations' identity,

ISESCO has stepped up its efforts for the project aimed at **transcribing Muslim peoples' languages using the standardized Quranic script**, as a confirmation of the Islamic historical experience which has reconciled unity and diversity, making it an international framework bringing together different cultures, peoples and races.

The Conference adopted the Director General's Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World (Document ICCM-8/2014/2.2), as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.2.2), taking into consideration the observations of the Conference's members. It also called on ISESCO to continue publicizing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, in its amended version, among Members States' relevant parties, civil society organizations, as well as similar regional and international organizations, and to devote more activities and programmes under its action plans to activating the Strategy and fulfilling its objectives in promoting joint Islamic cultural action. As well as urging the relevant parties in the Member States to increase efforts to implement the Strategy and its key guidelines, streamline cultural action into comprehensive development, and increase public and private financial allocations for cultural projects under this Strategy, the Conference endorsed the recommendations by the Consultative Council in Charge of Implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, in its meetings between the Conference's 7th and 8th sessions. It also thanked the Council for the effort to prepare for the 8th session of the Conference, by examining and enriching its documents, and invited it to pursue action in this regard in coordination with ISESCO. In addition, the Conference commended the efforts made by the Member States whose cities were celebrated as capitals of Islamic culture for 2011 and 2012 to mark this event, and invited relevant parties in the Member States with cities nominated for celebration as capitals of Islamic culture in the coming years to coordinate with ISESCO, drawing on previous experiences, in order to deliver this cultural and civilizational programme to the sought standard. Also significant, the Conference endorsed the recommendations by the Islamic Heritage Committee at its third and fourth meetings, and thanked it for endeavoring to protect Islamic cultural and civilizational heritage in danger in the Member States. The Conference invited the Committee to dedicate further attention to protect Al-Quds Al-Sharif against constant judaization attempts by the Israeli occupation authorities and coordinate with the World Heritage Committee to issue effective resolutions to immediately stop Israeli violations.

Also commended by the Conference were the measures by the Director General to reinvigorate the action of the Islamic Heritage Committee. In this regard, the Conference welcomed the establishment of the Islamic Heritage List, and invited relevant parties in the Member States to nominate natural and archaeological sites, along with intangible heritage items, for inscription on this List, in accordance with the mechanisms and criteria prescribed by the Islamic Heritage Committee. Finally, the Conference hailed the programmes and activities implemented by ISESCO to

counter incitement to hatred, racism, fanaticism, violence and extremism, promote a culture of justice and peace, and entrench the values of respect for plurality and cultural diversity inside and outside the Member States. It also commended the action by the Director General to redress misconceptions about Islam as a creed, a culture, a civilization and an Ummah.

10. The Conference adopted the Report of the Director General on ISESCO's Efforts in Implementing the Strategy for Islamic Cultural Action outside the Islamic World

(Document ICCM-8/2014/2.3), as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.2.3), taking into account the observations of the Conference's members. It commended ISESCO for its Islamic cultural action activities geared to Muslims outside the Islamic world, through convening the meetings of the heads of Islamic cultural centres and associations in Europe, South-eastern Asia and the Indian Ocean, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the meetings of the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture for Muslims outside the Islamic World, and invited it to continue efforts in this connection. The Conference also lauded the quality of the educational, cultural and information activities carried out by ISESCO for Muslims outside the Islamic World, namely as regards redressing misconceptions about Islam and Muslims, countering Islamophobia, promoting dialogue between cultures, civilizations and followers of religions, and developing Arabic language and Islamic education programmes. Besides, it invited ISESCO to pursue its efforts and intensify contact with Islamic cultural centres and associations in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, through the Supreme Council of Education, Science and Culture for Muslims outside the Islamic World, in order to enforce the Executive Plan of the Strategy for Islamic Cultural Action outside the Islamic World. The Conference went on to commend ISESCO's Training Programme for Imams and Guides for Muslim communities outside the Islamic world to spread the values of dialogue, middle stance and moderation, and invited it to continue holding relevant training sessions and symposia. In addition, the Conference commended ISESCO's methodology to strengthen cooperation and coordination with governmental authorities in Europe, Asia and Latin America and involve them in implementing its activities geared to Muslim communities in these countries.

11. The Conference adopted the Report of the Director General on ISESCO's Efforts to Follow-up the Implementation of the Strategy for ICTs Development in the Islamic World

(Document ICCM-8/2014/2.4), as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.2.4), while taking into consideration the observations of its members. In this regard, the Conference lauded the quality of the information and communication activities implemented inside and outside the Islamic world, between the 7th and 8th sessions of the Conference, with a major portion dedicated to promoting education, science and culture, and providing training to relevant staff, in follow-up to the Strategy for ICTs Development in the Islamic World.

In the same vein, the Conference invited ISESCO to focus more on the activities designed to promote harmony between ICT ethics and human right principles and values, and identify the best tools to enhance the cultural and moral content of information and communication technologies in the Islamic world. It also called on the relevant parties in the Member States to develop the necessary policies and legislation to advance this vital sector.

- 12. The Conference adopted the document on the Draft Implementation Plan of the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for Dialogue among the Followers of Religions and Cultures: Achievement and Future Prospects** (Document ICCM-8/2014/3.1), as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.3.1), and commended ISESCO's efforts to publicize this initiative and its executive plan in international and regional forums such as the Fifth Forum of Alliance of Civilizations (Vienna, February 2013), the Baku Forum for Intercultural Dialogue (May and June 2013), and the 10th coordination meeting of ISESCO's heads of delegation to UNESCO's 37th General Conference (November 2013).

It also commended the study conducted by ISESCO on the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for Dialogue among the Followers of Religions and Cultures and on its Executive Plan, which proved a true expression of the Islamic world's vision of dialogue among the followers of religions and cultures.

In addition, the Conference called on ISESCO, the OIC, the Muslim World League and the Vienna-based King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) to collaborate in implementing programmes and activities in this connection. It also called on the relevant parties to cooperate in order to achieve an optimal level of efficiency to ensure success of this civilizational project. In the same vein, it invited the Director General to prepare a report on the efforts to enforce the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for Dialogue among the Followers of Religions and Cultures and its Executive Plan and submit it to the ninth session of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers.

- 13. The Conference adopted the document on the “Islamic Declaration on Cultural Rights”** (Document ICCM-8/2014/3.2), as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.3.2), taking into consideration the observations of its members. It stressed the importance of cultural rights in the human rights system to preserve social cohesion and promote citizenship, dialogue, social peace and comprehensive development through cooperation between governments and civil society organizations. The Conference invited the relevant parties in the Member States, along with civil society organizations and bodies, to cooperate and coordinate to activate the civil society's cultural rights, as expounded in the document, enact necessary legislation, and carry out relevant programmes and projects toward promoting

dialogue and peace. It further invited ISESCO to publicize the document in international and regional forums and hold seminars and training sessions to develop the necessary capacities to effectively integrate these rights. Besides, the Conference invited ISESCO to present the outcomes of the implementation of this document content at the forthcoming sessions of the Consultative Council for the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, and the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers. In addition, the Conference called on the Director General to enhance cooperation with international and regional organizations to carry out joint programmes and activities toward the enforcement of cultural rights for civil society organizations catering for the youth, women and children. The Conference also thanked the Director General for scheduling a roundtable on cultural rights at the beginning of the Conference with the participation of cultural and civil society actors and called for pursuing this successful initiative in the forthcoming sessions.

14. The second session of the ministerial roundtable which was dedicated to the promotion of cultural rights in the Islamic world to foster dialogue and peace was held with the moderation of H.E. Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General.

Introducing the roundtable, ISESCO Director General pointed out that cultural rights are disregarded in comparison to the other rights contained in international instruments. He went on saying that the focus nowadays is mainly placed on the third generation of rights considering that the first (political and civic rights) and second (social and economic rights) generations of rights have already been recognized by the international community.

He stressed that the third generation of rights is founded upon **solidarity** which is a set of such collective rights of peoples and communities as the right to sustainable development, the right to peace, the right to a healthy, unpolluted environment, and the right to benefit from the human cultural heritage. ISESCO Director General also said that this new generation of human rights has gained wider recognition among human rights advocates and organizations as a prelude to a comprehensive approach to the system of human rights. In this regard, the Fifth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Tripoli, 2007) had adopted the Strategy of Cultural Takaful to Serve Muslim Developmental and Civilizational Causes which approached cultural solidarity and *takaful* as major cultural and civilizational issues.

At the close of his presentation, Dr Altwaijri stressed the necessity to pursue the path of national reform and dialogue together with civil society in the Member States in order to incorporate cultural rights into public relevant policies as part of a participative approach. Then, Dr Alsadeq Al-Faqeeh, the Secretary General of the Arab Thought Forum, made a brief presentation on the document.

The Conference took note of the document on the Broad Lines of Cultural Roles in the Islamic World: Realities and Future Prospects(Document ICCM-8/2014/3.3),

as contained in the Resolution (ICCM-8/2014/R.3.3). it also invited the Member States to present their observations and suggestions on the document to ISESCO in order to submit them to the meeting of the Consultative Council in Charge of Implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World for study and accordingly place them on the agenda of the ninth session of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers, in coordination with the Conference Chair.

15. The heads of delegation delivered statements and presented national reports on their countries' efforts in implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.

In their statements, the heads of delegation commended ISESCO's efforts in implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, promoting Islamic cultural action for Muslims outside the Islamic world, enhancing dialogue and cultural diversity, as well as preserving and protecting sanctities and landmarks of Islamic civilization in the Member States.

The Conference expressed its deep appreciation of the address of H.E. Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Chair of the Conference's Eighth Session. It also welcomed the proposals put forward by the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia concerning the project of the Web Portal of Al Madinah Al Munawwarah on Culture in the Islamic World, and the project of a web-based bibliography of creative, literary and artistic talents in the Islamic world, and invited the Member States and the competent parties to cooperate in the implementation of the two projects.

Besides, the Conference praised the addresses of Mr Iyad Madani, OIC Secretary General, and Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General. It also commended the efforts to publicize Islamic culture and expressed appreciation for the action led by the OIC and ISESCO to promote inter-cultural dialogue and alliance of civilizations.

The Conference highly commended the OIC Secretary General and the General Secretariat for taking strong and appropriate measures to combat Islamophobia and discrimination against Muslims, and for sensitizing the international community to the issue of incitement of hatred and stereotyping of Muslims and their negative profiling. It equally expressed appreciation for the commendable work by the Islamophobia Observatory at the OIC General Secretariat in monitoring Islamophobia incidents, taking necessary countermeasures and producing annual reports thereon.

The Conference also lauded the activities and programmes geared by the OIC General Secretariat and its specialized subsidiary and affiliated organs for promoting Islamic values and culture.

The Conference re-commissioned ISESCO to continue implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, with follow-up to its implementation mechanisms, in consultation with the Consultative Council, as well as in coordination with the OIC General Secretariat, and in cooperation with the Member States and relevant regional and international organizations.

The Conference agreed that all forthcoming sessions of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers be organized by ISESCO in coordination with the OIC General Secretariat as provided for by relevant resolutions. It also welcomed the offer by the Sultanate of Oman to host the Conference's ninth session in Muscat to mark the celebration of Nizwa as the Islamic Culture Capital, and invited ISESCO to take necessary measures in this connection, in coordination with the host country and the OIC General Secretariat.

Moreover, the Conference commended the OIC General Secretariat for its efforts and active engagement in the Initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz for Dialogue among Followers of Religions and Cultures.

The Conference commended the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat and ISESCO to raise the international community's awareness about Israel's systematic actions to alter the historical Arab-Islamic identity of the holy places in Palestine, as well as judaize and tamper with its history, particularly in the historical, religious and cultural heritage sites in Eastern Al-Quds.

- 16.** The Conference endorsed the election of the Consultative Council in Charge of Implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, for a two-year term, renewable once.
- 17.** The Conference elected the members of the Islamic World Heritage Committee.
- 18.** The Conference decided to hold its ninth session during the second half of November 2015, in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, to mark the celebration of Nizwa as the 2015 Islamic Culture Capital for the Arab region.

At the closing session, the Conference members addressed a message to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, as well as to his Crown Prince and HRH the Governor of Madinah Region wherein they expressed their gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, as well as to his government and people for hosting the Conference, the warm hospitality granted to the participants, and the support and facilities provided by the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to hold the Conference in the best conditions.

ISESCO Director General, Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri, made an address to the Conference, wherein he praised the generous support offered by the Custodian of the

Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, and extended deep thanks and appreciation to H.E. Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and to his assistants for their efforts to organize the Conference and provide the suitable conditions for its success. He also thanked the participating delegations, and expressed great satisfaction with the important resolutions reached by the Conference.

The Conference closed with an address by H.E. Dr Abdulaziz bin Mohieddin Khoja, Minister of Culture and Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Chair of the Conference, wherein he expressed Saudi Arabia's honour in hosting the Conference, and highly commended the performance put in by ISESCO Director General and the Conference's members. Moreover, he underlined his constant readiness to continue cooperation with ISESCO on promoting joint Islamic action in the areas covered by the Conference.