Final Communiqué

The Fourth Meeting of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World

Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
Rabii I, 25th-26th, 1425 A.H. corresponding to 15-16 May 2004
In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,

In the furtherance of the efforts of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization -ISESCO- aiming at energizing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, and striving to make every endeavor to make a success of this vital area, the Fourth Meeting of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World was convened at the headquarters of the Islamic Organization on 25-26 Rabii I 1425 A.H., corresponding to 15-16 May 2004 A.D., in the presence of His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Hashem Falougi, ISESCO Deputy Director General, His Excellency Dr. Saleh Ahmed Bin Nasser, Chairman of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World and representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia therein, along with Their Excellencies the representatives of the following Member States in the Council: the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Guinea, the Union of Comoros, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, and the Republic of Yemen. The representatives of the Republic of Chad and the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam could not attend the Meeting.

1. Opening session

The Meeting was opened in Al Quds Hall at ISESCO Headquarters in Rabat, on Saturday morning 25 Rabii I 1425 A.H., corresponding to 15 May 2004 A.D., with the recitation of Verses of the Holy Quran, after which Dr. Mohamed Hashem Falougi, ISESCO Deputy Director General, made an address on behalf of the Organization, whereby he welcomed the Council chairman and members, and conveyed to them the greetings of H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of the Islamic Organization, along with his wishes of success and prosperity.

Having reminded the audience of the causes that led to the canceling of the Council’s meeting last year, he also underlined the interest taken by ISESCO in carrying out the Council’s decisions and recommendations with regard to the implementation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, in keeping with the Organization’s awareness of the need to develop culture along with its means, and to face up to the relevant challenges being witnessed in the Islamic world, while stressing the importance of assiduous and industrious work in this civilizational field and of reconsidering the implementation mechanisms in such a way as to ensure effectiveness towards attaining the objectives targeted.
The floor was then taken by Dr. Saleh Ahmed Bin Nasser, Chairman of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, who delivered an address at the outset of which he welcomed the Council members, and praised the diligent efforts directed by ISESCO in following up the implementation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World along with the recommendations of its Consultative Council. He lauded, as well, the efforts exerted by H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri and his assistants in this respect.

He also urged Member States to render their contacts with the Islamic Organization more effective and to support its efforts in implementing this strategy, with a view to overcoming the difficulties and hindrances that the Organization faced while implementing the Council’s recommendations.

2. The Council’s working sessions

During the organizational session, the Council board was made up of:

- Dr. Saleh Ahmed Bin Nasser (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), Chairman.
- Mr. Laye Sidibé (Republic of Guinea), Vice-chairman.
- Dr. Abdullah Muhamed Baouzir (Republic of Yemen), Rapporteur.

The Council held two working sessions whereby the following matters were presented and discussed:

1. ISESCO’s Report on its efforts in following up the decisions and recommendations of the Third Meeting of the Consultative Council.

2. The Cultural projects submitted by the Member States to the Consultative Council.

3. The form pertaining to the submission of the cultural projects to the Consultative Council.

4. The special document on the techniques of designing cultural projects and the use of IT in modernizing cultural administration.

5. The special document pertaining to the sources and techniques of funding the cultural project and cultural industries.

Upon considering these matters, the Council decided the following:

1. Adopting ISESCO’s report on following up implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Third Meeting of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, and commending ISESCO’s persistent efforts in energizing the cultural action
undertaken within the framework of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.

2. Adopting the cultural project submitted by the Tunisian Republic, under the title: «Protection of the Collective Civilizational Heritage of the Islamic Countries», and apprising the competent Tunisian authority thereof, while recommending that the project be presented in an appropriate manner so that it stands good chances of success and of being approved by the funding institutions.

3. Adopting the cultural project submitted by the Republic of Yemen, under the title: «Project of the Regional Centre for Islamic Manuscripts» after reconsidering it by the competent Yemenite authorities with a view to assigning their financial contribution thereto, the venue of the centre as well as the detailed expenses incurred by the procurement of the equipment necessary for its operating and the human resources needed for its management.

4. Calling for reconsideration of the project submitted by the Republic of Niger, under the title: (Project of Protection and Promotion of Islamic Cultural Heritage in Niger), due to the high expenditure to be incurred by a number of its components, especially as regards the production of the film on Sheikh Ousmane Dan Fodio, and looking into the possibility of implementing some of its other constituents, as part of ISESCO’s activities, namely: promotion of reading centres in rural areas, and preparing a study on hazards of moral decadence among youth.

5. Requesting the information required in accordance with the guiding criteria adopted with regard to the cultural projects submitted by the Arab Republic of Egypt (Project of the Arab Centre for qualifying officials working in the field of Childhood) and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Project of the Child Cultural House, and Project of a Permanent Exhibition of Islamic Heritage and Arts).

6. Rejecting the cultural project submitted by the Republic of the Gambia, under the title: «Setting up ISESCO Secretariat for the supervision of its cultural programmes in the Gambia», due to its incongruity with the scope of action of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.

7. Implementing the cultural project submitted by the People’s Republic of Bangladesh under the title: «Project of Raising Awareness within Muslim Societies regarding Muslim Women’s Rights», under ISESCO’s Action Plan, along with the cultural project submitted by the Republic of
Yemen under the title: «Project of Cataloguing and Documenting Handicrafts in Yemen», after a budget has been allocated thereto within the resources available to the Islamic Organization.

The Fourth Meeting of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World closed its proceedings with the following recommendations:

1. Urging Member States to consider cultural action among the priorities of comprehensive development, in view of its plus value on the one hand, and given its importance for the cultural and social development of individuals and societies alike, on the other hand.

2. Calling on Member States to increase the budgets allocated to cultural action, and to step up the official and non-governmental efforts in order to provide the financial resources required to promote this action.

3. Urging the officials in charge of the cultural policies and cultural planning in Member States to further perfect the designing of cultural projects, in keeping with the document on guiding criteria and in accordance with the document on the techniques of cultural projects design, both prepared with a view to securing the support of financial institutions for these projects.

4. Inviting the States represented in the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World to avoid, as far as possible, changing their respective representatives in the Council during the three-year term in which they are supposed to be mandated. Failing that, they should notify such a change to the Islamic Organization.

5. Recommending that the Islamic Conference of Ministers of Culture maintain the membership of some Member States which are represented in the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for an additional term in a bid to secure the continuity and effectiveness of the Council’s activities.

6. Emphasizing the importance of assigning the financial contributions of the Member States submitting cultural projects for their implementation.

7. Inviting again the Member States that have not yet established national councils and funds for culture to establish them if they are to energize the mechanisms of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.

8. Appealing to the Member States to support the special account opened by the Islamic Organization with a view to carrying out the joint cultural activities that fall within the scope of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.
9. Extending thanks and appreciation to H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, along with his assistants, for the efforts they exerted in following up the recommendations of the Consultative Council in charge of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, and inviting them to pursue these efforts for the sake of promoting cultural action in the Islamic world.