Final Report

1. With the help of Allah, the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers held its extraordinary session in Manama, capital of the Kingdom of Bahrain, under the high patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, on 28-29 November 2018, under the theme “Together for Safeguarding Human Heritage and Countering Extremism”, as part of celebrating Muharraq as the Arab region’s Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018.

2. On the first day of the Conference, 28 November 2018, the closing Ceremony of the celebration of Muharraq as the Arab region’s Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018 was held under the effective presidency of H.R.H. Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, in the presence of H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, and H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, and several Bahraini ministers, heads of the delegations of participating countries and organizations and many senior personalities from the sphere of arts and thought from Bahrain and beyond.

On this occasion, H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, offered the Celebration’s shield to H.R.H. Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain in appreciation of His Highness’ patronage for the celebration. Also, H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, made an address wherein she extended her deep gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for his patronage of the Celebration of Muharraq, the city of enlightenment and peace, as the Arab region’s Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018, while expressing her pride for the creation of the Pearling Path Visitor Center under the effective presidency of His Majesty King of Bahrain, and the endorsement of the International Day of Islamic Art by UNESCO as a victory for the language of art and beauty, and reiterating her welcome to the Celebration's guests for whom she wished a good stay in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Kingdom of peace, love and art.

Then, H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, delivered an address wherein he extended his wholehearted thanks and gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for his patronage of the Celebration, while lauding the cultural and civilizational projects and achievements that saw light during the celebration’s period, congratulating H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, for her sustained outstanding efforts to advance culture and preserve heritage and antiquities in the Kingdom of Bahrain and for the diverse projects and activities she implemented during the celebration’s period, and recalling some of the activities implemented by ISESCO on the occasion which are truly deserved by this historic cultural capital. At the close of his address, Dr Altwaijri announced the launch by the Organization of four capitals of Islamic culture for 2019, namely: Al-Quds Al-Sharif, Tunis, Bandar Seri Begawan and Bisau.

During this ceremony, both H.E. Mr Omar Suleiman Adam, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities of the Republic of the Sudan, President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture
Ministers, and H.E. Dr Abdul-Latif Kanoo, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Beit Al Quran in Manama, were honored in recognition of their efforts in the promotion of joint Islamic cultural action. The “Celebration's shield” was presented to them by Their Excellencies Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, and Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities. Besides, the “Celebration's banner and shield” were presented to H.E. Dr Ehab Bsiso, Minister of Culture of the State of Palestine and Dr Mohamed Zine El Abidine, Minister of Cultural Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, while the “Celebration's shield” was awarded to H.E. Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports in the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam and H.E. Dr Florentino Fernando Dias, Secretary of State in Charge of Culture of the Republic of Guinea Bissau, on the occasion of celebrating Bandar Seri Begawan and Bissau as Capitals of Islamic Culture for 2019 for the Asian and African regions, respectively. Moreover, the ceremony witnessed the inauguration of the Pearling Path Visitor Center, the ringing of the bell of peace jointly with the Federation of World Peace and Love (FOWPAL) and the organization of a special musical on the occasion of the closing of the Celebration.

3. On the following day, the conference kicked off in the presence of H.E. Mr Omar Suleiman Adam, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities of the Republic of the Sudan, President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities; H.E. Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC); H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISEESCO Director General; H.E. Dr Boubacar Doukouré, Chairman of ISESCO Executive Council; and the representatives of a number of Islamic, Arab and international organizations, and Member States’ ambassadors accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

4. After recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, H.E. Sheikha Mai delivered an address wherein she first welcomed Their Excellencies heads of delegations of participating Member States, guests, and invitees. She also expressed her pleasure with Bahrain's hosting of the extraordinary session of the Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers, held under the high patronage of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and with support from his honorable government, while expressing her pride for the establishment of the Pearl Path Visitor Center as a civilizational and cultural achievement as part of the Celebration of Muharraq as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018, and highlighting the cultural projects and achievements accomplished on this occasion, as part of a sustainable vision of cultural action. Moreover, H.E. Sheikha Mai recalled the Kingdom's efforts toward the endorsement of the International Day of Islamic Art by UNESCO on the occasion of celebrating Muharraq as the Arab region's Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018 and extended her greetings and appreciation to H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, while commending the keenness of His Excellency to supervise the Islamic Culture Capitals Programme.

In closing, Sheikha Mai expressed her appreciation for the two important topics on the conference's agenda and her wishes for the success of the conference.

5. For his part, Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, delivered an address wherein he first extended his heartfelt thanks and gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for his high patronage for the Conference, in
appreciation from His Majesty to ISESCO and its civilizational mission and programmes, including the Islamic Culture Capitals Programme. Moreover, Dr Altwaijri emphasized that the choice of "Safeguarding Human Heritage and Countering Extremism" as a theme for this extraordinary session of the Conference reflects the fact that heritage belongs to the entire humanity and manifests the preoccupation and interest of the entire Ummah in countering all forms and degrees of extremism, while highlighting the reasons for linking the protection of heritage and the fight against extremism which targets both tangible and intangible heritage and compromises the stability of human societies.

Further, Dr Altwaijri stated that the "Manama Process for the Activation of Joint Islamic Cultural Action to Face Extremism, Sectarianism and Terrorism", which is submitted to the Conference, complements the project of the “Action Programme on the Promotion of Islamic and International Support for Safeguarding Civilizational and Cultural Heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif” and which will both serve as a basis for the “Bahrain Declaration on Safeguarding Human Heritage and Countering Extremism” which will be issued by the Conference as a founding document that will boost the system of relevant reference documents adopted by ISESCO’s specialized ministerial conferences.

By the same token, ISESCO Director General stressed that the protection of human heritage, through facing all forms of extremism, is a collective responsibility that should jointly be assumed by the international community and the United Nations and its specialized organs so as to save the world from the scourge of wars, disasters and crises.

In conclusion, Dr Altwaijri appealed to the international community to carry its responsibilities in protecting human heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and all over the world and confront extremism, sectarianism and terrorism which all place at stake global security and peace, given that the protection of human heritage is a common global human mission, while wishing success for the conference.

6. Thereafter, Dr Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen, OIC Secretary General, made an address in which he first extended his wholehearted gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for His Majesty’s high patronage for the Conference, while commending His Majesty’s sustained efforts in promoting joint Islamic action and congratulating the King, Government and people of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for the success of the Celebration of Muharraq as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018. He also praised the efforts of ISESCO Director General in promoting Muslim culture and joint Islamic cultural action and appreciated the remarkable efforts and work of ISESCO in supervising the Programme of Islamic Culture Capitals under which Muharraq was elected as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018. He also praised the efforts of ISESCO Director General in promoting Muslim culture and joint Islamic cultural action and appreciated the remarkable efforts and work of ISESCO in supervising the Programme of Islamic Culture Capitals under which Muharraq was elected as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018, emphasizing the importance of the two topics that will be tackled by the conference and the contribution of the OIC in handling them. Moreover, Dr Al-Othaimeen stressed the centrality of the Palestinian cause and the standing of Al-Quds Al-Sharif for Member States and the Islamic world's peoples, while calling for collective responsibility and action to defend the Arab Identity of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. Besides, Dr Al Othaimeen warned against the dangers of rising extremism, sectarianism and terrorism across the globe, namely in the Islamic world, and called for intensified efforts to combat these phenomena as they threaten the stability of countries and communities as well as their human heritage, wishing success for the conference.
7. H.E. Mr Omar Suleiman Adam, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities of the Republic of the Sudan, President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers, took the floor and delivered an address in which he first extended his thanks and gratitude to His Majesty the King, Government and people of Bahrain, for the generous hospitality and warm reception. In addition, he conveyed the greetings of H.E. Field Marshal Mr Omar Hassan Ahmad Al Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan, and his hopes that the outcomes of the conference will support joint Islamic cultural action while congratulating Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities for the success of the activities and programmes of the Celebration of Muharraq as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2018 and the creation of the Pearl Path Visitor Center, a site inscribed on the World Heritage List. Moreover, Mr Adam highlighted the Sudan's experience and achievements in celebrating Sinnar as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2017 which culminated in the establishment of the Sinnar Regional Center for Dialogue and Cultural Diversity under the aegis of ISESCO, while reviewing the efforts of the Republic of the Sudan in the activation of the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, especially in what concerns the safeguarding and preservation of cultural heritage, and calling for promoting intercultural dialogue and disseminating a culture of peace, wishing success for the Conference.

8. In appreciation of the efforts of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, in promoting joint Islamic action and safeguarding human heritage, and in recognition of his Majesty's support to ISESCO's activities, Dr Altwaijri offered the Conference's shield to His Majesty, received on his behalf by H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities.

9. On the same occasion, H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, offered the shield of the Celebration of Muharraq to honor H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities; H.E. Dr Yousef bin Ahmad Al Othaimeen, OIC Secretary General; H.E. Dr Awwad bin Saleh Al-Awwad, Minister of Information and Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Vice-President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; H.E. Mr Hamat Bah, Minister of Tourism and Culture of the Republic of the Gambia, Vice-President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; H.E. Vagif Aliyev, First Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Vice-President of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Hilal Al Ma'amari, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture in the Sultanate of Oman, Rapporteur of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers; and H.E. Dr Boubacar Doukouré, Chairman of ISESCO Executive Council.

10. Afterwards, a Memorandum of Understanding was respectively signed between ISESCO, the Arab Center for Tourism Media, and the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage (ARC-WH). In addition, ISESCO and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in the Republic of Tunisia signed an agreement on the organizational arrangements for holding the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers (Tunis, September 2019).

11. Then, H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, held a reception in honor of the heads and members of the delegations of participating Member States and organizations.

12. At the beginning of the first working session, the conference adopted its draft agenda and programme.
13. Mr Karam Allah Hamid Khalaf Allah, Chairman the Consultative Council for Cultural Development in the Islamic World, presented the report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Council held on 24-25 September 2018 in Manama. In this connection, he emphasized that during this meeting session, the Council discussed and examined the two documents placed on the agenda of the extraordinary session of the conference which are: the "Action Programme on the Promotion of Islamic and International Support for Safeguarding Civilizational and Cultural Heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif" and the "Manama Process for the Activation of Joint Islamic Cultural Action to Face Extremism, Sectarianism and Terrorism" and recommended the conference to approve them.

14. Thereafter, ISESCO Director General presented the document on the "Action Programme on the Promotion of Islamic and International Support for Safeguarding Civilizational and Cultural Heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif" in which he first mentioned the key importance of Al Quds heritage and the diversity of its components as it is a property of the entire humanity, while pointing to the responsibility of the international community to protect this heritage against the violations and illegal measures of the Israeli occupation authorities, namely the excavations that aim to distort and falsify historic facts thereon. Moreover, Dr Altwaijri praised the continued efforts of many Member States and Arab and Islamic joint action institutions, foremost among them the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan through its Hashemite Custodianship of Al-Quds Al-Sharif's Muslim and Christian Holy Sites and Endowments, and the Kingdom of Morocco through Al-Quds Al-Sharif Committee, to support, protect and safeguard the cultural and civilizational heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif. He also clarified that this document was prepared to expand the scope of cooperation to include international competent institutions in addition to the relevant joint Islamic action, proposing the adoption of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as permanent Capital of Islamic Culture.

Likewise, ISESCO Director General commended the deep significance of placing this document on the conference’s agenda which reflects the interest of Member States in the protection of cultural and civilizational heritage in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, in concurrence with the celebration of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the Arab region's Capital of Islamic Culture for 2019 and the Proclamation of 2019 a Year of Cultural Heritage in the Islamic World.

At the close of his presentation, Dr Altwaijri recalled that the Sixteenth Meeting of the Consultative Council for Cultural Development in the Islamic World, held on 24-25 September 2018 in Manama, had discussed this document and recommended the conference to approve it.

After the discussions, the conference adopted the document and issued thereon the attached resolution.

15. Then, ISESCO Director General presented the "Manama Process for the Activation of Joint Islamic Cultural Action to Face Extremism, Sectarianism and Terrorism" stressing that countering these hazardous phenomena requires mobilizing and strengthening the resolve of all actors to promote cultural action in its broader sense in the knowledge, cultural, educational and media fields to bolster and complement the security approach to these phenomena as part of a comprehensive approach to face the threats of the spread of the culture of extremism and violence in all its diverse and ever-changing forms.
He clarified that the Manama Process is a guidance document that aims to renew awareness of the importance of practical and consultative involvement in facing all forms of extremism, sectarianism and terrorism and developing a practical programme to face these phenomena, drawing on the relevant references of joint Islamic and international cultural action, especially the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, the Strategy for Islamic Cultural Action outside the Islamic World, the Strategy for Bringing Muslim Madhib Closer Together, the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Diversity, the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Rights, the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism, Makkah Al Mukarramah Declaration, and relevant regional and international treaties and conventions.

In the same vein, Dr Altwaijri explained how the Manama Process seeks to enrich the contents of the culture of moderation, especially in its legislative, human rights, educational, social, media, economic, art, and security fields.

In conclusion, ISESCO Director General pointed out that the Consultative Council for Cultural Development in the Islamic World had examined and adopted this document, and recommended the honorable conference to approve it.

After discussions, the conference adopted this document and issued thereon the attached resolution.

16. Thereafter, the heads of participating delegations delivered the statements of their countries and organizations, commended the efforts of ISESCO and its Director General in developing and promoting joint Islamic cultural action for the benefit of Member States and Muslims outside the Islamic world and expressed their satisfaction with and appreciation for the achievements and gains that ISESCO has scored and accumulated for the Islamic world and its developmental and civilizational project. They also underscored the importance of the two topics placed on the agenda of this extraordinary session of the Conference, while expressing their preparedness to work toward the activation of relevant resolutions.

17. At beginning of the closing session, the conference adopted the "Bahrain Declaration on Safeguarding Human Heritage and Countering Extremism", its Final Report and Resolutions.

18. Afterwards, H.E. Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, delivered an address in which she congratulated the heads of delegations of participating Member States on the outcomes the conference. She also commended the Draft Bahrain Declaration on “Safeguarding Human Heritage and Countering Extremism” which crowned this extraordinary session of the Conference, while lauding the efforts of H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, in preparing the documents and practical suggestions of this session of the conference, so as to promote joint Islamic action thereon.

19. Further, H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, ISESCO Director General, delivered an address wherein he reaffirmed his praise for the high patronage extended by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, to the Conference and extended his thanks and gratitude to Sheikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, President of the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, and through her, to all the staff of the Authority for their commendable efforts in the good preparation for the Conference and the good conditions allowing for its
success and to Their Excellencies heads of participating delegations for their efforts which contributed to achieving the outcomes of the conference.

20. At its close, the conference submitted a message of thanks and gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for extending his high patronage to the conference and for the good reception and hospitality, and wished His Majesty good health and happiness and to the Bahraini people progress and prosperity.