



The Harvest of Solidarity in the Face of Existential Challenges

It is my honor to present the 60th Issue of the OIC Journal, released at a delicate international juncture marked by rapidly unfolding events, escalating conflicts, and mounting challenges that strike at the very core of our Islamic Ummah. This Issue builds upon the OIC's steadfast approach, reflecting our unwavering commitment to strengthening inter-Islamic solidarity, unifying our voice, and advancing joint Islamic action.

Over the past four months, the OIC has maintained an intensive level of activity, demonstrated through a series of significant meetings and events that reflect its dynamic and influential role on the international stage. Foremost among these was the Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting convened in January 2026 to address the serious implications of Israel's announcement recognizing the so-called "Somaliland." The meeting delivered a clear, powerful, and unequivocal message on behalf of the entire Islamic Ummah, affirming total and categorical rejection of any attempts to undermine the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Somalia and compromise its territorial integrity.

Such null and invalid recognition, which constitutes a flagrant breach of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter, not only poses an existential threat to regional security and stability, but also sets a serious precedent that could open the door to illegitimate external interference, further exacerbating the already fragile humanitarian and security conditions in many of our Member States.

During this same period, an Open-Ended Meeting of the OIC Executive Committee at the level of Foreign Ministers was convened in February 2026 to address the Israeli policies aimed at annexing the West Bank. Member states expressed their firm rejection of any attempt to alter the status quo in the West Bank and Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The OIC also took the lead in articulating an international stance against the statements made by the U.S. Ambassador to Israel concerning the borders of the Israeli entity. In addition, it coordinated closely with international organizations and Member States to condemn measures taken by Israel to alter the status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque, including its closure throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

Alongside these political and security challenges, the OIC continued its vigorous efforts in the areas of sustainable development and socioeconomic cooperation, underscoring its broad vision and integrated action. The recent period saw the convening of high-level meetings of OIC Ministers of Agriculture, Labor, and Health.

In the water sector, discussions during the 5th Islamic Conference of Ministers Responsible for Water, held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on October 20–22, 2025, focused on developing a unified vision to strengthen collective food security, enhance agricultural productivity, and adopt sustainable technologies to ensure the availability of safe and sufficient food for our populations.

In the labor sector, discussions during the 6th Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers, held in Doha, State of Qatar, on October 14–16, 2025, centered on ways of expanding decent employment opportunities, developing skills in line with future job market demands, and addressing rapid transformations in global markets.

In the health sector, the 8th Islamic Conference of Health Ministers, convened in Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on October 7-9, 2025, addressed critical issues, foremost among them strengthening healthcare systems, enhancing epidemic prevention and response mechanisms, and improving the quality of services provided to citizens. With regard to Muslim communities, the OIC General-Secretariat organized a visit to China, accompanied by a number of representatives of Member States, from 19 to 23 October 2025, to take stock of the situation of Muslims in the Xinjiang region. I personally visited the region from 22 to 27 January 2026, where I met several leaders of the Muslim community, visited the Xinjiang Islamic Institute, and held discussions with the Chinese Foreign Minister and the Chinese Vice-President on ways to empower the Muslim minority in China and on prospects for future cooperation between the OIC and China.

None of these efforts would have been possible without the support of our Member States. To all of them, I wish to express my sincere gratitude for their continued backing of the Organization. I reaffirm that the OIC will, with the help of Allah, remain a unifying platform, a voice expressing the aspirations of the Muslim Ummah, and an effective mechanism for building a brighter and more prosperous future for our Islamic world.



Hissein Brahim Taha

*Secretary-General of the
Organization of Islamic
Cooperation*

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OIC Journal

Issued by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

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Organization of Islamic Cooperation
Organisation de Coopération islamique





The Islamic World Views Israel's Recognition of "Somaliland"

As a Direct Threat to Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa



The OIC Member States stressed that Israel's recognition of the so-called "Somaliland" constitutes a direct threat to peace and security in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region, with dangerous implications for international security and peace. They affirmed that respect for the sovereignty and territorial unity of states, alongside rejection of separatist schemes, constitute the cornerstone of regional security and stability, and that any breach of these principles will impact negatively on international peace and security. They further stressed that the step taken by Israel, the occupying power, represents a blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter, and a grave breach of the principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

The OIC countries affirmed that the recognition by Israel, the occupying power, of the so-called "Somaliland" as an independent state is null, void, and of no legal effect, and confers neither status nor any international legal obligations. This recognition amounts to a clear contravention of the principles of international law, the United Nations Charter, the OIC Charter, and all instruments governing inter-state relations.

It represents a serious and unacceptable precedent threatening international peace and security.

In January 2026, the OIC took center stage in the political arena, spearheading the formulation of a unified Islamic position on Israel's recognition of the so-called region of "Somaliland" as an independent state. This unprecedented step constitutes a grave violation of international law and a direct threat to international peace and stability, occurring at an exceptionally delicate and sensitive juncture in the Middle East.

Accordingly, the OIC convened its Council of Foreign Ministers in its 22nd extraordinary session on January 10, 2026, at its headquarters in Jeddah to discuss the developments of the situation in Somalia.

Addressing the opening session, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, the OIC Secretary-General, emphasized that this extraordinary ministerial meeting was being held at a highly delicate and sensitive moment to discuss serious developments affecting the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The meeting, he noted, clearly reflects the extent of shared concern over these serious developments. It also demonstrates the Member States' collective

awareness of the need to adopt a unified, clear, and firm Islamic position that supports Somalia and its territorial integrity and sovereignty, based on the principles of the OIC Charter, the provisions of international law, and relevant United Nations resolutions.

With regard to the situation in Palestine, the Secretary-General stressed the need to compel Israel, the occupying power, to move to the second phase of the ceasefire agreement. This would lead to a comprehensive and permanent cessation of the Israeli aggression and complete withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, prevent the displacement of the Palestinian people, facilitate the return of displaced persons to their homes, and make it possible to open all crossings and ensure the adequate and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid, in addition to holding an international conference in Cairo for the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

The Council of Foreign Ministers concluded its 22nd extraordinary session by adopting two resolutions: the first on developments in the Federal Republic of Somalia, and the second on Israel's continued aggression against the Palestinian people and its annexation and displacement schemes.

OIC Countries Categorically Reject any Military Presence in the so-called “Somaliland”

The Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on Israel's recognition of the so-called “Somaliland”, held in Jeddah on January 10, 2026, categorically rejected any illegal foreign military, security, or intelligence presence on any part of the Somali territory, in particular the presence of any Israeli occupation force. It stressed that any attempt to establish military bases, security or defense arrangements, or any investments, including those of strategic nature, or any foreign presence, without the approval of the legitimate Somali Federal Government, constitutes an assault on national sovereignty and a red line that cannot be crossed.

The Resolution adopted by the meeting stressed that the so-called “Somaliland” is an integral part of the Federal Republic of Somalia and does not enjoy any independent international legal status, and that any attempt to separate or recognize it constitutes a blatant interference in Somalia's internal affairs and a direct violation of its unity and sovereignty.

The Resolution affirmed that the step taken by Israel, the occupying power, amounts to a gross contravention of international law, and a direct threat to peace and security in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea region, with grave implications for international peace and security as well as for freedom of navigation and international trade.

The OIC Countries stressed their support for the Government of Somalia, a member of the United Nations and a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, in its efforts to mobilize international support in the face of this provocative Israeli action, and reaffirmed Somalia's unity and territo-

rial integrity. They recognized the right of Somalia to have recourse to specialized international judicial and legal mechanisms to hold accountable any party that violates its sovereignty or supports any illegal actions that undermine its unity and territorial integrity. They called on all Member States, as well as international and regional organizations, to refrain from any form of recognition or engagement—whether explicit or implicit, political, diplomatic, economic, or legal—with the authorities of the so called ‘Somaliland’, outside the framework of the national sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

The Resolution called on Member States to coordinate their positions and act collectively at the United Nations, international and regional organizations, and multilateral fora, including the OIC Groups in non-Member States, in support of the unity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Somalia. It also called on the OIC Secretary-General to address communications to the Presidents of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, as well as to the UN Secretary-General and international and regional organizations, to underscore the gravity of Israel's violation of the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Somalia and

its assault on its territorial integrity, and to urge them to take official positions rejecting this recognition as a threat to international peace and security, in line with the provision of the United Nations Charter.

The Resolution warned that these practices do undermine regional and international counter-terrorism efforts, and open the way for the emergence of vulnerable environments that can be exploited by extremist and terrorist groups, which would impact negatively on regional and international security. It also warned against any attempts to militarize the Horn of Africa, the Red Sea, and the Gulf of Aden, given the grave repercussions such actions would have on regional and international maritime security and on the stability of vital shipping lanes. It called on the international community, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, to assume their legal and moral responsibilities, in a consensual manner, in order to maintain international peace and security, and stand against any attempts to impose new realities in the Horn of Africa region that are contrary to international law.



Israel's Actions are a Grave Attempt to Alter the Geopolitical Map of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea

The 22nd Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Jeddah on January 10, 2026, affirmed that the actions undertaken by Israel, the occupying power, constitute a serious attempt to unilaterally re-draw the geopolitical map of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea opposite the Somali Coasts, and demanded that the international community stand against those actions, being a threat to regional and international peace and security as well as to freedom of navigation and international trade.

The OIC had previously condemned the illegal visit made by an Israeli official, on January 6, 2026, to the so called 'Somaliland' region, which the OIC considers an integral part of the Federal Republic of Somalia. It affirmed that this visit constitutes a flagrant violation of Somalia's sovereignty and territorial unity.

The OIC Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, expressed his strong condemnation of the visit, as it represents a blatant infringement on the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Somalia. He emphasized that any offi-

cial presence on the territories of Somalia without the consent or authorization of the Somali Government is illegal, null and void, and contravenes the principles and objectives of the UN Charter and the established rules governing inter-state relations, foremost among which are respect for states' sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and non-interference in their internal affairs. The Secretary-General reaffirmed the OIC's firm position in support of the Federal Republic of Somalia in preserving its sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity. He called on the international community to take action to immediately stop all practices that seek to undermine the sovereignty and unity of Somalia and threaten security and stability in the Horn of Africa region.

The Resolution called on the Islamic Group in New York to act within the framework of the United Nations to affirm the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Somalia, and reject any actions resulting from the illegal recognition of the so-called "Somaliland", including submitting a draft resolution in this regard to the United Nations General Assembly.

The meeting mandated the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of this Resolution and submit a report thereon to the 52nd session of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Previously, the Open-ended Executive Committee at the level of OIC Permanent Representatives had convened an extraordinary meeting on January 1, 2026, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, to discuss developments of the situation in Somalia.

In his address to the meeting, delivered on his behalf by Mr. Yousef Al-Dobeay, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, emphasized that the unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Somalia constitute a fundamental and unwavering principle that admits of no compromise or concession.

The Secretary-General stated that the region and the world as a whole are facing rapid transformations and intertwined challenges, noting that this meeting comes at a time when Somalia is confronted with complex challenges that affect its security, stability, and sovereignty.



Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting Warns against Cooperation with Israel's Schemes to Displace Palestinians

The OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, convened in its 22nd Extraordinary Session on January 10, 2026, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, issued a Resolution addressing Israel's schemes to displace the Palestinian people, in line with the broader pattern of Israeli crimes and violations in Palestine and at the regional level.

The Resolution warned against any direct or indirect cooperation with Israel's schemes to displace the Palestinian people, stressing that any such cooperation amounts to complicity in grave crimes and violations of international law and international humanitarian law, and entails international legal accountability.

The Resolution categorically rejected any potential link between Israel's recognition of the so called "Somaliland" and attempts

to forcibly displace the Palestinian people from their lands. It firmly reiterated its absolute rejection of any calls, schemes, or policies aimed at any form of forced displacement of the Palestinian people, under any pretext, whether inside or outside Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, as well as any attempts to alter the geographic or demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory.

The Resolution affirmed absolute rejection of, and firm opposition to, schemes aimed at displacing the Palestinian people, individually or collectively, within or outside their land, or forced displacement, exile, or deportation in any form and under any circumstances or justifications. It considered this to be an act of ethnic cleansing, a grave violation of international law, a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, an unacceptable infringement on the sovereignty and stability of states, and a threat to their security and territorial integrity. It condemned the policies of starvation, or the creation of hostile conditions aimed at forcing the Palestinian people to leave their land, and rejected any Israeli attempts to reduce Palestinian geography and demography.

The Resolution demanded a halt to all Israeli

policies and actions of annexation, illegal settlement, demolition of homes, confiscation of lands, destruction of infrastructure, settler terrorism, military incursions into Palestinian camps and cities, fragmentation of Palestinian cities and villages, harassment of Palestinians at Israeli military checkpoints, and attempts to impose an alleged Israeli sovereignty over any part of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Al-Quds. It warned that these practices threaten to ignite the entire situation in an unprecedented manner and to further inflame and complicate the regional conditions, and constitute a flagrant violation of the principles of international law and relevant UN resolutions, and a threat to international peace and security.

The Resolution affirmed that a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, as a strategic choice, is predicated upon Israel, the occupying power, fully withdrawing from all Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and Al Quds Al Sharif. It emphasized the need to enable the Government of the State of Palestine and the Palestinian people to reclaim their legitimate rights, including the right to self determination, independence, and freedom.



OIC Reiterates Rejection of the Persecution of Muslim and Christian Worshippers in Al-Quds

The 22nd Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers strongly condemned the continued measures and policies of Israel, the occupying power, and its illegal practices, including the imposition, in the City of Al Quds Al Sharif, of racist laws

that violate all international resolutions and laws. These include the forced displacement of the City's indigenous Palestinian inhabitants, the demolition of homes, the construction of settlements, and the building of a wall to isolate the City from its natural Palestinian surroundings.

The Resolution adopted by the Extraordinary Session denounced the persecution of Muslim and Christian worshippers, as well as measures preventing them from accessing places of worship and performing their religious rites, and policies aimed at Judaizing the Holy City, altering its existing historical and legal status, and changing its historical landmarks, its Palestinian Arab and

Islamic identity, and its demographic composition. It affirmed that all such measures and policies are null and void.

The Resolution affirmed that the entire 144,000 square meters area of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque is an exclusive place of worship for Muslims. It further emphasized that the "Al-Quds Endowments and Al-Aqsa Mosque Affairs Department, affiliated with the Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf, is the legitimate authority with exclusive jurisdiction to manage all affairs of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, to maintain it and organize access to it, within the framework of the historical Hashemite guardianship over the Islamic and Christian holy sites in occupied Al-Quds. It also asserted the role of "Al-Quds Committee", headed by HM King Mohamed VI of Morocco, and commended the efforts exerted by Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, affiliated with the Committee.

The Resolution called upon all Member States to comply with the resolutions of Islamic Summits and other relevant conferences with regard to taking measures against any State that recognizes the occupied City of Al-Quds as an alleged capital of Israel, the colonial occupying power, or that transfers its embassy thereto, including through restricting and reviewing relations with such State, until it complies with the relevant UNSC resolutions. It called on Member States to use their influence and relations with all States to clarify their position and convey the OIC's firm stance and message with regard to Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The Resolution affirmed that all the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying power, amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of genocide that call for accountability and prosecution under international law and international criminal law. It underlined the need to join the case brought before the International Court of Justice regarding Israel's violation of the provisions of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It emphasized the importance of following up on the implementation of legal opinions issued by the International Court of Justice to ensure that Israel, the occupying power, is held accountable for its continued illegal occupation and the genocidal crimes it has committed and continues to commit in the State of Palestine.



Extraordinary CFM Meeting Condemns the Occupying Power's Illegal Measures against International Humanitarian Institutions and Organizations



In a special resolution on the State of Palestine, the 22nd Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, convened on January 10, 2026, at the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah, strongly condemned the attacks by Israel, the occupying power, on the Ibrahimi Mosque in the city of Hebron. It denounced, in particular, the recent illegal decision to strip the Hebron Municipality of its planning and construction authority over the Mosque and transfer it to bodies affiliated with the illegal Israeli occupation, as well as the continued illegal measures aimed at seizing and fully controlling the Mosque.

The Resolution reaffirmed that the World Heritage Site in the Old City of Hebron, including the Ibrahimi Mosque, is an integral part of the land of the State of Palestine and its cultural heritage. It held Israel, the illegal colonial occupying power, fully responsible for these aggressions that violate international law, and called on Member States to cooperate with UNESCO in supporting all moves to immediately stop the Israeli violations and schemes.

The meeting condemned all illegal measures taken by Israel, the occupying power, against international humanitarian and relief institutions and organizations, the lat-

est of which was the decision of the Israeli occupation authority to revoke the work permits of 37 leading international humanitarian and relief organizations operating in the State of Palestine, especially in the Gaza Strip. It called on the international community and the United Nations to reject these Israeli measures, to take all punitive actions to confront these illegal retaliatory policies, and to work to deter Israel, the occupying power, from its crimes and grave violations of international law.

The Resolution reaffirmed support for the New York Declaration and its annexes issued by the High-Level International Conference on the Peaceful Settlement of the Palestinian Question and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, and the need to take all steps to implement the New York Declaration and the relevant UN resolutions related to the Palestinian Cause. It commended the positions and decisions of the States that have recognized the State of Palestine, in affirmation and support for the legal and historical right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the realization of their independent State on the internationally-recognized 1967 borders. It urged all States that have yet to do so, to fulfil their duties and recognize the State of

Palestine, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and to support its full membership in the United Nations, as an essential pillar in the implementation and protection of the Two-State Solution and the realization of peace and stability in the region and across the world.

The Meeting denounced and deplored Israel's practices against the brave Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention centers, and called upon the world community and international institutions to work toward guaranteeing their rights under the protection of international humanitarian law and securing their release. It further condemned Israel's steps to legislate the death penalty against Palestinian prisoners, considering it an additional crime and a flagrant, immoral violation of international law, particularly international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions, including the First and Third Conventions of 1949 concerning prisoners of war and the wounded in the battlefield.

The Meeting called upon all States to provide support and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in order to alleviate their suffering and strengthen their resilience on their land.



OIC Articulates its Stances on key Middle East Crises

Amid the delicate and sensitive situation prevailing in the Middle East, particularly in the Red Sea region, the OIC has articulated its clear positions. Alongside the extraordinary meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on developments in the Federal Republic of Somalia, the OIC has played a visible role in three crises that together shaped the regional agenda in recent months.

Regarding developments in the Republic of Yemen that commenced late last year and extended into the early months of this year, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, commended, on January 3, 2026, Saudi Arabia's initiative to hold a comprehensive conference in Riyadh, following a request by the President of the Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council, with the participation of various southern stakeholders. The Conference seeks to explore fair solutions to the Southern question through inclusive and responsible dialogue, while engaging diverse Southern stakeholders. The Secretary-General stressed that this initiative reflects Saudi Arabia's judicious policy and insightful leadership in promoting cohesion, renouncing violence, and prioritizing peace.

The Secretary-General affirmed that sincere and inclusive dialogue remains the only path to achieve lasting peace and stability in Ye-

men. He stressed that addressing national challenges, particularly the southern issue, can only be achieved through dialogue, mutual understanding, and consensus, taking into account their historical and social dimensions, and sparing the country further fragmentation, suffering, and divisions.

The Secretary-General underlined that Yemen's unity, security, and stability are key to the security and stability of the entire region. He commended, in this regard, the leading role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in supporting the Yemeni legitimacy and sponsoring dialogue processes. He called on all parties to be positively and constructively engaged in a manner that serves Yemen's higher interests, meets the aspirations of its people, and promotes regional peace and stability.

On December 31, 2025, in light of recent developments in Yemen, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, stressed the OIC's firm and principled position in support of the Republic of Yemen, its sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and the OIC's categorical rejection of any acts or attempts that could undermine Yemen's unity or cause prejudice to its constitutional legitimacy and national institutions. The Secretary General reiterated the OIC's full support for the Yemeni legitimacy, represented by the President of the Presidential

Leadership Council and his internationally-recognized government. He emphasized the importance of preserving and consolidating national state institutions, thereby contributing to the realization of the Yemeni people's aspirations for security, stability, and development.

The Secretary-General condemned any actions or practices by the Southern Transitional Council that pose a direct threat to Yemen's unity, undermine peace efforts, and protract the conflict. He considered that any breach of Yemen's security and stability is a threat to peace, security, and stability in the entire region. He welcomed the announcement of the withdrawal of Emirati forces from Yemen as a constructive step that would support efforts to calm tensions, de-escalate the situation, and spare the blood of the Yemeni people.

The Secretary-General emphasized that the security, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Qibla of Muslims and the land of the Two Holy Mosques, are a red line that cannot be crossed, and that any threat to its security is a direct threat to the security of the region and the entire Islamic world. He reaffirmed the OIC's full solidarity with Saudi Arabia in all the steps and measures it takes to protect its national security.





The OIC General Secretariat expressed concern over the military movements in Yemen's Hadramout and Al-Mahra governorates, carried out on December 25, 2025, by the Southern Transitional Council. These actions were undertaken unilaterally, without the approval of the Presidential Council or coordination with coalition forces, thereby exposing the region to unjustified escalation.

The General Secretariat commended the laudable efforts and initiatives undertaken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the President of the Presidential Leadership Council, and the Yemeni government to de-escalate the situation. It underlined the need for collaboration among all Yemeni factions and actors to show restraint and prevent actions that could threaten security and stability. It called for prioritizing the higher national interest in order to safeguard peace and security. The General Secretariat reaffirmed the OIC's steadfast and resolute support for all efforts geared toward achieving lasting security, peace, and stability in Yemen, in alignment with the legitimate aspirations of its people. Previously, the OIC General Secretariat had welcomed the agreement on the exchange of prisoners and detainees in Yemen, signed in Muscat, Oman, on December 23, 2025, being a significant achievement that would help alleviate humanitarian suffering and foster confidence-building chances.

OIC Commends Peace Initiatives in Yemen, Sudan, and Syria

The General Secretariat commended, in this regard, the valuable efforts exerted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, which hosted the negotiations, as well as the UN Special Envoy to Yemen and the International Committee of the Red Cross, in bringing this agreement to fruition. It expressed hope that this agreement would help bring peace and stability to Yemen and ease the suffering of its people. On January 10, 2026, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, received, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, H.E. Dr. Shaya Mohsin Zindani.

The meeting discussed avenues for strengthening cooperation between the OIC and Yemen. The Secretary-General commended the significant role of Yemen in the OIC and its active contribution to promoting joint Islamic action. He reaffirmed the OIC's unwavering and principled position in support of Yemen's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity. For his part, the Yemeni Minister reaffirmed the special importance his coun-

try attaches to supporting the work of the OIC.

The Secretary-General stressed the importance of continuing to support political and diplomatic efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive and lasting political solution to the Yemeni crisis. He called on all Yemeni parties to commit to legitimacy, renounce violence, and give priority to dialogue and the higher interests of Yemen and its people; thus contributing to the achievement of security, stability, and development, and the preservation of the country's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

With regard to the situation in Syria, the OIC Secretary-General welcomed the ceasefire agreement and the integration of the Syrian Democratic Forces, with all their civil and military institutions, into the Syrian state, announced on 18 January 2026. He expressed hope that this agreement would contribute to strengthening efforts to achieve civil peace and establish security and stability. He reaffirmed the OIC's position in support of Syria's security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.



Somali British Ramla



From Refugee to UNICEF Ambassador

Nairobi—DPA

Ramla Ali clutches a water bottle and takes a sip. The British-Somali boxer and social activist appreciates the importance of clean fresh water even more after a week spent in Dadaab refugee camp as special ambassador for UNICEF.

Housing hundreds of thousands of refugees, mostly from Somalia, the camp in north-eastern Kenya is one of the largest and oldest in Africa, set up after Somalia plunged into civil war in 1991.

For Ramla, who has visited many camps in the past, Dadaab holds a special meaning. "This could have been me," she says, looking at pictures of young girls with pink headscarves in a school she visited in the camp.

Ramla was Born in Mogadishu. Her family left when her brother was killed by a grenade. As a refugee in Kenya, her mother

recalls standing in line for food aid.

Ramla was a toddler when her family was granted asylum in Britain. That gave her opportunities that the children stuck in the arid plains of Dadaab don't have, starting with education in a school that is not overcrowded. She was also able to take access to clean water and shelter for granted. And above all, she had the chance to decide what to do with her life.

"For me, it's really important to be amongst my people and to see what their life is like," she says. "Were it not for the strength, courage, and resilience of my mum, that could have been me in that situation."

Dadaab is home to more than 400,000 refugees. Many more lack access to education. It's one of the stories that put everyday problems into perspective. "It just makes you realize that you need to be grateful for everything that you have, and you can

no longer be complacent about what you don't have."

The visit to the camp made a major impression on her, Ramla says. "It was really important to just witness that and see that for the first time. I must admit, it has been the most inspiring and humbling experience I've ever had or witnessed in my entire life." Ramla also saw first-hand the effects of aid cuts, the significant reduction or suspension of funding for foreign assistance programs, particularly by the United States. Britain is also preparing to reduce aid as of 2027.

Water rations given to the Dadaab refugees have been halved to 8.5 litres a day to wash, cook, and drink. In a desert dominated by dust and heat, that reduction makes living conditions even harsher. "And it's going to get reduced even more because in two years' time, more aid is going to be cut," she warns.



Dakar

OLC City of Tourism

Dakar (in Wolof: Ndakaaru) is the capital of Senegal and the westernmost city in Africa. It is also the largest city in the country, serving as a port on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in the Republic of Senegal. In 2005, the estimated population of the city of Dakar proper was 1,030,594 inhabitants. The nearby Gorée Island became a Euro-

pean fortress in the 16th century, and was a major center for trade between Africa and the New World. The French commander Faïdherbe founded the city of Dakar in 1857. In 1960, it became the capital of the Mali Federation, and later the capital of Senegal. Dakar is divided into 19 communes

d'arrondissement. Among its famous tourist attractions are the Museum of African Culture, the Grand Market, and the Slavery Museum. During the colonial period, the city served as a departure point for the slave trade to North America. The city is also home to the African Renaissance Monument.





OIC Secretary General Visits China to Boost Cooperation at all Levels



The Vice-President of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Mr. Han Zheng, received, on 26 January 2026 in Beijing, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha. Both sides reviewed bilateral relations between the OIC and China, and expressed their aspiration to further enhance dialogue and cooperation in areas of mutual interest. As part of strengthening constructive dialogue and fruitful cooperation between the OIC and China, and at the kind invitation of H.E. Wang Yi, Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, paid an official visit to China from 22 to 27 January 2026, accompanied by a delegation from the OIC General Secretariat.

The Chinese Vice-President expressed appreciation for the role played by the OIC as a bridge linking China with the Islamic world, affirming his country's keenness to strengthen relations with the OIC and its Member States.

For his part, the Secretary-General underlined the special importance the OIC attaches to its relations with China, in light of the deep historical and cultural ties between the Islamic world and China. He expressed

his aspiration for further dialogue and cooperation at various levels.

On the other hand, the Secretary-General held talks with H.E. Wang Yi, Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs. The meeting examined the full spectrum of relations between the OIC and China, considering future prospects and exploring mechanisms to enhance dialogue and bilateral cooperation across political, economic, cultural, educational, and health domains.

The Chinese Foreign Minister stressed that his country has always attached great importance, from a strategic standpoint, to developing its relations with the OIC and its Member States. He affirmed China's readiness to work with the OIC and its Member States to enhance mutual trust and support, strengthen coordination, and expand practical cooperation.

For his part, the Secretary-General stated that the OIC attaches particular importance to the deep historical ties between the Islamic world and China. He highlighted the marked progress in OIC's relations with China in recent years, expressing a commitment to deepen dialogue and cooperation across various fields. Both sides exchanged

views on a range of regional and international issues of shared concern.

Commencing his program in Shanghai, the OIC Secretary-General engaged in multiple meetings and site visits, notably to Shanghai International Studies University, with the aim of identifying avenues for enhanced cooperation and knowledge exchange.

The Secretary-General and his accompanying delegation visited Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, where they met with senior regional officials and undertook field visits, including to the Xinjiang Islamic Institute, in order to gain insight into the conditions of the Muslim community in the region.

On January 19, 2026, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim, OIC Secretary-General, received, at the OIC General Secretariat, H.E. Mr. Chang Hua, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Special Representative to the OIC. Both sides explored prospects for further cooperation between the OIC and China, and exchanged views on issues of shared interest. They expressed appreciation for ongoing cooperation and emphasized the importance of continued dialogue.



High-level OIC Delegation Visits China



In the context of the constructive dialogue and ongoing cooperation between the OIC and the People's Republic of China, and at the invitation of the Chinese authorities, a high-level delegation from OIC Member States and the General Secretariat paid a visit to China from October 19 to 23, 2025. The delegation comprised ambassadors and permanent representatives from 21 OIC Member States, and was led by Mr. Yousef Al-Dobaey, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. It also included representatives from the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission.

The delegation commenced its program with site visits to Urumqi in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, during which they met with senior regional government officials.

Subsequently, in Shanghai, the delegation met with high-ranking officials from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both sides underscored the strong relations between the Islamic world and China at the bilateral and multilateral levels, particularly under the umbrella of the OIC.

As part of continued dialogue and cooperation between the OIC General Secretariat and the Chinese Foreign Ministry, the two sides held a new round of political consulta-

tions on October 22, 2025. The General Secretariat's delegation was headed by Mr. Yousef Al-Dobaey, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, while the Chinese side was headed by Mr. Chen Weiqing, Director-General of the Department of West Asian and North African Affairs at the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

Discussions addressed ways to enhance OIC-China constructive dialogue and cooperation in various fields. Focus was laid on a number of issues of common concern, most notably the Palestinian Cause and the situation in Afghanistan. The meeting also touched on the situation of Muslim groups and communities in non-Member States, and ways of promoting inter-cultural dialogue and combating Islamophobia.

On December 4, 2025, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, H.E. Zhang Hua, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Special Representative to the OIC.

Both sides commended the ongoing dialogue and fruitful cooperation between the OIC and China in areas of common interest, and discussed prospects for future cooperation.

OIC Participates in 164th Arab League Council Meeting

At the invitation of the League of Arab States, the OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Yousef Al-Dobaey, took part in the 164th session of the League of Arab States' Council at the level of Foreign Ministers, held in Cairo, Egypt, on September 4, 2025. This participation reflected the sustained coordination and cooperative engagement between the two organizations on issues of shared concern.

The meeting addressed developments on the regional and international scene, particularly the Palestinian Cause, which is going through a critical phase, the situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the efforts exerted to ensure the flow of humanitarian aid. It also discussed security challenges in the region and ways to enhance joint Arab action to maintain regional security and stability.



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Muslim World Condemns Statements by US Ambassador to Israel

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“A Call to Violate International Law”

The OIC General Secretariat condemned the serious and irresponsible statements made by the US Ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, as an unacceptable call for the expansion of Israel, the occupying power, and its seizure of more Palestinian and Arab lands. It stressed that such remarks rest on a false narrative and on rejected historical and ideological claims that violate state sovereignty, diplomatic norms, the principles of international law, and the UN Resolutions and Charter.

The General Secretariat warned that such extremist ideological rhetoric would fuel extremism and encourage the Israeli occupation to persist in its illegal practices of displacement, settlement, and attempted annexation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which threatens security and stability across the entire region.

The General Secretariat reiterated its absolute and unwavering support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, particularly their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent and sovereign State on the borders of June 4, 1967, with East Al-Quds as its capital.

In a related context, the Foreign Ministries of 14 OIC Member States, (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, State of Qatar, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Kingdom of Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Arab Republic of Egypt, Republic of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Türkiye, Syrian Arab Republic, State of Palestine, State of Kuwait, Lebanese Republic, Sultanate of Oman) alongside the General Secretariats of the Gulf Cooperation Council and League of Arab States (LAS), expressed their “strong condemnation and profound

concern” over the statements made by the US Ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee. They affirmed that the U.S. Ambassador’s “dangerous and provocative” remarks constitute a blatant violation of international law and the United Nations Charter, and pose a direct threat to the security and stability of the entire region.

Conservative American commentator Tucker Carlson had conducted an interview with Mike Huckabee, a former Baptist minister and a staunch supporter of Israel, the occupying power, who was appointed ambassador to Israel in 2025. Asked about his understanding of a biblical verse that speaks of Israel’s rights to lands between the Nile and the Euphrates, stretching from Egypt to Iraq and Syria, Huckabee responded: “It would be fine if they took it all.”

Bilaterals



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on November 18, 2025, H.E. Mr. Matar Salem Al-Dhaheeri, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on November 26, 2025, H.E. Amb. Ahmed Shaheen, who presented his credentials as Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the OIC.



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on December 1, 2025 at the OIC headquarters, H.E. Mr. Yousef Abdullah Al-Tunaib, Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the OIC.



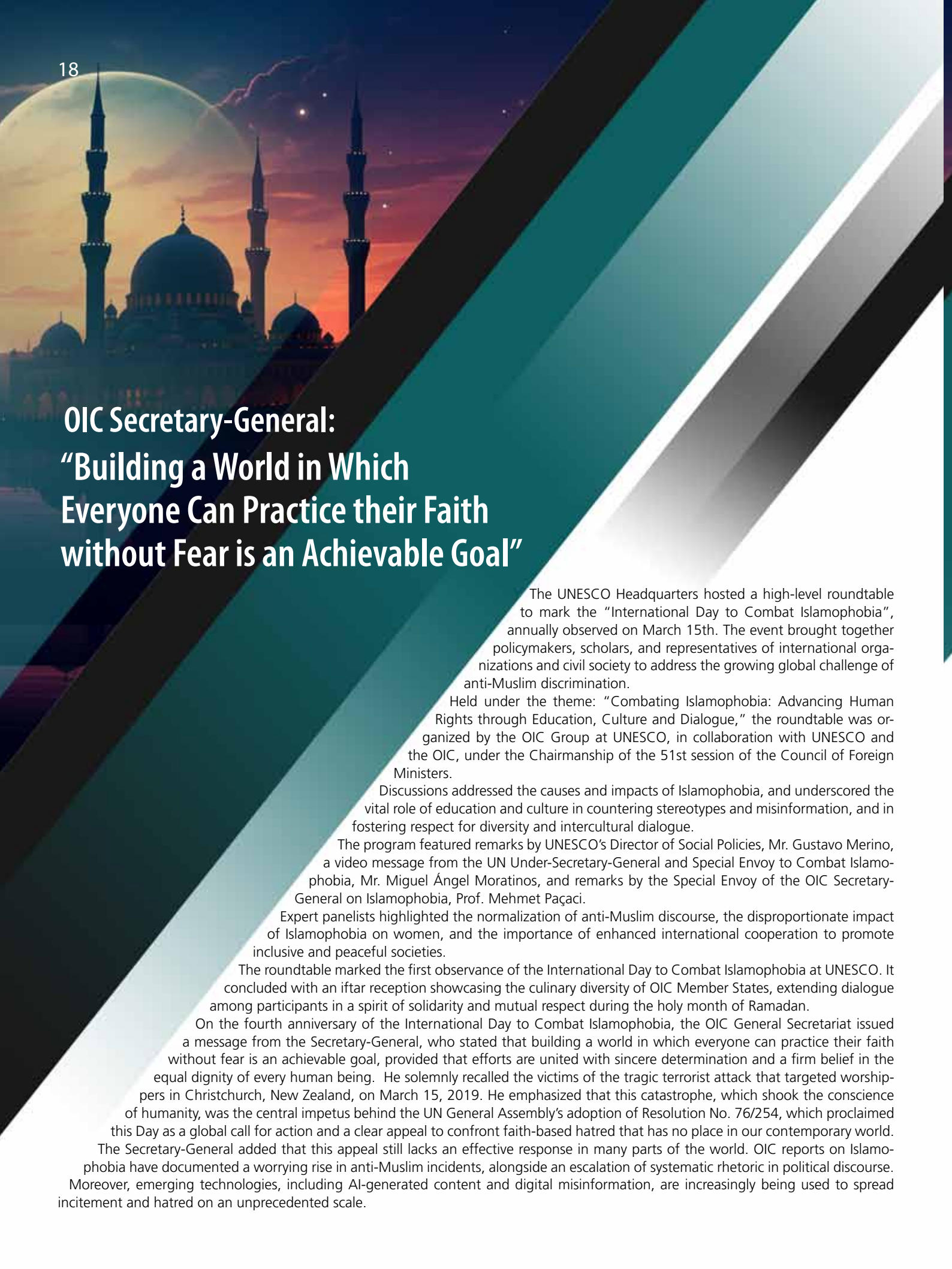
H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on November 26, 2025 at the OIC headquarters, H.E. Mr. Ihab Al-Qishawi, new Consul General of the State of Palestine.



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on 15 February 2026 at the OIC headquarters, H.E. Amb. Mutallim Sabir Mirzayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, received, on December 29, 2025 at the OIC headquarters, H.E. Amb. Cenk Uraz, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Türkiye to the OIC.



OIC Secretary-General: “Building a World in Which Everyone Can Practice their Faith without Fear is an Achievable Goal”

The UNESCO Headquarters hosted a high-level roundtable to mark the “International Day to Combat Islamophobia”, annually observed on March 15th. The event brought together policymakers, scholars, and representatives of international organizations and civil society to address the growing global challenge of anti-Muslim discrimination.

Held under the theme: “Combating Islamophobia: Advancing Human Rights through Education, Culture and Dialogue,” the roundtable was organized by the OIC Group at UNESCO, in collaboration with UNESCO and the OIC, under the Chairmanship of the 51st session of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Discussions addressed the causes and impacts of Islamophobia, and underscored the vital role of education and culture in countering stereotypes and misinformation, and in fostering respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue.

The program featured remarks by UNESCO’s Director of Social Policies, Mr. Gustavo Merino, a video message from the UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, and remarks by the Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General on Islamophobia, Prof. Mehmet Paçacı.

Expert panelists highlighted the normalization of anti-Muslim discourse, the disproportionate impact of Islamophobia on women, and the importance of enhanced international cooperation to promote inclusive and peaceful societies.

The roundtable marked the first observance of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia at UNESCO. It concluded with an iftar reception showcasing the culinary diversity of OIC Member States, extending dialogue among participants in a spirit of solidarity and mutual respect during the holy month of Ramadan.

On the fourth anniversary of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, the OIC General Secretariat issued a message from the Secretary-General, who stated that building a world in which everyone can practice their faith without fear is an achievable goal, provided that efforts are united with sincere determination and a firm belief in the equal dignity of every human being. He solemnly recalled the victims of the tragic terrorist attack that targeted worshippers in Christchurch, New Zealand, on March 15, 2019. He emphasized that this catastrophe, which shook the conscience of humanity, was the central impetus behind the UN General Assembly’s adoption of Resolution No. 76/254, which proclaimed this Day as a global call for action and a clear appeal to confront faith-based hatred that has no place in our contemporary world.

The Secretary-General added that this appeal still lacks an effective response in many parts of the world. OIC reports on Islamophobia have documented a worrying rise in anti-Muslim incidents, alongside an escalation of systematic rhetoric in political discourse. Moreover, emerging technologies, including AI-generated content and digital misinformation, are increasingly being used to spread incitement and hatred on an unprecedented scale.



Islamic Group at the United Nations Succeeds in Deleting References To “Sexual Orientation”

The OIC Group at the United Nations General Assembly succeeded in pushing toward a historic outcome in the vote held on December 15, 2025 on the draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto” (A/C.3/80/L.44/Rev.1). In an unprecedented step, the General Assembly adopted an amendment deleting references to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) by a decisive majority of 81 votes in favor, 77 against, and 15 abstentions. This achievement represents a significant milestone for the OIC Group, underscoring the effectiveness of unified, principled engagement in upholding cultural diversity, national sovereignty, and respect for social and family values within the multilateral system. The OIC General Secretariat welcomed the vote as a step in the right direction.

The General Secretariat commended the Arab Republic of Egypt for its outstanding leadership and strategic coordination, particularly in its capacity as Chair of the Second Session of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Social Development, and as Coordinator of the OIC Group in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly.

Egypt’s effective and sustained engagement within the Third Committee of the General Assembly, including its role in guiding negotiations and unifying positions, was instrumental in mobilizing broad support and in steering deliberations toward an outcome that reflects balance, inclusivity, and respect for cultural and social contexts. The General Secretariat also expressed deep appreciation to the Permanent Observer Mission of the OIC to the United Nations for its effective coordination, tireless advocacy efforts, and close engagement with Member States throughout all stages of the negotiation and voting process.

This approach had previously been strengthened by Resolution No. 4/49-C, adopted at the 49th CFM session held in Nouakchott, Mauritania, in March 2023, which introduced concrete measures in support of the establishment of the OIC Family Committee, originally initiated by Türkiye. The Committee played a significant role in strengthening the OIC family agenda.

On another note, the OIC joined the international community in marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, celebrated on November 25, 2025, under the theme: “Unite to End

Digital Violence against Women and Girls”. The OIC highlighted the alarming rise of online violence, including harassment, cyber-stalking, threats, extortion, AI-enabled impersonation, and the non-consensual sharing of content, which is increasingly targeting women and girls, especially journalists, public figures, and activists. It stressed that digital violence is a continuation of existing forms of abuse that undermine women’s safety, psychological well-being, economic participation, and freedom of expression. It urged Member States to strengthen legal protections, hold digital platforms accountable, enhance cybercrime legislation, and improve digital literacy in line with the OIC Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW) and with the resolutions of OIC Ministerial Conferences on Women.

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Husein Brahim Taha, stated, in this regard, that: “Digital violence is a direct assault on women’s rights. As technology evolves, our response must keep pace. We call on governments, technology firms, and partners to ensure safe digital environments where women can participate fully and without fear.”.



Prominent OIC Role in Interfaith Dialogue Conferences

Following a kind invitation from the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokaïev, addressed to H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, the OIC General Secretariat took part in the 8th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held in Astana on September 17-18. The Secretary-General was represented at this event by Mr. Yousef Al-Dobeay, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

President Tokaïev inaugurated the Congress, which saw a wide participation of diplomats and high-level religious leaders from various countries around the world. Among them was H.E. the Secretary-General of the Muslim World League and Chairman of the Council of Muslim Scholars in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Dr. Mohammed bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa.

Mr. Al-Dobeay participated in a panel session titled "Faith Against Extremism: The Peacebuilding Potential of Religions". He highlighted the OIC's role and efforts in combating extremism and terrorism and in promoting peace through mediation initiatives carried out by the OIC and its Member

States in several conflicts across the Muslim world.

The concluding session was honored with the presence of President Tokaïev, who expressed his thanks and appreciation to all participants for their valuable contributions. He reaffirmed his country's continued commitment to promoting tolerance, dialogue, and harmony among religions, and highlighted the pivotal role of religious leaders in achieving this shared humanitarian goal. The Congress concluded with the Astana Peace Declaration 2025, which includes practical recommendations for advancing global peace.

In a related context, and on behalf of H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, Mr. Yousef Al-Dobeay, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, participated in the Second International Forum for Dialogue of Declarations. The Forum was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from September 10-13, 2025. Numerous political and religious leaders, as well as representatives of civil society organizations and research centers, took part in the event.

This Forum served as a platform for dialogue

and the exchange of ideas on pressing challenges related to freedom of religion, interfaith harmony, and partnership-building.

During the opening session, Mr. Al-Dobeay delivered a statement on behalf of the OIC Secretary-General, in which he highlighted the OIC's efforts to promote the values of tolerance and to combat intolerance and discrimination, in line with relevant resolutions adopted by the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers. He reaffirmed the OIC's support for freedom of faith and belief and the promotion of interfaith harmony through dialogue and institutional and community partnerships.

The Forum featured a number of working sessions that discussed the role of government institutions in ensuring religious freedom, and the contributions of civil society organizations in promoting harmony among communities of different religious backgrounds. In addition, three panel discussions were organized with the participation of religious leaders, government officials, and law enforcement agencies.



Moderation: A Defining Principle of Libya and its People

Mohammed Al-Hafi **Permanent Representative of the State of** **Libya to the OIC**

There is no dispute that Islam is a religion of moderation, and tolerance, a religion of peace and harmony. When the Muslim community adheres to these principles, it fulfills the lofty aims of Islamic law: building a society grounded in security and peace, far removed from extremism and radicalism. Libya offers a clear illustration of this principle of moderation, which has consistently been manifested, both in word and in deed, in the conduct of its Sunni Muslim population.

Libya is a Sunni, moderate Muslim nation whose religious identity is rooted in Islam without sectarian divisions or denominational fragmentation. The Sunni Maliki school is the dominant tradition among both scholars and the wider population. Libyans take pride in their moderate religious creed and are keen to have their children learn and memorize the Holy Qur'an in schools and *kuttābs* (Qur'anic schools). The widespread practice of Qur'an memorization has produced over one million *huffaz* (memorizers of the Holy Qur'an).

Following the events of February 2011, extremist groups exploited the fragile security situation, the collapse of state authority, and the absence of functioning security institutions. They infiltrated several areas and established footholds in different regions of the country.

Libya, particularly its major cities, became a target of Daesh (ISIS). The group first established a presence in the coastal city of Derna in eastern Libya, then infiltrated Benghazi, the largest city in the east, and later moved toward central Libya, eventually seizing the city of Sirte. There, they sought to establish what they called an "emirate," intending it to serve as the nucleus of an Islamic state in North Africa.

Faced with this threat, Libyans had no choice but to engage in armed struggle to preserve their country and their faith, and to uproot these groups before they could spread further across Libyan territory.

Averting the dangers of extremism and preserving the path of moderation requires governments across the Islamic world to pay close attention to educational curricula and to instill the spirit of the tolerant Islamic faith among members of society. It

is also necessary to avoid excessive rigidity in religious *Fatwas* (legal rulings), as undue harshness in matters of faith often leads to the very outcomes it seeks to prevent. Additionally, greater attention must be given to Muslim youth by expanding access to education and employment opportunities, encouraging marriage and family formation, and supporting these goals through carefully-designed policies.

Stability and sustainable development are among the key foundations for lasting security in our societies. In Libya, however, the persistence of instability and the absence of effective state institutions, coupled with the failure of the Libyan political elites to agree on a viable path toward building a stable state, are all factors that could lead to the resurgence of extremism across the country. Libyans must therefore recognize the urgency of reaching a political agreement and restoring stable state institutions. Failure to do so could once again cause the country to fall into the grip of extremism and terrorism.



Afghans and Syrians: A Main Source of Workforce in Germany

Nohra, Germany—DPA :

It's been ten years since former German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened the country's borders to what became millions of refugees, many from war-torn Syria.

The welcoming culture, with Germans waiting in train stations and clapping for the newcomers, is long gone, as many, especially in eastern Germany, turn to the far-right, anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD). But for established companies like global

logistics firm DHL, life without immigrant workers would be unimaginable.

What is true for the DHL Center in Nohra also applies to the parent company, according to the company's spokesperson, Thomas Koch. Since 2015, DHL has integrated over 30,000 refugees into the main labor market, most of them from Syria and Afghanistan, and more recently from Ukraine.

The company relies on an international workforce at its Nohra Parcel Center near

Erfurt in eastern Germany, with about 40% of staff having a migration background, Personnel Manager Steven Schley says.

Hasan Sulaiman, from Qamishli, Syria, right on the border with Türkiye, thinks everyone should be welcome in Germany, "provided you work straight away."

Sulaiman, 47, has been working since 2018 at the DHL Parcel Center in Nohra. Countless consignments hurtle over the fully automated conveyor belts in the vast hall.



OIC Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Afghanistan Reviews in Kabul, the Outcomes of the Contact Group Meeting in New York

The Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary-General to Afghanistan, Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, held talks in the Afghan capital, Kabul, during an official visit, accompanied by a delegation from the OIC General Secretariat and the OIC Office in Kabul.

During the visit, the Special Envoy held a series of meetings with several Afghan ministers and senior officials. In his meeting with the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Amb. Bakheet discussed issues related to Afghanistan, as reflected in the resolutions of the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Discussions focused on the OIC's continued support for the Afghan people, the importance of maintaining constructive dialogue, and the need to advance progress on key issues highlighted in OIC resolutions.

Both sides also reviewed the outcomes of the recent meeting of the OIC Ministerial Contact Group on Afghanistan, held on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The OIC Ministerial Contact Group on Afghanistan held its first meeting on September

23, 2025, in New York, on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, with the participation of members of the Contact Group from Member States.

In his speech, delivered on his behalf by Mr. Yousef Al-Dobeay, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, stated that the setting of this Ministerial Group was designed to serve as an effective and dynamic mechanism for implementing the OIC resolutions on Afghanistan and strengthening cooperation among Member States to help Afghanistan overcome the humanitarian, political, and economic challenges it faces.

The Secretary-General expressed his appreciation to the countries that have contributed to providing humanitarian support to the Afghan people, particularly through the Afghanistan Humanitarian Trust Fund and the OIC Office in Kabul, especially Saudi Arabia, through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center. He also stressed the importance of continuing dialogue with the de facto authorities in Afghanistan on fundamental issues.

On November 14, 2025, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Anis Matta, received, in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jakarta, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social, and Cultural Affairs and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Afghanistan, H.E. Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet. During the meeting, Amb. Bakheet delivered a written message from the Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Soegianto.

In his message, the Secretary-General commended Indonesia's efforts to promote joint Islamic action and strengthen inter-Islamic solidarity. The meeting reviewed the OIC's efforts in support of the Afghan people, in line with the relevant resolutions adopted by the Islamic Summit and the Council of Foreign Ministers.

On November 3, 2025, the Secretary-General expressed the OIC's solidarity with Afghanistan following the earthquake that struck the north of the country, claiming dozens of lives, leaving many injured, and displacing a large number of inhabitants.



OIC, Arab League, and AU Warn Against Making Gaza Unlivable

The Consultative Meeting on Developments Relating to the Cause of Palestine with the Participation of High-Level Delegations from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the League of Arab States, and the African Union warned against the implications of the Israeli policies

aimed at making the Gaza Strip an unlivable place. It condemned the policy of systematic blockade and starvation imposed by the Israeli authorities on the Gaza Strip.

The Joint Statement issued by the Consultative Meeting warned against the dangers of

continued Israeli occupation policies in the West Bank, including East Al-Quds, through colonial settlement, arbitrary arrest, annexation schemes, and imposition of an alleged Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Palestinian territory.



Joint Statement Condemns West Bank Annexation Measures

The Foreign Ministers of OIC Member States, along with several countries around the world, condemned in the strongest terms the Israeli occupation's decisions that would expand Israel's illegal control over the West Bank.

These countries include the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Federative Republic of Brazil, the French Republic, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Finland, the Republic of Iceland, the Republic of Indonesia, Ireland, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Kingdom of Norway, the State of Palestine, the Portuguese Republic, the State of Qatar, the Republic of Slovenia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Kingdom of Sweden, and the Republic of Türkiye. The Secretaries-General of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation also joined in the condemnation.

The Israeli decisions involve reclassifying Palestinian land as so-called Israeli "state land", with the aim of accelerating illegal settlement activity and further entrenching Israeli administration.

The aforementioned States clearly affirmed that Israel's illegal settlements, and the deci-

sions designed to reinforce them, constitute a flagrant violation of international law, including the relevant UNSC Resolutions and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice issued in 2024. They considered that these decisions are part of a clear trajectory aimed at changing the reality on the ground and moving forward toward an unacceptable de facto annexation; thereby undermining ongoing efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region, including the 20-Point Gaza Plan, and threatening any meaningful prospect for regional integration. They called on the Government of Israel to immediately reverse those decisions, to abide by its international obligations, and to refrain from any actions that would result in permanent changes to the legal and administrative status of the occupied Palestinian Territory.

These decisions come in the context of an unprecedented acceleration of Israel's settlement policy, including the approval of the E1 project and the issuance of its tender. Such actions constitute a deliberate and direct undermining of the foundations for the establishment of the Palestinian State and the implementation of the two-State Solution.

In this regard, the Foreign Ministers stressed their rejection of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character, and legal status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Al-Quds. They also expressed their opposition to any form of annexation.

In the same context, the General Secretariat of the OIC, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, and the African Union Commission reaffirmed the central status of the City of Al-Quds, as well as the inalienable religious rights and the eternal attachment of Muslims to the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first Qibla and the third holiest site in Islam. The three organizations also strongly condemned the continued Israeli occupation's closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque to Muslim worshippers, particularly during the holy month of Ramadan. Such measures constitute a grave violation of the established historical and legal status quo of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in occupied Al-Quds, an assault on the inalienable religious rights and the heritage of the Muslim Ummah, a provocation to Muslims worldwide, and an infringement of freedom of worship and the sanctity of holy places.



OIC Countries Reject Annexation Measures, Reaffirm Centrality of Palestinian Cause

The OIC Executive Committee convened an Extraordinary Open-ended Meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers on February 26, 2026, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, to discuss the illegal decisions of the Israeli occupation aimed at reinforcing settlement and annexation, along with attempts to impose an alleged Israeli sovereignty over the occupied West Bank.

During the opening session of the meeting, the Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs and Secretary-General Ad Interim, Amb. Samir Bakr Diab, delivered a speech on behalf of the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha. He warned of the danger posed by the Israeli measures targeting the very existence of the Palestinian people, their land, their holy sites, and their legitimate rights. He reaffirmed that Israel has no sovereignty over Palestinian land, which includes the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif along with its Islamic and Christian holy sites.

The Secretary General warned against the continued systematic crimes committed by the occupation forces and settlers, calling for the swift implementation of the second phase of the Peace Plan in accordance with UNSC Resolution 2803. This would ensure

the implementation of a sustainable cease-fire, the opening of crossings and delivery of humanitarian aid, the complete withdrawal of the occupying forces, and the launch of the reconstruction process, while reaffirming the rejection of displacement and the guarantee of the unity of Palestinian land.

The Secretary-General expressed the OIC's condemnation of the irresponsible statements and false ideological claims that constitute an unacceptable and illegitimate justification for Israel to persist in its illegal actions based on settlement expansion, annexation, and attempts to impose an alleged sovereignty over the Occupied Palestinian Territory. These actions, he added, constitute a violation of the sovereignty of states, the principles of international law, and the United Nations Resolutions and Charter.

The Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the OIC Executive Committee and the representatives of several Member States participating in the meeting delivered statements on the latest developments in the West Bank.

The Executive Committee concluded its extraordinary meeting by adopting a Chair's Summary, aimed at coordinating the positions of Member States and strengthening their efforts to uphold the rights of the Pal-

estinian people and their just Cause, and to support the security and safety of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The meeting expressed its absolute rejection and strong condemnation of the recent hostile decisions and measures taken by the illegal Israeli occupation authority, including the announcement by the so-called Israeli "Cabinet" of illegal decisions aimed at imposing a colonial settlement fait accompli in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the West Bank, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It emphasized that these decisions are null and void, and must be rescinded immediately, and affirmed its rejection of any form of annexation. It considered this serious escalation a new blatant assault on the historical and legal rights of the Palestinian people, and a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, the principles of international law, and relevant UN resolutions.

The meeting reaffirmed the centrality of the Cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif to the entire Islamic Ummah, as well as the Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic identity of occupied East Al-Quds.



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Israeli Incursions into West Bank Territories in 78 Days

The monitoring undertaken by the OIC Media Observatory on Israeli Crimes against the Palestinians takes into account the timing and location of each crime.

The Observatory noted that the Israeli violations often vary in nature, and are not equal in number or scale. For instance, killings are more frequent in the Gaza Strip, which is subjected to a genocidal war, despite the declared ceasefire. Meanwhile, settlement activity is more prevalent in the rural areas of the West Bank than in urban centers, whereas arrests occur more frequently in cities. The Observatory also noted that attacks on agricultural land peaked during October, November, and December, coinciding with the olive harvest season.

Israeli occupation forces continued bombing displaced people in the Gaza Strip despite the ceasefire agreement coming into effect on October 9, 2025. They carried out raids on displacement camps and civilian homes and demolished buildings throughout the

period documented by the Observatory, over 78 days from October 14 to December 30, 2025. They also continued restricting and preventing the entry of aid and basic necessities for over two million displaced people, particularly medical supplies and medicines. Till the end of 2025, the total number of Palestinians martyred since October 7, 2023, had reached 72,372 across different Palestinian territories, in addition to 180,524 injured. Meanwhile, 17 Palestinians died from severe cold due to the lack of shelter and the Israeli occupation forces' refusal to allow the entry of mobile housing units.

The number of arrests from October 7, 2023, until February 9, 2026, reached 29,114 cases, most of them in West Bank cities such as Ramallah, Nablus, and Hebron.

In the West Bank, where the type of violations varies depending on the nature of frictions between Palestinian areas and the occupation forces, Israeli forces carried out 3,862 incursions into Palestinian cities,

towns, and villages over a period of 78 days. During these incursions, 139 children were subjected to violations, including killing, injury, assault, or arrest.

The OIC Media Observatory recorded 242 attacks targeting the olive harvest season in Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank during September, October, and November 2025. These attacks included the theft of crops, burning of harvests, preventing farmers from harvesting olives, uprooting olive trees, cutting their branches, and confiscating agricultural land.

As for pastoral settlement activity, the OIC Media Observatory documented, between October 7, 2025, and January 26, 2026, no less than 100 attacks in which Israeli settlers grazed livestock on Palestinian-owned lands in the West Bank.



Loneliness

as a Contemporary Challenge: Health, Psychological, and Physical Implications



Berlin – Marco Rauch (DPA):

It is widely known that building a strong social network of acquaintances and friends is beneficial to health, while loneliness and social isolation can have serious consequences for both physical and mental well-being. While scholars have long acknowledged this connection, recent research continues to confirm it.

The American Psychological Association's Journal published an analysis based on a diverse body of data, encompassing 604 studies conducted in over 30 countries. The findings show that people who feel supported by family members, friends, or colleagues generally enjoy better mental and physical health and tend to report greater life satisfaction and success than those who lack such support.

However, the opposite dynamic can also occur. Iblnaz Burzar, a member of the German Society for Psychology, explains how loneliness can affect the body's health. "Loneliness is not just a feeling," she says. "It is a complex state of psychobiological stress. When individuals experience social isolation or a prolonged lack of belonging, the body

reacts much like it does under chronic stress. In such cases, the level of cortisol, the hormone released when the body faces psychological stress, remains elevated, the immune system becomes weakened, and inflammatory processes in the body increase".

In recent years, governments have begun paying closer attention to the problem. The United Kingdom was among the first to address it at a national level, establishing a ministry in 2018 to coordinate efforts to combat loneliness.

In Germany, the responsibility has been assigned to the Ministry for Family Affairs, which has launched several initiatives. Among them is the "Network of Effectiveness Against Loneliness", a program that established a digital map identifying organizations and programs across Germany designed to tackle loneliness.

Research increasingly links loneliness to higher risks of cardiovascular disease, depression, and sleep disorders, and even to shorter life expectancy. Humans are inherently social beings, and when this basic need for connection goes unmet, the consequences can be serious.

Burzar explains that "loneliness affects the brain and has neurobiological effects. It activates what scientists call the 'social pain system', the same areas of the brain that respond to physical pain. "This constant activation can make affected individuals more sensitive to perceived social rejection", she explains, "often pushing them to withdraw further from social interactions. The result is a self-reinforcing cycle of psychological and physical stress."

Overall, the issue of loneliness has received increasing attention in recent years. For example, the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia launched last year its first action plan to tackle loneliness, under the slogan "You and We Are One – North Rhine-Westphalia Against Loneliness." The plan includes 100 measures involving all state ministries. It aims to help affected individuals better understand loneliness and encourage them to reconnect with others. Officials say the plan seeks to expand support services, while raising awareness of the issue in employment centers, schools, universities, and police stations.



Aiman Abboushi

Editor of the OIC Journal

Now imagine a human servant with these same qualities, someone who knows millions of times more than you do, yet stands humbly at your command

Overly Polite

Imagine you run into someone one morning who notices that you look pale. They would say only one word: "Hope you're well...!" But the moment you reply that your shoulder has been hurting for the past two weeks, their face would suddenly fill with feigned concern and exaggerated indignation, and they would say with fake empathy: "How can you neglect yourself like that, man?"

Their overflowing compassion encourages you to open up further, so you add that the pain has spread across your back. At this point, they would take two steps backward in a theatrical manner, as if shocked by the gravity of your condition, lament what has happened to you, and quickly recommend a tried-and-true treatment that would eliminate the pain entirely. As the conversation goes on, you find yourself confiding an even bigger problem, and so it goes.

People like this bring to mind artificial intelligence (AI) and ChatGPT. You might ask, out of idle curiosity, where termites live, so it responds: "That's an important question... termites live here and there." If you add that you suppose they live in colonies like black ants, it immediately replies: "You're very observant!" And the more the conversation wanders, the more AI sprinkles polite expressions like "Excellent question!" or "That's a very important point."

Soon enough, these carefully-polished and unusual compliments, coming from a small glass screen made of silicon, draw you into a seemingly endless digital conversation filled with praise, respect, and courtesy. For many people, the experience can feel like a kind of cultural shock, especially those whose first brush with digital technology was something as simple as a calculator.

It's not just the flow of conversation that draws you into the thrill of talking to a machine. Research from the late 1990s reveals that when people can conceal their real identities, they tend to open up more and speak with greater candor, especially in online chat rooms, which began spreading across the Internet toward the end of the 1980s and throughout the 1990s. Allowing users to join chat rooms under pseudonyms makes it possible to discuss all kinds of topics without embarrassment or restrictions.

Human interaction later evolved into something far more complex with the rise of social media platforms. These platforms transformed communication from simple exchanges between two individuals into highly complex, clustered social networks connecting millions within a single digital space. They not only competed with traditional media; they developed into deeply embedded social systems in their own right.

From this new human-machine entanglement emerged a major turning point. Social media produced unfamiliar patterns of behavior and new habits while gradually eroding older forms of social interaction.

Barely two decades later came what we now call artificial intelligence, particularly its well-known form, Large Language Models (LLMs), the scientific term for AI applications that provide information through direct conversational interaction between users and sources. These appear in numerous commercial platforms developed by companies such as Google, Baidu, and Amazon, among others.

What is striking is how quickly this technology has taken center stage. It arrived almost like a charming guest to a relaxed humanity already inclined to seek quick, intelligent solutions to its problems. More than that, it is now encroaching on what remains of the human role in tackling difficult problems, while promising to protect the user's privacy.

A quick look at how these applications operate reveals one notable trait: they are overly polite, often even entertaining. They do not make you feel as if you are dealing with a machine; instead, they display a kind of quasi-human spontaneity, and show a unique ability to adapt quickly to whatever topic you raise. Interestingly, AI offers its interlocutor a carefully measured dose of self-esteem, just enough to keep the conversation going. It demonstrates an extraordinary ability to follow the user's train of thought. At one moment it can sound like a philosopher, at another like a shoemaker, whatever the situation demands. It is always eager to satisfy the user as fully as possible, whether the subject is health, society, or culture. It avoids condescending or obscure language, offering instead simple, orderly, and neatly structured explanations.

Now imagine a human servant with these same qualities, someone who knows millions of times more than you do, yet stands humbly at your command, obedient to your wishes like the genie in the lamp from the story of Aladdin. Over time, users may grow addicted to this magical lamp, and what begins as an exhilarating sense of empowerment can gradually turn into dependence, tinged with vulnerability and supplication. AI, as we know and use it today, is only just taking its first steps in our world. What lies ahead across various fields will likely be more refined, and perhaps more unsettling. It could deepen social isolation, by making self-sufficiency and self-containment easier, potentially resulting in an unprecedented level of human introversion. More troubling still, this technology could drive the human mind into an endless loop of recycling, eroding its desire, or even ability, to create, explore, reflect, and above all, ask more questions, as long as answers are always readily available at the click of a button.



At 41st COMCEC Session: Erdoğan Urges Action on Global Economic Challenges

The President of the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, inaugurated, on November 3, 2025, in Istanbul, the 41st session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC).

In his statement, President Erdoğan, Chair of COMCEC, underscored the need for stronger economic solidarity and coordinated actions within the OIC to address global challenges such as protectionism, supply chain disruptions, and the growing impacts of climate change. He emphasized the importance of deepening intra-OIC trade through effective implementation of the OIC Trade Preferential System, developing national export strategies, and advancing halal certification and arbitration mechanisms to foster sustainable and comprehensive growth. He further urged enhanced cooperation for post-conflict reconstruction in Gaza and Syria, as well as solidarity with Sudan.

President Erdoğan emphasized that the OIC should play a leading role in mobilizing resources, partnerships, and technical expertise for recovery and long-term resilience. He also encouraged Member States to broaden participation in COMCEC programs, and urged them to translate shared

commitments into concrete actions that will advance stability, prosperity, and sustainable development across the Islamic world.

Speaking at the Opening Ceremony of the 41st Session of COMCEC, H.E Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, underscored that COMCEC continues to play a central role in strengthening intra-OIC economic cooperation and in achieving development goals in OIC countries.

Referring to the recently reached ceasefire agreement in Gaza, the Secretary-General emphasized that alleviating the suffering of the Palestinian people should be the first and most urgent measure. He called on all Member States and the international community to support the resilience of the Palestinian economy and people during the critical period of recovery and beyond.

While highlighting the activities of the OIC and its institutions in the economic domain during the past year, the Secretary-General emphasized the need to further enhance intra-OIC cooperation in key economic sectors, and called for increased cooperation to address Member States' most pressing economic challenges. He also highlighted the OIC's efforts to establish the new OIC Programme of Action for 2026-2035, and

encouraged Member States to actively contribute to this process.

The Opening Ceremony was also addressed by Ministers in charge of Trade from the State of Qatar, the Republic of Senegal, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in their capacities as representatives of the Arab, African, and Asian Groups, respectively. The President of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group, the President and Vice-President of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Development (ICCD), and the President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB), also addressed the meeting.

The 41st Session of COMCEC was attended by Ministers in charge of trade and economy of OIC Member States, as well as representatives of OIC institutions and international organizations.

The session's agenda included the review of progress in implementing projects in trade and investment, agriculture, tourism, transportation, finance, private sector development, and poverty alleviation, among other areas, and the adoption of resolutions in this regard.



234

Million People in the Muslim World Impacted by Food Shortages



The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) celebrated, on December 11, 2025, at its headquarters in Jeddah, the OIC Food Security Day. This event provided an opportunity to explore how to effectively and collectively address the problem of food insecurity in OIC countries.

In his address on this occasion, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, commended the 50th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Cameroon on 29–30 August 2024, which designated December 11th of each year as “OIC Food Security Day”. He recalled that there are currently 234 million people in OIC countries who still suffer from food shortages, because of the interconnected issues of poverty and economic downturns, climate change, and conflicts, many of which are a result of internal disputes, fueled in some cases by external forces.

The Secretary-General also indicated that the hungry in OIC countries represent one-third (34%) of the world’s total population

suffering from malnutrition. He pointed out that this figure does not include Member States facing acute humanitarian crises, such as Palestine, Sudan, and Yemen, where the actual levels of malnutrition are likely to be far higher than those reported.

In a related context, the Ministry of Municipality of the State of Qatar, Chair of the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, hosted, on September 1-3, 2025, in Doha, the meeting of experts from OIC Member States to assess progress in OIC programs towards enhancing food security and promoting sustainable agriculture in OIC Member States. The meeting brought together experts from the relevant ministries of Member States and OIC institutions to review progress and challenges in implementing OIC resolutions on the establishment of the OIC Food Security Reserve System, the development of strategic agricultural commodities, and the formulation of an OIC food security framework.

Addressing the opening session, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, emphasized the significance of continued evaluation of the various OIC programs related to food security and agricultural development, in order to assess their effectiveness, ensure efficient resource use, and introduce the necessary adjustments. He also stressed the need for practical actions to address the various constraints that impede the effective implementation of OIC initiatives in the field of agriculture development and food security. With regard to the Draft Strategic Plan for Ensuring Food Security in OIC Member States, Dr. Sengendo indicated that the proposed OIC food security framework aims to ensure food security in Member States through strategies that promote sustainable agriculture, responsible investment, and climate-resilient systems, while also fostering intra-OIC trade in agricultural and food products.



6th Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers Addresses Youth Unemployment

Under the high patronage of H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, the 6th session of the Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers kicked off on October 16, 2025, in Doha, Qatar.

Held under the theme : "Local Experiences, Global Achievements: Success Stories in the Islamic World," the Conference brought together Labor Ministers from OIC Member States, representatives from regional and international organizations, experts, academics, and civil society actors.

The Conference offered an opportunity to promote the sharing of best practices in terms of employment policies, skills development, social protection, and integration in the labor market. It also served as a strategic platform to strengthen cooperation among OIC Member States and promote innovative solutions to common labor-related challenges.

In his opening address, delivered on his behalf by Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, H.E. Mr. Houssein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, emphasized the importance of integrating education, training, and skill development to address employment challenges in

OIC countries.

The Conference featured thematic sessions, workshops, and bilateral meetings aimed at strengthening partnerships and developing concrete recommendations for the future of labor in the Islamic world.

The Conference offered Labor Ministers an opportunity to review progress in implementing OIC initiatives designed to strengthen cooperation among Member States, enhance workforce competitiveness, and promote decent and productive employment across OIC countries. It also examined the contributions of OIC institutions in this regard.

The Senior Officials Meeting preparatory for the 6th session of the Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers, had previously been convened in Doha, Qatar, to prepare the agenda of the Conference and adopt the key documents to be submitted to the ministerial meeting.

The meeting in Doha underscored the OIC's growing commitment to advancing socio-economic development, enhancing cooperation in labor and employment policies, and strengthening solidarity among Member States. It also reflected the OIC's broader role in promoting mutual understanding, trust, and partnership between the peoples of the

Islamic world and the wider international community.

The Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers serves as a key platform for fostering cooperation among Member States, with the objective of building a workforce that is more skilled, resilient, and adaptable, particularly in view of the high unemployment rates affecting many OIC countries, most notably among youth.

On the sidelines of the Conference, Labor Ministers from six Member States, Jordan, Sierra Leone, Yemen, Lebanon, Nigeria, and Indonesia, signed, on behalf of their governments, the Statute of the OIC Labor Centre. With these signatures, the total number of States endorsing the Statute has risen to 32, underscoring their commitment to advancing cooperation in the fields of labor and employment, in line with the OIC's objectives.

The OIC Labor Centre aims to promote cooperation and solidarity among Member States in the areas of labor and employment, as part of the OIC's broader efforts to strengthen solidarity and cooperation among its members and support their socio-economic development.



Dr. Hadi Al-Yami

Executive Director of IPHRC

The Jeddah Declaration goes beyond broad principles. It outlines practical pathways for empowering youth through education, civic engagement, capacity-building, and equitable access to opportunities.

Youth Potential from the Perspective of the “Jeddah Declaration 2025”

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) accords growing attention to youth issues, driven by a deep awareness of the key role young people can play in advancing Member States and strengthening their socio-economic stability. For the OIC, investing in youth is not simply a developmental choice; it is a strategic imperative to build resilient societies capable of meeting the challenges of the modern era.

In line with this approach, the OIC has, in recent years, launched a range of integrated initiatives and programs designed to enhance youth skills, expand their engagement in public life, and empower them to access educational and professional opportunities. These efforts involve training programs in entrepreneurship, innovation, and emerging technologies; thereby enabling young people to more effectively contribute to the knowledge economy.

It is in this context that Member States adopted the “OIC Youth Strategy” as part of the OIC-2025 Programme of Action, as a comprehensive framework to address such challenges as unemployment, health, and political participation. In addition, the Council of Foreign Ministers, at its 50th session held in August 2024 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, approved the Statute of the “OIC Youth Fund.”

Another key initiative is the “OIC Youth Capital” Program, under which a city in a Member State is selected each year to host cultural, educational, and sporting events, along with capacity-building programs throughout the year. This program is complemented by other initiatives, including the “OIC Youth Forum”, along with digital transformation and technical capacity-building programs.

Together, these initiatives reflect the OIC’s comprehensive approach to youth empowerment, one that involves capacity-building, strengthening participation, supporting innovation and digital transformation, providing international platforms for interaction, and developing integrated sectoral policies.

Recently, the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), jointly with the Union of OIC News Agencies (UNA), launched the “Jeddah Declaration 2025 on Youth Empowerment, Development and Peace.” This Declaration represents a significant milestone, signalling an important shift in how the OIC approaches youth issues. It articulates a shared vision that strengthens the place of youth as partners in peace and development, and opens the door to practical initiatives and future partnerships that enhance their role in the public sphere.

What distinguishes the Declaration is not only its substance but also its timing. It was, in fact, the fruit of extensive discussions during the 26th session of the IPHRC in December 2025, which brought together Commission members, representatives of Member and Observer States, alongside international experts.

This diverse gathering reflects a collective effort to formulate a human rights-based and development-oriented framework capable of responding to the growing challenges faced by young people across the Islamic world, challenges that can no longer be addressed through seasonal initiatives, but require a long-term vision rooted in rights, good governance, and collective action.

Importantly, the Declaration goes beyond broad principles. It outlines practical pathways for empowering youth through education, civic engagement, capacity-building, and equitable access to opportunities; thereby strengthening their confidence and preparing them to engage thoughtfully with a rapidly changing world.

The Declaration also warns against the growing risks associated with the digital sphere, including the spread of harmful online content, an issue that is often overlooked despite its serious impact on young people, particularly in societies where the gap between digital awareness and the rapid expansion of online influence is ever-widening.

In this context, I wish to commend the significant role played by the Union of OIC News Agencies (UNA) in highlighting the role of the media in protecting youth rights, supporting development, showcasing inspiring models, and promoting more equitable policies.

Although only recently launched, the Declaration has already attracted substantial media attention, an indication of its potential impact. It also demonstrates the strong partnership between IPHRC and UNA, one that could help stimulate wider discussions about the Declaration across Member States, so that it can find its way into practical implementation, rather than remaining merely a document circulated among elites. For these reasons, I am optimistic that the Declaration will mark the beginning of a cultural shift in the OIC’s perception of youth and their role in peace and development. Rather than being viewed primarily as a group in constant need of support, young people can be recognized as a strategic force capable of making a real difference, as partners who, when given the opportunity, can carry the banner of construction and development.



A New Step Toward Boosting Investment in OIC Countries

The OIC Member States held the first meeting of the “Contracting Parties to the Agreement on Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments” to launch the process of modernizing the 1981 OIC Investment Agreement. The meeting took place on October 26-28, 2025, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, under the Chairmanship of Amb. Cenk Uraz, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Türkiye to the OIC.

The meeting was convened in response to a joint request led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and supported by several Member States to update the Agreement in line with current global investment trends.

The initiative, welcomed by the 51st session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, is designed to strengthen intra-OIC investment cooperation and align the Agreement with the latest developments in similar investment frameworks.

Delegates underscored the importance of balancing investor protection with Member States’ regulatory rights, and called for inclusive reforms that foster responsible, mutually beneficial investment across the Muslim world.

The meeting featured insightful presentations by relevant international experts, during

which the latest trends and contemporary approaches were highlighted.

Under the supervision of the Oversight and Anti-Corruption Authority in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Nazaha), the Regional Asset Recovery Network in the Middle East and North Africa (RARN MENA-ARIN) held its first annual meeting in Jeddah on October 8–9, 2025. Amb. Samir Bakr Diab, Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs (Secretary General Ad Interim), took part in the meeting upon the invitation of H.E. Mr. Mazin bin Ibrahim Al-Kahmous, President of Nazaha.

The General Secretariat’s statement emphasized the importance that the OIC attaches to combating corruption, being one of the objectives stated in the OIC Charter. To that end, the OIC adopted the “Makkah Al Mukarramah Convention on Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Cooperation”, and established a ministerial council on anti-corruption. The RARN MENA-ARIN comprises 21 countries, all of which are OIC members.

On the economic front, the OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Science & Technology, Amb. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, represented the OIC in an event titled “Uncovering the Opportunities of Global and Islamic Finance

for Economic Transformation”, held in Riyadh on November 24, 2025.

The event was organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on the sidelines of its 21st General Conference. Panelists shared their views on achievements and challenges shaping the development of Islamic financial products.

In his remarks, the Assistant Secretary-General emphasized the need for the global economy to prioritize the growth and expansion of Islamic Finance, which should be perceived worldwide as a rational and effective economic tool rather than a religious doctrine. He underscored that Islamic Finance assets reached \$6 trillion in 2024, and are projected to rise to \$10 trillion by 2029. He, therefore, called on financial institutions of OIC Member States to establish flexible legislative frameworks and collateral practices that respond to the needs and aspirations of small and medium-sized businesses, the backbone of Islamic economies. The OIC, he added, will pursue cooperation with UNIDO to leverage Islamic financial products for promoting industrial development across common Member States.



Centrist Parties in Europe Seek to Win Back Far-Right Voters

Berlin — Christoph Driessen (DPA)

Shortly after the first exit polls of the Dutch parliamentary election in October 2025, Geert Wilders, the leader of the populist, far-right Party for Freedom (PVV), was asked why he had suffered such a setback.

Wilders gave a surprisingly candid assessment: "I think a lot of people thought: 'Well, if all parties say they don't want to govern with him, then maybe we'd better give our vote to a party that has a chance of governing.'"

In other words, the political firewall held: All major parties ruled out cooperation with Wilders. Two years earlier, that had not been the case, and Wilders achieved a spectacular election success then.

Even though the PVV lost some seats in the 2025 vote, it remains a powerful force in Dutch politics. Although the PVV accomplished little during the brief period it led the government, that hardly damaged Wilders.

"The assumption that the far right will inevitably lose support once voters see them fail in government is a fundamental mistake,"

says the German-British historian Frank Trentmann from London.

"Right-wing populism rests on a core electorate that does not seriously consider voting for any other party," Trentmann explains.

However, cracks are beginning to show within the party.

Austria's Freedom Party (FPÖ) is regarded as Europe's first right-wing, populist party, rising to prominence in the 1980s under Jörg Haider.

Initially, the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) kept its distance. In 2000, however, it entered a coalition with the FPÖ for the first time.

The hope at the time was that voters would realize that the FPÖ could not work miracles - in fact, quite the opposite. But did that strategy work?

"I think the key question is: Does inclusion actually weaken and moderate right-wing populists?" says Sebastian Enskat, a political analyst with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Enskat recently published a study dealing

with right-wing populist parties in Europe.

While the FPÖ did suffer temporary collapses, these setbacks never lasted.

According to recent polls, the far-right party is well ahead with about 36% support, with the ÖVP trailing at nearly 20%.

In the UK, the party led by right-wing populist Nigel Farage is currently topping opinion polls. Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the Labour Party has responded by partially adopting the rhetoric of the right. He has pledged to end what he called the "experiment in open borders" and to close the "squalid chapter" of rising irregular migration.

So far, this approach has not boosted Labour in the polls, and Trentmann doubts it ever will.

The most successful examples Enskat identified in his study are Greece and Spain. He notes that "the approach is different in these two countries," explaining that right wing parties in Greece and Spain focus more on their domestic policies.



Urgent Action Needed on Escalating Global Health Challenges

The Jordanian capital, Amman, hosted, on October 8-9, 2025, the 8th session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM), held under the theme: "Health is Our Shared Responsibility".

The opening session of the Conference was addressed by H.E. Dr. Ibrahim Bdour, Minister of Health of Jordan, who emphasized the importance of joint Islamic action within the framework of the OIC to address key challenges in the health sector. It was also addressed by the outgoing Chair, H.E. Ahmed bin Ali Al Sayegh, UAE Minister of Health and Prevention, who reviewed achievements over the past five years.

On his part, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, stressed, in his speech delivered on his behalf by Amb. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, that health remains a high priority for the OIC, not only as a basic human right but also as a central pillar for sustainable development and prosperity. He highlighted the support provided by key Member States, including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, and Kuwait, as instrumental to the success of various OIC health initiatives in the Least Developed

Member States.

In a recorded message, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, commended the OIC's partnership in tackling global health challenges.

A high-level panel during the Conference focused on ways of building equitable and resilient health systems for achieving universal health coverage (UHC) and health security, with emphasis on the need for sustainable financing and innovation in public health infrastructure.

The Senior Officials Meeting, preparatory for the 8th session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers, had previously been held on October 7, 2025, in Amman, Jordan. The meeting deliberated on key draft reports, resolutions, and the Amman Declaration to be submitted to the Conference.

The meeting was inaugurated by the Chair of the 7th session of the ICHM, Dr. Hussein Al Rand, Undersecretary of the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention, who handed over the Chairmanship to Dr. Raed Al-Shabool, Secretary-General of the Jordanian Ministry of Health.

Addressing the meeting, Amb. Aftab

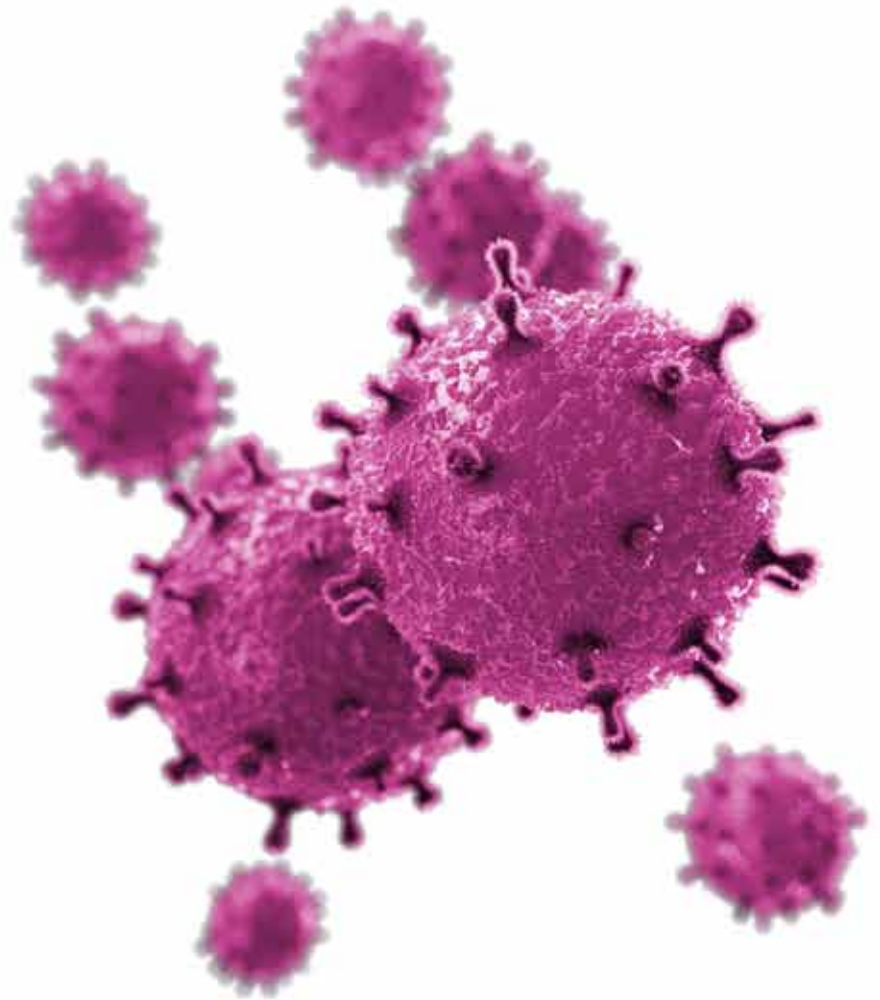
Khokher, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, highlighted the progress made as part of the OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action (2014–2023), calling for extending this Programme in order to consolidate achievements and meet emerging challenges.

Amb. Aftab Khokher expressed grave concern over the worsening health situation in Gaza, Palestine, with the destruction of health infrastructure and the critical shortages of supplies, and highlighted the urgent need for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid. He called for unified action to deliver life-saving assistance and to support the rebuilding of Gaza's health system, reaffirming the OIC's unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people.

In the Amman Declaration issued by the Conference, the meeting endorsed efforts to combat polio, malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS, as well as emerging pathogens, and to strengthen immunization programs, including routine childhood vaccines, through integrated action among Member States; thereby affirming the shared belief that health is a collective responsibility.



OIC Health Ministers Urge Stronger Epidemic Early Warning Systems



The Health Ministers of OIC Member States underlined the need to commit to strengthening epidemic early warning systems, laboratory networks, vaccine manufacturing, and equitable access to vaccines and high-quality health services for all.

That was part of the Amman Declaration issued by the 8th Islamic Conference of Health Ministers, held in Amman, Jordan, on October 7-9, 2025, under the theme: "Health is Our Shared Responsibility".

The Declaration reaffirmed the need to provide resilient, people-centered primary healthcare, robust supply chains, and integrated health workforce planning to guarantee equitable access to basic healthcare services. It called for more intensive efforts to reduce premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030, and to expand mental health services and suicide prevention strategies, while recognizing the pandemic's psychological toll.

The Declaration reaffirmed commitment to

reducing the rates of preventable diseases as well as maternal and child mortality, combat the double burden of malnutrition, strengthen reproductive health services, and expand adolescent and elderly health programs; thereby assuming the shared responsibility for promoting health across OIC Countries. The Declaration underlined the importance of commitment to strengthening health research capacity, adopting data-driven policies, and establishing robust mechanisms for sharing information, evidence, and best practices among OIC Member States. It also

called for harnessing digital health, telemedicine, and AI-driven solutions for surveillance, service delivery, and health data management, while ensuring governance to protect privacy, uphold ethics, and guarantee equitable access, to support the commitment to the "health as our shared responsibility" principle.



Aftab Khokher: “Progress in OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action Despite COVID-19 Setbacks”



The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened, on September 11, 2025, at its General Secretariat in Jeddah, the 15th Meeting of the OIC Steering Committee on Health (SCH) under the chairmanship of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The meeting brought together Member States of the SCH, relevant OIC institutions, and international partners, as part of preparations for the 8th Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM), later held in Amman, Jordan, on 7–9 October 2025.

In his opening remarks, Amb. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, welcomed all participants and commended their diligent efforts to advance the OIC health agenda. He pointed out that “despite the setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, tangible progress has been achieved in the implementation of the OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action (SHPA 2014–2023).” He reaffirmed the unwavering support and full cooperation of the OIC General Secretariat to ensure the success of the current meeting and the forthcoming 8th ICHM.

The Meeting Chair, H.E. Eng. Huda Ababneh, Director of Projects Management, Planning, and International Cooperation at the Jordanian Ministry of Health, welcomed the Member States, OIC institutions, and partners. She expressed appreciation for the dedication of the Lead Country Coordinators Group (LCCG) in advancing the Strategic Health Programme of Action, noting its significant contribution to health promotion and resilience across OIC Member States. She stressed that discussions during the SCH meeting reflect the OIC’s spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and collective determination to safeguard public health, emphasizing that “health is not only a fundamental human right, but also the foundation upon which we build prosperous, sustainable and resilient societies.”

The 15th SCH meeting provided a platform to review progress, share experiences, and consolidate joint actions ahead of the 8th ICHM. Key agenda items included: assessing the implementation of the OIC SHPA 2014–2023 and its follow-up actions; aligning Member States’ priorities with global health agendas; and strengthening collaborative mechanisms to address emerging health challenges.

In a related context, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA), represented by its educational arm, the SFDA Academy, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), organized a virtual workshop in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). This initiative was aligned with the “Riyadh Declaration” issued by the 3rd Meeting of the Heads of National Medicines Regulatory Authorities (NMRAs) in OIC Member States, which emphasized enhancing cooperation and developing regulatory capacities.

The workshop, attended by 200 specialists from 57 OIC Member States, was held under the title: “Strengthening Regulatory Systems: The Saudi FDA’s Path to ML4 Compliance with WHO’s Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) - Achievements and Lessons Learned”.



By Dr. Jamal bin Tahir
University Rector

The University's sustained success is the fruit of the strong dedication of its Board of Trustees, chaired by Amb. Nasser bin Abdullah bin Hamdan Al-Zaabi, as well as the generous support of donors

Islamic University of Niger: 40 Years of Scientific Leadership

The Islamic University of Niger stands as a living model of the success of joint Islamic action, and a practical embodiment of the vision of the leaders of OIC Countries who laid its foundation during the Second Islamic Summit, held in Lahore in 1974. Since opening its doors in November 1986, the University has grown far beyond a conventional academic institution, evolving into a beacon of knowledge and values at the heart of the African continent.

Today, the University serves more than 5,185 students, young men and women, representing a rich and diverse African tapestry from over 20 countries. This vibrant academic community is distributed across two main campuses: the historic "Say Campus" and the modern "King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz University Campus" in Niamey, which marked a qualitative leap in the Organization's educational infrastructure in Africa.

The University's mission is grounded in a set of core objectives that harmonize authenticity and modernity:

1. Strengthening identity: Promoting the study of Arab-Islamic heritage and enriching Muslim life with the principles of Islamic civilization;
2. Technological empowerment: Equipping students with modern scientific knowledge to support local and regional development;
3. Cultural rapprochement: Fostering mutual understanding among African peoples within the framework of OIC programs.
4. Academic excellence: Providing an advanced research environment across diverse fields of knowledge.

The University offers Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees in key fields, including Islamic studies, Arabic language, technical sciences, agricultural and environmental sciences, and nursing and health sciences. These disciplines are carefully aligned with the developmental needs of Niger and the broader West African region. A major milestone in the University's development is the inauguration of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz University Campus in March 2021. Established as an endowment project under the King Abdullah Humanitarian Foundation, and implemented by the Islamic Development Bank, the campus has significantly enhanced opportunities for female education. With five modern residential facilities, it provides a safe and stimulating environment for students. Today, female enrollments amount to nearly 2,448, nearly half of the total student body, which bears clear witness to the University's success in advancing the role of African women in the development process.

The Islamic University of Niger distinguishes itself as a truly community-engaged institution, extending beyond its academic mission to serve the local community. Through its social responsibility initiatives, it delivers significant community services, including:

- Solidarity Schools on the Say Campus: Two schools serve 1,819 students, from kindergarten through high school, mostly children from nearby villages and poor families. The University also provides education for school dropouts, enabling their reintegration into society and the workforce.
- Vocational training (Iqra Institute): Addressing graduate unemployment, the University offers parallel technical training, enabling students of Sharia or Arabic to earn mid-level diplomas in manual trades, and thus enter the workforce more readily;
- Food security and charitable action: The University implements a wide range of community initiatives for students and the local population, including scholarships, healthcare, financial aid, transportation, and Ramadan iftar programs. A flagship initiative is the Date Palm Farm, designed to promote food security, diversify local income sources, and localize palm cultivation. The farm includes 400 palm trees whose annual yield is distributed as charity to the poor and those in need.

In pursuit of financial autonomy, the Islamic University of Niger launched the "University Waqf" (Endowment), one of Niamey's most notable architectural landmarks. Financed jointly by the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Solidarity Fund at a cost of \$27 million, the project became operational in 2021. Its revenues are expected to fully support the University's budget and long-term sustainability once the financing loans are repaid.

While preparing to celebrate its 40th anniversary, and having proudly graduated over 9,000 African professionals, the University is now looking to the future. Its Strategic Plan 2026–2036, under the slogan "Quality in Education and Scientific Research," seeks to place students at the center of university life, while expanding the University's academic influence across the entire West African region.

The University's sustained success is the fruit of the strong dedication of its Board of Trustees, chaired by Amb. Nasser bin Abdullah bin Hamdan Al-Zaabi, as well as the generous support of donors, most notably the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Foundation for Humanitarian Activities, and Sharjah Awqaf (Endowments). Together, they ensure that the University continues to serve as a vital bridge between enduring Islamic values and the evolving challenges of the future.



OIC Attends Graduation Ceremonies of IUIU in Mbale and IUT in Gazipur



Amb. Aftab Ahmad Kohkher, Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, represented the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, at the 34th Graduation Ceremony of the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), held on December 20, 2025, at the Main Campus in Mbale, Uganda. H.E. Madam Jessica Alupo, Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda, attended the event as Chief Guest of Honor.

The ceremony marked the graduation of 2,484 students across the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels.

Addressing the event, Amb. Khokher urged the IUIU and other OIC universities, as well as universities in OIC Member States, to transcend traditional models of teaching and learning and reposition themselves as dynamic hubs of innovation, interdisciplinary research, and technological entrepreneurship. He reaffirmed the OIC's full commitment to supporting the IUIU in its endeavor to become a center of academic excellence and a catalyst for socio-economic development in the region and across the wider Islamic world.

For her part, H.E. Madam Jessica Alupo, Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda, paid tribute to the OIC for its long-standing commitment to the promotion of higher education, notably through the establishment of the Islamic University in Uganda in 1988. She noted that, under OIC patronage,

the IUIU has achieved remarkable growth in academic programs and infrastructure development, including the recently constructed Faculty of Engineering and Technology.

For its part, the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), a subsidiary organ of the OIC, held its 37th Convocation Ceremony on 26 October 2025 at its campus in Gazipur, Bangladesh. The event celebrated the academic achievements of 522 graduates who received degrees in various disciplines, including engineering, technical education, and applied sciences.

The ceremony was chaired by Amb. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, representing the OIC Secretary-General, who is the Chancellor of the IUT.

Prof. Dr. Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar, Education Adviser at the Ministry of Education of Bangladesh, attended as Chief Guest of Honor.

In his remarks, Amb. Khokher congratulated the graduates and urged them to leverage their knowledge and skills to drive innovation and progress in their respective countries.

Prof. Abrar commended the IUT's contribution to strengthening educational cooperation among OIC Member States, and emphasized the need to

align higher education with national priorities and global development goals, with a focus on skills that promote resilience, sustainability, and technological advancement.

Dr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor of the IUT, praised the graduates for their perseverance, and reaffirmed the University's commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and innovation.

The 54th session of the Governing Board of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) was convened on 25 October 2025 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The meeting was chaired by Mr. M. Forhadul Islam, Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh.

Addressing the event, Amb. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Assistant Secretary-General for Science and Technology, expressed profound appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for its continuous support to the University. He reaffirmed the OIC's strong support for the IUT's role in driving science, technology, and innovation across Member States.





Virtual Reality Offers Psychological Relief for Gaza's Children

Gaza – Emad Abdel Jawad (DPA)

Inside a temporary tent set up in the village of Al-Zawaida in central Gaza, nine-year-old Samer Khalil carefully adjusts a virtual-reality headset over his eyes.

Samer and his family have been living in a shelter for nearly two years after their home was damaged during military operations, forcing them to relocate several times.

As soon as the session began, the tension on his face gradually faded. Describing the experience, Samer told the German Press Agency (DPA): "I was in a place full of trees and water. There were no loud or scary sounds. It felt like I was far away from everything frightening." He added that his physical sensations changed: "My heart felt calmer, and I stopped thinking about upsetting things." For many children in Gaza, anxiety and fear have become part of daily life. For more than two years, the Israeli war on the Strip and its aftermath have affected nearly every aspect of childhood.

Layan Mahmoud took part in the same experience. She said the headset took her to "a colorful garden," and for a moment she felt as though she could run freely without fear.

She added that her family had been displaced several times during the past months of the war, which affected her psychological state. "I used to get angry quickly and cry a lot," she explained. "After the session, I felt calmer."

Adam Nasser, aged 12, sat in a wheelchair after suffering an injury that limited his mobility. Describing his experience, he said: "I felt like I was flying over the sea. I forgot that I was tired." "In real life, I don't go out much, but inside the headset I felt free," he added.

These children are taking part in a small-scale initiative that brings virtual-reality experiences into temporary shelters to ease some of the psychological strain of the war, at a time when mental health and social support services in Gaza are severely lacking, and medical facilities are overcrowded.

The initiative is overseen by psychologist Dr. Abdul-Rahman Abu Shamaleh, who works with a local support team. He explained that the goal is not to provide full trauma therapy, but rather to offer children a brief sense of safety and calm.

"We begin with calm scenes and let the chil-

dren freely describe what they see," he said.

"This helps them relax. Some of them then start talking about their fears or difficult experiences." Gradually moving from imagination to expression, he added, helps children release emotional pressure without feeling overwhelmed or afraid. "We try to make the session a supportive experience, not a direct confrontation with pain," he explained.

Mental-health specialists in Gaza warn that the psychological effects of the war on children are deep and long-lasting. Psychiatrist Eyad Al-Najjar says many children have experienced intense stress and fear, compounded by the loss of a sense of safety and repeated displacement.

"We observe sleep disturbances, anxiety attacks, withdrawal behavior, and trouble concentrating," he said. He also noted that core childhood activities, such as play and social interaction, have significantly declined. "Play is an essential element of psychological development, and its absence has long-term consequences," he added. Al-Najjar stresses that virtual reality is not a substitute for treatment, but in such difficult conditions, it can serve as a form of psychological support.



Ministers Responsible for Water: Expanding Intra-OIC Partnerships to Meet Challenges and Promote Sustainability

The coastal city of Jeddah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosted, on October 20-22, 2025, the 5th session of the Islamic Conference of Ministers Responsible for Water, held under the theme: "From Vision to Impact". H.E. Eng. Abdulrahman Al-Fadley, Minister of Environment, Water, and Agriculture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Chair of the 5th session of the Conference, emphasized, in his remarks, that achieving water security is a cornerstone of sustainable development and a foundation for the well-being of societies. He noted that OIC Member States, like many others worldwide, are confronting mounting challenges driven by population growth, economic expansion, and the impacts of climate change, resulting in rising demand for water, more frequent droughts and floods, and other natural disasters. He called on Member States to promote efficient water use, develop infrastructure, and secure adequate financing to ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation for all.

H.E. Dr. Hani Atef Sweilem, Minister of Water and Irrigation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Chair of the 4th session of the Conference, highlighted, in his remarks, the OIC's efforts to advance cooperation in the field of water. He noted that the 4th Ministerial Meeting

convened in Egypt had adopted an Implementation Plan for the OIC Water Vision as a significant milestone toward improving infrastructure, promoting scientific research, and enhancing collaboration and knowledge-exchange in the water sector.

Amb. Samir Bakr, Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs (Secretary-General ad interim), reaffirmed the OIC's commitment to advancing collective efforts on water security, sustainable management, and climate resilience among Member States. He expressed deep appreciation for Saudi Arabia's visionary leadership and the significant role it plays in strengthening global cooperation on water security. He particularly commended the establishment of the Global Water Organization (GWO) in Riyadh, which has placed water issues at the center of the global agenda, fostering innovation, advancing research, and promoting the development of sustainable solutions. Referring to the problem of water scarcity in Gaza, he urged intensified humanitarian efforts to ensure access to safe water and sanitation.

Ministers and Heads of Delegation from OIC Member States shared insights on the overall state of water security in their countries and across the OIC region. They underscored

the importance of translating the OIC Water Vision into concrete actions, fostering resilience, and ensuring that collective efforts effectively contribute to sustainable development and the well-being of future generations.

The Meeting also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation and partnerships among OIC Member States and explore opportunities to harness modern technologies and digital transformation in support of sustainable water resource planning and management efforts.

The Ministerial Conference was preceded by a preparatory Senior Officials Meeting that addressed water issues and the related challenges shared by Member States.

Dr. Abdul-Aziz bin Muhareb Al-Shaibani, Deputy Minister for Water Affairs at the Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, emphasized that strengthening regional and international cooperation and partnerships in the water sector is essential to achieving tangible results beyond theoretical planning. He stressed the importance of adopting innovative solutions and harnessing modern technologies to accelerate positive change, thereby enhancing the capacity to address growing water-related challenges.





The OIC Water Agenda: Challenges and Opportunities

Water is fundamental to life and development, underpinning vital sectors such as health, agriculture, industry, energy, and the environment. Yet, many OIC countries are facing mounting water-related challenges. Rapid population growth, expanding economic activity, rising development needs, and the growing impacts of climate change are placing increasing pressure on already limited water resources, with serious implications for food security as well as social and economic stability.

Data from ICESCO indicate that the average per-capita share of renewable water resources in many Islamic countries is about 3,806 cubic meters per year, significantly below the global average of 7,027 cubic meters. Meanwhile, 29 countries face water stress, including 18 experiencing critical stress levels. The Middle East and North Africa, along with African countries bordering the Lake Chad Basin, are among the regions most vulnerable to water scarcity. According to data from ESCWA, about 362 million people in the Arab region live under conditions ranging from water scarcity to extreme scarcity.

Agriculture alone accounts for more than 70 per-

cent of total water consumption, which creates additional pressure in Islamic countries that rely heavily on agriculture, particularly the Lake Chad Basin States, which face severe water challenges due to their semi-arid climate and limited renewable water resources.

At the same time, however, the water landscape in Islamic countries is not defined solely by challenges; it also offers inspiring success stories, particularly in Central Asia. In fact, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, among other countries, have successfully harnessed their abundant water resources to develop dams and hydropower infrastructure, helping to secure renewable energy supplies while supporting sustainable development.

Tajikistan, for instance, generates over 90 percent of its electricity from hydropower, while Kyrgyzstan produces about 80 percent. The Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers serve as key sources of water and energy, demonstrating how effective water resource management can transform challenges into tangible development opportunities.

Given the varying realities and levels of expertise across its Member States, the Organization

of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has undertaken a key role in coordinating efforts and enhancing the sharing of knowledge and innovative technologies to strengthen water security and support sustainable development in the Islamic world. The OIC's vision focuses on building national capacities and transferring modern technologies, including digital monitoring systems and data management tools, to increase water-use efficiency and reduce water loss.

Working jointly with its affiliated institutions, the OIC supports the development of infrastructure and promotes financing for water and sanitation projects, particularly in least developed countries. It also seeks to strengthen transboundary cooperation and the development of legal agreements to reduce water-related disputes.



OIC Supports Development of Emergency and Disaster Response Mechanisms

The OIC General Secretariat participated, on December 3, 2025, in the Disaster Risk Reduction Forum organized by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN-DRR) in Bonn, Germany.

The OIC was represented by Dr. Aisha Al-Ayafi Al-Sharif, Director of the Humanitarian Affairs Department, who expressed deep appreciation for the invitation extended to the Organization to participate in this significant international event. She emphasized that the forum is being held at a time when disaster risks related to climate change are increasing and directly impacting many OIC Member States.

Dr. Al-Ayafi noted that the Forum aligns with the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, which prioritizes strengthening joint Islamic humanitarian action, developing effective emergency response mechanisms, and supporting resilience-building through comprehensive and integrated disaster risk reduction approaches.

Dr. Al-Ayafi stressed that disaster risk man-

agement is a central priority for the OIC, emphasizing the importance of strengthening cooperation among Member States in sharing expertise, technologies, and assistance. She welcomed existing partnerships with the United Nations system and the European Union, noting that global challenges necessitate collective coordination and shared solutions. She indicated that the OIC stands ready to work with the United Nations to enhance the implementation of the Sendai Framework and to align with international and regional risk reduction efforts.

Regarding financing, Dr. Al-Ayafi underlined the need to provide adequate and reliable resources for investment in green technologies, early warning systems, and enhanced preparedness. She expressed the OIC's interest in exploring innovative financing mechanisms, particularly through Islamic finance, to support disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action. She also emphasized the importance of capacity-building, data-sharing, and strengthening disaster management in-

stitutions in Member States, especially those most vulnerable to climate risks. She stressed the need to engage local communities and ensure that policies are inclusive and human-centered.

Dr. Al-Ayafi concluded by reaffirming the OIC's commitment to strengthening cooperation among Member States, international partners, and local stakeholders to reduce vulnerabilities, enhance preparedness, and improve recovery capabilities, indicating that the OIC General Secretariat looks forward to the significant outcomes of the Forum.

In a related context, and on the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, observed annually on October 13th, the OIC joined the international community in expressing solidarity with all victims of natural and human-made disasters around the world.

The year's theme, "Fund Resilience, Not Disasters," highlights the urgent need to invest in resilience-building and preventive measures rather than in post-disaster recovery.



Bakheet Holds Meetings to Support OIC Humanitarian Action



Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social and Cultural Affairs, and Mr. Mamadou Sow, Head of the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to the GCC, signed, October 9, 2025 at the General Secretariat headquarters, a new Plan of Action between the OIC and the ICRC covering the period 2025-2028.

This Plan is based on the longstanding Bilateral Cooperation Agreement that has governed the OIC-ICRC partnership for many years, and aims at facilitating the implementation of the Agreement through a range of joint activities, including capacity-building, humanitarian assistance, and advocacy programs.

Both sides took this opportunity to exchange views on humanitarian issues of mutual concern.

On October 9, 2025, Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social and Cultural Affairs, received Dr. Abdallah Al Dardari, Assistant Secretary-General and Regional Director for Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The meeting formed part of the contacts and information exchanges initiated earlier this year, designed to reinforce bilateral cooperation between OIC and UNDP. It discussed the final steps before the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions.

Both sides exchanged views on the humanitarian situation in a number of OIC Member States affected by humanitarian crises, and discussed the ways and means to assist them as part of the implementation of the future MoU.

On October 5, 2025, the OIC Department of Humanitarian Affairs received, at the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah, a high-level delegation from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Discussions centered on enhancing bilateral cooperation and reviewing progress in the implementation of the OIC-IOM Joint Action Plan.

Both sides underscored the necessity of strengthening capacity-building initiatives and training programs for humanitarian workers within OIC Member States. Furthermore, they explored the expansion of collaborative field projects, particularly in providing aid to displaced populations and those adversely affected by crises. They also addressed ways of improving resource mobilization and leveraging Islamic social financing mechanisms to bolster humanitarian responses and resilience-building efforts.

The meeting reaffirmed the commitment of OIC and IOM to strengthening their partnership and developing joint initiatives to tackle issues related to displacement, migration, and the humanitarian impacts of climate change, while actively seeking sustainable solutions for vulnerable groups across OIC Member States.

On September 5, 2025, the OIC joined the international community in observing the International Day of Charity, an occasion dedicated to promoting the values of compassion, generosity, and solidarity worldwide. It took this opportunity to reaffirm the pivotal role of charity in alleviating poverty, responding to humanitarian crises, and strengthening social cohesion within societies.



Working with the “Red Crescent” to Address Irregular Migration

Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Social and Cultural Affairs, addressed virtually, on November 18, 2025, the Second Regional Forum on the Humanitarian Impacts of Irregular Migration and Social Peacebuilding, convened on November 18-19, 2025, in Conakry, Guinea. The Forum was organized at the initiative of the Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC), in partnership with the Guinean Red Cross.

Addressing the Forum, the Assistant Secretary-General underscored the importance of strengthening humanitarian action and fostering sustainable social peace through dialogue, solidarity, and cooperation among communities. He emphasized the need to support displaced populations, back up recovery efforts, and uphold human dignity across Africa and beyond.

Amb. Bakheet reaffirmed the OIC’s readiness to continue working closely with the ICIC, as well as with Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations in OIC Member States, and all relevant partners, to advance shared objectives.

On October 14, 2025, upon a kind invitation from UNHCR, the OIC General Secretariat participated in the final Consultative Meeting on “Local Solutions Towards Peaceful Coexistence in the Regional Context of the MENA and Asia Regions,” held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva as part of the Geneva Peace Week.

The OIC was represented by Dr. Aisha Al-Ayafi, Director of Humanitarian Affairs, who highlighted the OIC’s ongoing humanitarian efforts in countries affected by crises and disasters. She underscored the importance of sustained international cooperation and strategic partnerships to address displacement challenges and promote social cohesion within affected communities.

The meeting provided a valuable platform for the exchange of expertise and best practices, and reaffirmed the OIC’s steadfast commitment to supporting displaced and vulnerable

populations through humanitarian assistance, policy advocacy, and multilateral collaboration.

In a related context, the OIC commended the leading role undertaken by the Kingdom of Bahrain in promoting joint humanitarian and development action among OIC Member States. This was part of a statement delivered at the Kaaf Humanitarian Conference, held in Manama, Bahrain, on October 9, 2025, under the theme « Kaaf Humanitarian: An Active Partner in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals. »

Speaking at the opening session, Dr. Aisha Al-Ayafi, Director of Humanitarian Affairs at the OIC, expressed her gratitude to the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting the Conference, and commended Bahrain’s efforts in supporting solidarity and humanitarian action at the regional and international levels. She emphasized that holding the Conference in Bahrain reflects its leading role in supporting sustainable development, noting that current global challenges require transforming humanitarian action into a strategic driver for development.





OIC and King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language: Strengthening Arabic as a Pillar of Identity

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the status of the Arabic language as the language of the Holy Qur'an and a fundamental pillar of the cultural identity of the Islamic world, and also as one of the official languages of the OIC alongside English and French, the OIC General Secretariat, in collaboration with the King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language in Saudi Arabia, organized a series of cultural and training activities during 2025. These included the celebration of World Arabic Language Day and the convening of specialized training events.

On December 24, 2025, the OIC General Secretariat hosted an event in celebration of World Arabic Language Day, observed annually on December 18th, under the patronage of His Highness Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Minister of Culture and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Academy, with broad participation from representatives of Member States, OIC institutions, and Arabic language academies. Official speeches during this event emphasized the importance of the institutional partnership between the OIC and the Academy as a practical model for integrated efforts in

building language capacities, delivering high-quality training programs that serve Member States, and promoting the use of the Arabic language in international fora.

In a related context, a specialized virtual training workshop, titled "Key Arabic Writing Skills", was held virtually on September 1-3, 2025. The workshop aimed to develop participants' written expression and text composition skills, as well as to enhance their linguistic and professional communication proficiency. This event was part of a series of training programs that, over three years, resulted in the organization of dozens of workshops and cultural seminars that attracted wide participation.

These activities were conducted as part of implementing the ministerial resolutions issued by the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, most notably Resolution 13/51 on Cultural Affairs, adopted in June 2025. The resolution seeks to strengthen the presence of the Arabic language in human thought and to promote its use within regional and international organizations, thereby highlighting its profound contribution to humanity's cultural and intellectual diversity.

Partnership with the OIC reflects Saudi Arabia's leading role in nurturing, promoting, and strengthening the Arabic language as a bridge for civilizational dialogue among peoples. It also underscores the importance the OIC attaches to its official languages (Arabic, English, and French) not merely as means of communication, but also as instruments for expressing the identity of the Islamic world, which unites peoples and Muslims from across all Member States around shared values, while embracing their diversity as a source of cultural and human richness.

The King Salman Global Academy for Arabic Language is an international scientific institution established at the initiative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the aim of serving the Arabic language, empowering it locally and globally, and enhancing its status as a language of culture, knowledge, identity, and civilization. The Academy works to support linguistic scientific research, build capacities, develop educational and training programs, and leverage modern technologies to serve the Arabic language. It also seeks to strengthen the language's presence in international organizations and cultural fora.



Arabic Language

The OIC General Secretariat has undertaken a wide range of initiatives and participations aimed at advancing and promoting the Arabic language within international forums.

At the kind invitation of the International Council for the Arabic Language, the General Secretariat, represented by the Department of Cultural Affairs, took part in the 11th International Conference on the Arabic Language, held on October 22-24, 2025, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

This participation formed part of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed on May 29, 2024, between the OIC General Secretariat and the International Council for the Arabic Language, with

the aim of advancing efforts to strengthen the presence of the Arabic language in international fora and enhance its cultural and civilizational influence worldwide.

The event saw a broad participation from Member States, regional and international organizations, and civil society organizations concerned with the Arabic language.

During the Conference, the "Mohammed bin Rashid Arabic Language Award" was presented, and hundreds of scientific and field studies across various disciplines were showcased, alongside innovative initiatives to strengthen Arabic language education and promote its dissemination through modern means.

The General Secretariat delegation was headed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural, and Social Affairs, Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, who delivered

the Secretary-General's address at the opening session. Dr. Al-Hussein Ghazawi and Dr. Rami Mohammed Inshasi also participated in several scientific sessions, and reviewed the OIC's initiatives to promote the Arabic language as part of global efforts in this regard. On the sidelines of the Conference, the OIC delegation held bilateral meetings with representatives of organizations and scientific bodies with the aim of strengthening partnerships and cooperation, particularly in the dissemination and teaching of the Arabic language.

The General Secretariat's participation in this international forum forms part of its ongoing commitment to strengthening the presence, dissemination, and empowerment of the Arabic language as the language of the Holy Qur'an, in accordance with relevant OIC ministerial resolutions.



Youth Empowerment via Video Games and Social Media

The OIC General Secretariat and the Union of OIC News Agencies organized, on September 4, 2025, at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah, a workshop titled: "Youth Empowerment in Member States via Video Games and Social Media: Prospects and Challenges."

The workshop was chaired by H.E. Mr. Ahmed Bin Salman Al-Ghamlas, Assistant Undersecretary for Youth Affairs at the Ministry of Sports in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Chair of the 5th session of the Islamic Conference Youth and Sports Ministers.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Al-Ghamlas stressed that the participation of the Saudi Sports Ministry in this workshop reflects its commitment to supporting youth empowerment and reinforcing youth capacities through constructive partnership with the

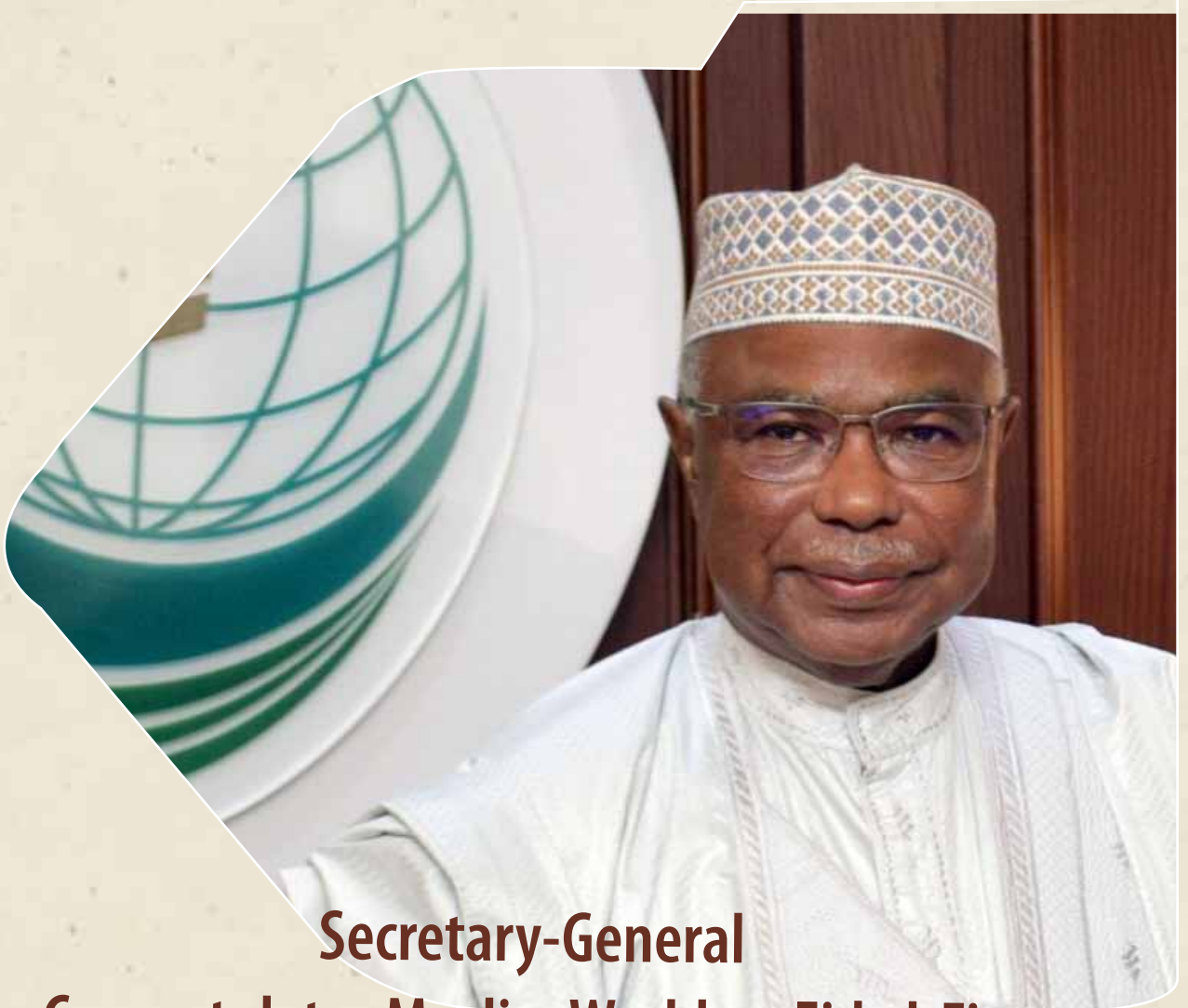
General Secretariat and OIC-affiliated institutions. He pointed out that video games and social media represent interactive spaces offering promising opportunities for innovation and impact. This requires investment in knowledge promotion and experience exchange, especially since the Islamic world's youth are now among the most prominent content creators and actors in this field.

For his part, H.E. Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Cultural, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, noted that video games and social media have now become an integral part of the life of youth and children, given the educational, communicational, recreational, and skill development potential they offer. They can effectively contribute to youth empowerment, he added, if they are properly and thought-

fully leveraged to reinforce strategic and logical thinking.

At the same time, Amb. Bakheet drew attention to the challenges these new technologies pose for Member States, particularly in ensuring their responsible and beneficial use by youth and children. He stressed that the workshop offers a significant platform for sharing expertise and best practices among Member States, OIC institutions, and international partners concerned with youth empowerment.

The workshop involved panel discussions on various topics, including the positive aspects of video games and social media for youth empowerment, and the challenges and opportunities associated with video games. A panel was dedicated to showcasing Member States' relevant experiences.



Secretary-General Congratulates Muslim World on Eid al-Fitr

H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, congratulated the entire Islamic Ummah on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr 1447 AH, praying to Allah Almighty to accept the fasting of Muslims and to spread goodness throughout the Islamic world. He extended his congratulations to Their Majesties, Excellencies and Highnesses, the Kings, Presidents and Emirs of OIC Member States.

In his message on this occasion, the Secretary-General, marking the shared celebration between the OIC and the host country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, expressed his sincere congratulations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and to HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister. He also wished continued security, stability, and prosperity for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and for all OIC Member States.

The Secretary-General expressed his hope

that the Eid would be an opportunity for the plights endured by Muslims everywhere to come to an end, and that Allah Almighty would bring it back to the Islamic Ummah with goodness, security, and peace.

On the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, the OIC General Secretariat held, on March 8, 2026, in collaboration with the Gulf Research Centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a virtual international cultural Symposium entitled: "Folk Cultural Heritage in Ramadan: Prospects for Sustainability and Threats of Dilution".

This Symposium formed part of the General Secretariat's efforts to promote cultural content and strengthen coordination mechanisms with prestigious intellectual institutions in Member States. It particularly embodied the strategic partnership stemming from the MoU signed between the OIC and the Gulf Research Centre in March 2024.

The Symposium addressed the cultural heri-

tage of Muslim peoples during Ramadan, and reviewed the current challenges facing this heritage in light of rapid socio-cultural transformations taking place in societies worldwide. It further advanced a set of practical recommendations designed to safeguard the continuity of the holy month's distinctive cultural identity, affirming it as a fundamental pillar of the broader unifying Islamic identity. The Symposium, which was attended by prominent Islamic figures from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Chad, and Indonesia, featured rich discussions and diverse cultural perspectives, reflecting the wealth of Islamic heritage and its ability to rise above the challenges of cultural dilution.

The OIC General Secretariat has undertaken a wide range of initiatives and participations aimed at advancing and promoting the Arabic language within international forums.



Palestinian Women: Resilience Despite Hardships

The OIC General Secretariat participated in an event organized by the OIC Women's Development Organization to launch its report, entitled "Palestinian Women: Resilience Despite Hardships."

Dr. Amina Al-Hajri, Director-General of the Department of Cultural and Social Affairs at the OIC General Secretariat, delivered a speech in which she conveyed the greetings of the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, and his wishes for the success of the Report in achieving its objectives. She emphasized that the Palestinian Cause remains at the forefront of the OIC's concerns and ranks high among the priorities of joint Islamic action.

Dr. Al-Hajri highlighted the importance of the Report in documenting the suffering and resilience of Palestinian women. It represents an appeal to the international community to intervene in order to protect and empower Palestinian women and guarantee their rights, including the right to live in freedom

and dignity.

Dr. Al-Hajri launched an appeal to the OIC Member States that have not yet joined the Women Development Organization, urging them to do so and contribute to the organization's activities, given the impact this would have on advancing the status of women in Member States.

In a related context, and on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child, observed in 2025 under the theme: "The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead: Girls on the Frontlines of Crisis," the OIC reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to protecting and advancing the rights, dignity, and potential of girls across the Muslim world.

The OIC recognized that in times of conflict, climate shocks, displacement, and social instability, girls often bear disproportionate burdens. Yet they continue to rise as resilient leaders, advocates for justice, and catalysts for positive transformation within their families and communities.

The OIC stressed that through its Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women (OPAAW), it continues to implement a comprehensive framework to strengthen access to education, health, economic opportunities, and social inclusion, in full accordance with Islamic values and international standards. It noted that the "Jeddah Document on the Rights of Women in Islam", adopted at the International Conference on the Rights of Women in Islam (November 2023, Jeddah), further reinforces the OIC's vision of promoting justice and equity between women and men across Member States. It considered that the ongoing intergovernmental process to finalize the "Jeddah Convention on the Rights of the Child in Islam" represents a milestone toward consolidating child protection mechanisms and ensuring that the rights of every girl-child are safeguarded and advanced in all spheres of life.



Doha Summit: Progress and Social Justice as Pillars for Sustainable Development

The Qatari capital, Doha, hosted, on November 4, 2025, the Second World Summit for Social Development, with the high-level participation of heads of state and government, ministers of social development, leaders of international organizations, and civil society representatives.

This Summit offered a significant platform for reaffirming the global commitment to alleviating poverty, curbing inequalities and social exclusion, and promoting inclusive development. It provided an important opportunity to assess progress in social development, identify existing gaps, reaffirm the principles spelled out in the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration, and mobilize international consensus around the common goal of advancing progress and social justice as fundamental pillars for achieving sustainable development and promoting global peace and security.

The OIC was represented at the Summit by a high-level delegation led by Dr. Amina Al-Hajri, Director-General of Cultural, Social, and Family Affairs, alongside Amb. Hameed Opoloyeru, OIC Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York. The OIC Delegation highlighted the OIC's initiatives aimed at promoting socio-economic empowerment of

women, strengthening the family and marriage institutions, and nurturing children and youth, through participation in bilateral and multilateral meetings and sideline events.

The opening session of the Summit featured remarks by prominent leaders and officials who emphasized the importance of renewing the global commitment to the values of social justice, combating poverty, and promoting social inclusion. The Summit also saw the launch of the Doha Political Declaration, which establishes a new international framework for advancing sustainable social development efforts and building more equitable and inclusive societies.

The OIC Delegation participated in sessions and workshops addressing key issues related to social empowerment, sustainable development, innovation in social action, and international partnerships.

Amb. Opoloyeru participated in several sideline events, including an event organized by the Doha International Family Institute on the "Protection of Families in Times of War and Conflict", and another organized by SESRIC on "Digital Pathways towards Formalization in the Social and Solidarity Economy."

Amb. Opoloyeru also delivered a presenta-

tion at the UNDP session on "Transition from Poverty to Prosperity," which saw an extensive exchange of experiences and the launch of several new partnerships and projects.

Among the most prominent events was a session organized by the Digital Cooperation Organization titled "Data-driven strategies to address gaps in social development and accelerate the building of inclusive digital economy." Another highlight was a sideline event organized by the Sultanate of Oman titled "Women at the Heart of Development: From Empowerment to Impact."

The Delegation also attended a session organized by the Doha International Family Institute titled: "The Family as the Cornerstone of Development and Social Cohesion: A Strategic Approach for a Sustainable Future."

On October 30, 2025, an OIC delegation took part in the meeting of the Al-Mujadilah Centre and Mosque, a member of Qatar Foundation in Doha, held upon an invitation from the Centre. The meeting was designed to explore avenues of cooperation in support of women's empowerment, family well-being, and community development across OIC Member States.



OIC Commemorates International Days of Older Persons, Children, and Persons with Disabilities

On the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons, annually observed on October 1st following a resolution adopted by the UNGA on December 14, 1990, the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, underlined the importance of providing healthcare and social protection for older persons and eliminating discrimination against them. He noted that the OIC resolutions, along with the OIC Strategy on the Elderly, adopted during the first session of the Ministerial Conference on Social Development (Istanbul – 2019), called on Member States to benefit from the experience of older persons by listening to their voices, especially when designing national development policies and programs, fostering their role within their communities, and promoting best practices in dealing with them.

The theme chosen for the International Day

of Older Persons in 2025 is: “Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being, and Our Rights.” The OIC Secretary-General called on Member States and the international community to develop inclusive policies that support the rights of older persons, ensure them a dignified life, and enable their active participation in society.

The OIC also joined the international community in celebrating World Children’s Day, thereby reaffirming its unwavering commitment to promoting and protecting the rights, well-being, and development of children across Member States and beyond.

On this occasion, the OIC emphasized that protecting every child’s right to education, healthcare, and safety, and ensuring a life free from violence, abuse, and neglect, constitutes a shared moral and humanitarian responsibility. It stressed that investing

in children’s well-being is key to building peaceful, inclusive, and resilient societies.

The Secretary-General stated: “Our collective future depends on how successfully we nurture and protect today’s children... The OIC remains fully committed to developing policies and instruments that ensure every child grows up in safety, dignity, and hope.” While observing World Children’s Day, the OIC expressed deep concern over the ongoing violations of children’s rights, particularly in conflict zones where children are among the most vulnerable groups. The OIC also voiced grave concern over the deteriorating situation of children in Palestine, who continue to suffer immensely due to ongoing instability and conflict. It renewed its hope that Palestinian children will soon regain access to education and live in dignity, stability, and peace.



Baku Festival: Enriching the Shared Heritage of the Islamic World

Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Cultural, Social and Humanitarian Affairs, at the head of a high-level delegation from the OIC General Secretariat, took part in the “OIC Cultural Festival: Baku Creative Week,” organized by the OIC in partnership with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku from 5 to 11 December 2025.

The opening ceremony of the Festival was held on December 8, 2025, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Adil Karimli, Minister of Culture of Azerbaijan, with the participation of Culture Ministers from several OIC Member States and more than 300 guests from over 50 countries. They celebrated creativity, dialogue, and the shared cultural values that unite the OIC Countries. Among the participants were government officials, representatives of international organizations, prominent academic and cultural figures, as well as experts in the creative, theatrical, and media industries.

Amb. Bakheet delivered a speech on behalf of the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha. He expressed sincere gratitude to the leadership, government, and people of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting

the 4th session of the Festival and for striving to turn Baku into a world capital for creative industries. He commended Azerbaijan's constant support for the OIC, particularly in the areas of culture, humanitarian affairs, economic cooperation, and the exchange of best practices, as well as for providing a platform to celebrate the diverse heritage of the Islamic world.

Amb. Bakheet stated that cultural activities play a pivotal role in building personal and institutional relationships and establishing productive cooperation networks and partnerships. He highlighted the importance of cultural exchanges in enriching the shared heritage within the Islamic world and overcoming misunderstandings, by strengthening collective identity and consolidating unity and solidarity within the wider OIC community. The Festival offered a platform that brought together thousands of invitees and participants, including Culture Ministers, designers, creators, film directors, and young innovators from OIC Member States and beyond. OIC institutions concerned with culture, heritage, and media also took part in the event, with pavilions dedicated to them to showcase their programs and productions.

This major cultural event is designed to strengthen cooperation among Member States in the fields of culture, heritage, filmmaking, creative industries, and digital media. It also seeks to promote communication and mutual understanding, and to build cultural bridges between Azerbaijan and the world, particularly OIC Countries.

The Festival also featured “OIC Cinema Days”, during which selected films were screened to promote intercultural dialogue and enhance artistic exchange and cooperation in the film industry. Additionally, theatrical performances were presented, highlighting the rich heritage and contemporary creativity of Member States, alongside works from Islamic cultures that shed light on the traditions and aesthetics of different peoples, showcasing cultural diversity and creative expression across OIC societies.

Alongside the Festival's activities, a high-level meeting of Culture Ministers from Member States was held, in addition to a forum on cultural and creative industries, an international cinema program, fashion shows featuring both emerging and established designers from OIC Countries, and an international summit on gaming technologies.



Baku Communiqué: Promoting Youth Empowerment and Sustainable Development



The closing session of the “OIC Cultural Festival: Baku Creative Week 2025” was held on December 9, 2025, at the Baku Congress Center in the capital city of Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan.

The OIC Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs, Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet read out the “Baku Communiqué on Creative Industries”, in the presence of the Deputy Ministers of Culture of Azerbaijan, Ms. Saadat Yusifova and Mr. Farid Jafarov, the Director-General of “Cinema Agency” of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Rashad Azizov, along with media professionals.

The Communiqué outlined a shared vision for OIC Member States to enhance cooperation in creative industries, encourage joint initiatives, and give a new impetus to cultural diplomacy. It emphasized the strategic importance of future partnerships and collaborative cultural efforts among OIC Member States.

The Communiqué underlined that enhanced cooperation in cultural and creative industries significantly contributes to economic diversification, youth empowerment, and sustainable development. It emphasized the importance of continued collaboration among OIC Member States, OIC institutions, and national partners, including initiatives

supporting digital innovation, entrepreneurship, cultural heritage preservation, and the responsible use of emerging technologies.

The Communiqué highlighted the importance of further boosting joint programs, institutional partnerships, and innovative financing mechanisms, including public-private cooperation. This will strengthen the role of creative industries as drivers of comprehensive and sustainable growth across OIC Member States, and support the implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Communiqué expressed deep appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the excellent organization and generous hospitality extended to all participants. It expressed special gratitude to H.E. President Ilham Aliyev for his valuable efforts to advance intra-OIC cooperation, strengthen solidarity across the Muslim world, and promote intercultural dialogue and peace.

The Communiqué expressed confidence that the

“OIC Cultural Festival: Baku Creative Week 2025” has ushered in a new phase of the creative industry and cultural cooperation among OIC Member States, and laid the ground for a long-term platform that will continue to strengthen sustainable dialogue, multi-layered partnership, and cultural innovation across the region.

On the sidelines of the Festival, Amb. Bakheet held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Mr. Adil Karimli, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Both sides exchanged views on cultural projects on the agenda for bilateral cooperation between the OIC and Azerbaijan.

Amb. Bakheet commended the excellent organization of the Festival and the efforts exerted by Azerbaijan to support and encourage

initiatives that seek to serve the major goals of the OIC Member States.





3000

Athletes Participate in 6th Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh

HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal, Minister of Sport and President of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Association (ISSA), received, on November 6, in Riyadh, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games, hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from November 7 to 21, with the participation of over 3,000 athletes from OIC Member States. The ceremony was also attended by youth and sport ministers and officials from relevant regional and international institutions.

The meeting discussed ways to enhance cooperation and joint coordination between the two sides to support the sports sector and empower youth in OIC Countries. It also reviewed the efforts of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Association (ISSA) in developing sports infrastructure and organizing tournaments that contribute to youth empowerment and promote the values of solidarity and unity

among youth in OIC Countries.

The Secretary-General commended Saudi Arabia's leading role in supporting joint Islamic action, as well as its tangible efforts to enhance the status of sports and strengthen youth capabilities in Member States. He affirmed that Saudi Arabia's hosting of this major sporting event reflects its firm commitment to serving the causes of the Islamic world and strengthening cooperation among its people across various fields.

The Secretary-General also expressed his appreciation for the significant efforts made by the Saudi Ministry of Sport and the Islamic Solidarity Sports Association (ISSA) in organizing this edition of the Islamic Solidarity Games in a way that reflects a bright image of Saudi Arabia and its ability to host major sports events. He affirmed that sports represent a bridge for interaction and mutual understanding among Islamic peoples, and a promising field for building a better future for Muslim youth.

At the kind invitation of HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki Al-Faisal, Minister of Sport of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and President of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Association (ISSA), the OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, led a high-level delegation from the General Secretariat to the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games, held in Riyadh under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

In his statement during the opening ceremony, delivered on his behalf by Amb. Tarig Ali Bakheet, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian, Cultural, Social and Family Affairs, the OIC Secretary-General commended Saudi Arabia's efforts in supporting joint Islamic action under the wise leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and HRH Crown Prince, Prime Minister, Prince Mohammed bin Salman.



Celebration of the 1500th Anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

As part of the celebration of the 1500th anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the OIC General Secretariat participated in a symposium themed: “Rethinking a World in Peril through the Lens of the Prophet’s Teachings for Peoples and the Whole World”. The symposium was organized by the Standing Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC) under the aegis of the Ministry of African Integration, Foreign Affairs, and Senegalese Abroad. It was attended by members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Senegal, leaders of major religious families in Senegal, along with researchers, scholars, and intellectuals.

This event is organized within the framework of implementing Resolution 15/51-C, adopted during the 51st session of the CFM held in Istanbul on June 21–22, 2025. The Resolution calls on Member States and OIC institutions to observe the year 2025 as a commemoration of the 1500th anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), an occasion of profound significance for Muslims around the world.

The Symposium featured keynote speeches and five panel discussions centered on the

legacy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), highlighting his life, deeds, teachings, and his key role in conveying the message of Islam. It also explored ways and means to help reshape the narrative surrounding the Prophetic tradition, particularly in the face of deliberate misinformation about Islam and Muslims.

Speaking on behalf of H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, OIC Secretary-General, Dr. Lhoucine Rhazoui, Director of Cultural Affairs, underscored the range of social, economic, political, and environmental challenges confronting the world today. He emphasized the need for Muslims to return to foundational sources and draw inspiration from the Prophet’s Sirah to overcome obstacles hindering collective action, unity, and shared prosperity. The General Secretariat’s participation in this symposium reflects its commitment to supporting OIC institutions in implementing high-quality programs, initiatives, and activities that deliver added value, in line with the OIC’s goals and mandate.

On October 14, 2025, the OIC General Secretariat, in collaboration with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), inau-

gurated in Ankara, Türkiye, a Workshop on “Cyber Addiction: Best Practices to Protect Children from Violence via Internet in OIC Member States.” The two-day event, held at SESRIC headquarters, brought together representatives from OIC Member States, relevant OIC institutions, and international and regional partners.

The Workshop was designed to enhance capacity-building and resilience across OIC Member States, share experiences and best practices in preventing cyber-addiction, and develop joint initiatives to ensure the digital safety and well-being of children and youth. Participants discussed the growing risks associated with excessive Internet use, its psychological and social impacts, and the roles of governments, civil society, and technology platforms in promoting responsible and safe digital behavior.

The Workshop concluded with the adoption of practical recommendations aimed at strengthening child protection policies in the digital environment and raising public awareness about the risks of cyber-addiction in OIC Member States.





A Meaningful Media Message for the Muslim World

Amb. Samir Bakr, Assistant Secretary-General for Palestine and Al-Quds Affairs (Secretary General Ad Interim), participated in the 11th General Assembly Meeting of the OIC States Broadcasting Union (OSBU), held virtually on October 2, 2025.

Amb. Bakr delivered the Secretary-General's statement at the opening session of the meeting, highlighting Saudi Arabia's substantial support for the OIC States Broadcasting Union. He noted that this support significantly advances media work in radio and television broadcasting and strengthens the infrastructure of Member States in these sectors. Amb. Bakr also expressed his gratitude to H.E. Salman bin Yousef Al-Dossari, Saudi Minister of Media and President of the Union's General Assembly and Executive Council, for his continued support to the

Union's work.

Amb. Bakr stressed that the Union plays a leading role in crafting a purposeful media message for the Islamic world through radio and television. The Union, he added, is keen to disseminate a balanced religious discourse about Islam and its noble values, taking into consideration contemporary developments, and effectively contributing to refuting Islamophobic discourse and countering the smear campaigns targeting symbols of the Islamic religion.

Amb. Bakr emphasized the pivotal role of the Union in defending the causes of the Muslim Ummah, particularly the Palestinian issue, the central cause of the OIC, which is currently facing an extremely dangerous phase due to the ongoing aggressions by Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian

people, especially in the Gaza Strip, as well as the continued assaults by settlers and occupation forces on cities, villages, camps in the West Bank, and on holy sites in Al-Quds. He also highlighted the OIC's appreciation for the Union's valuable efforts, under the leadership of its President, Dr. Amr El-Leithi, and the substantial media support it provides for the Palestinian Cause.

On the other hand, the 43rd Governing Board Session of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), a subsidiary organ of the OIC, was held on December 3, 2025, at IRCICA's headquarters in Istanbul. The meeting was chaired by the newly elected Board Chair, Amb. Amanul Haq, from Bangladesh.



“Show Me Your Smile”

ICESCO Combats School Bullying

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) launched on November 9, 2025, the animated film titled “Show Me Your Smile”. The launch was part of the activities of the International Children’s and Youth Book Fair in Casablanca, in partnership with the Moroccan Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication, the Conference of Education Ministers in French-Speaking States (CONFEMEN), and the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC). The film screening saw the participation of 50 children, along with relevant officials, experts, educators, and media professionals.

The film “Show Me Your Smile” was produced as part of a program supervised by ICESCO’s Social and Human Sciences Sector, and carried out by ICESCO’s Media and Communication Sector. It aims at combating bullying in schools through a creative visual story that seeks to raise awareness about the dangers of bullying and ways to prevent its psychological, educational, and social impacts. During the launch ceremony, Ms. Ramata Almayy Mbaye, Head of ICESCO’s Social and Human Sciences Sector, stated that the film is part of the “Stop Bully Program”, which involves a range of educational tools designed to protect children and promote well-being in schools through value-based education and the development of positive interaction skills.

Ms. Kenza Abourmane, Director of the Youth Sector at Morocco’s Ministry of Youth, Culture, and Communication, commended the Ministry’s cooperation with ICESCO in producing educational content designed for children and adolescents. She stressed that the project aligns with national efforts to combat violence in schools, indicating that cultural institutions falling under the Ministry stand ready to host screenings and parallel discussions that emphasize the film’s messages and values.

In a video address, Mr. Abdel Rahamane Baba-Moussa, CONFEMEN Secretary-General, extended his thanks to Dr. Salim M. AlMalik, ICESCO Director-General, for this initiative that carries moral and educational messages. He stressed that the film serves as an educational tool directed at students of different age groups.

Mr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary-General of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC), stressed that “a safe child is the foundation of a safe world,” which falls in line with ICESCO’s vision and its continuous support for initiatives that promote and uphold this principle.

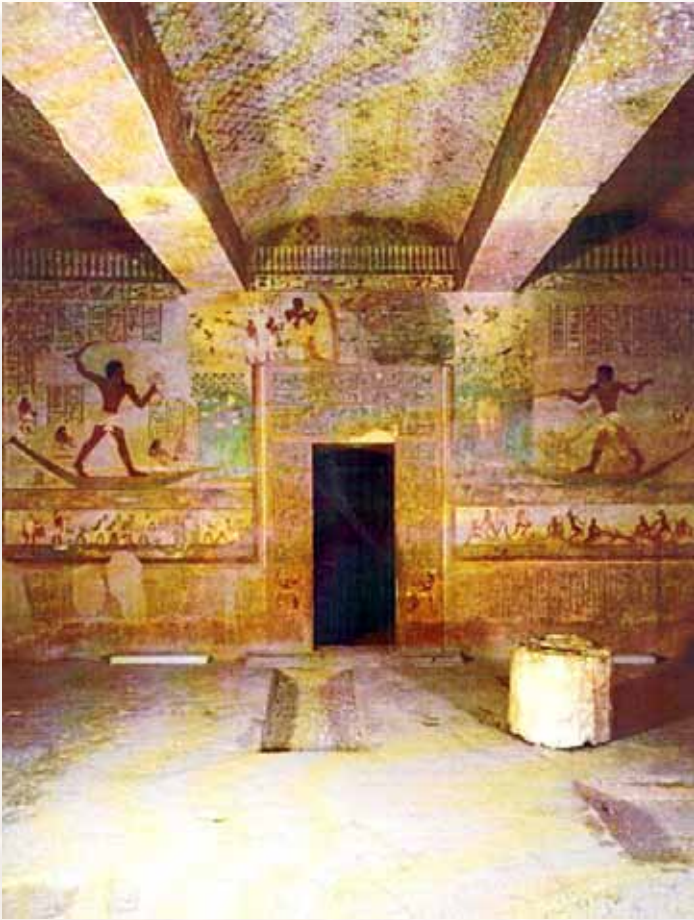
Following the screening, a discussion was held with the participating children who shared their experiences and ideas to help prevent bullying. They emphasized the importance of seeking support when needed,

and the role of families, schools, and educators in the early prevention of both school- and cyber-bullying.

On another note, the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) has recently inaugurated, at its headquarters in Rabat, a studio equipped with the latest cameras and technologies for recording and media broadcasting. The initiative aims to produce media content that strengthens ICESCO’s media message across its Member States, and to provide high-quality training services to qualify young media professionals and content creators throughout the Islamic world.

During the official inauguration of the studio, Dr. Salim M. AlMalik, ICESCO Director-General, affirmed that this step aligns with the Organization’s new media strategy, which seeks to formulate an advanced and modern media message capable of reaching the widest possible audience in Member States. It is also designed to strengthen the media capacities of individuals and institutions amid the current global challenges and the technological developments and innovative digital practices shaping the media industry.

Dr. AlMalik added that the Organization’s media vision, developed by the Media and Communication Sector since its establishment at the beginning of 2025, aims to publicize ICESCO’s efforts in various fields.



“Beni Hasan Tombs” A Book That Chronicles Successive Eras

Cairo – (DPA):

Numerous foreign and Arab books and studies have explored the history of the archaeological site of “Beni Hasan” in Minya Governorate in Upper Egypt. The site is one of the country’s most important tourist destinations, and continues to yield new archaeological discoveries each year.

A wide range of research has also focused on the area’s tombs and the archaeological evidence they contain, with studies covering both architectural and artistic aspects. According to Dr. Mostafa Waziri, former Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, the site has yet to reveal all its secrets.

Egyptologist and Egyptian artist Abdel Ghaffar Shedid says that the Beni Hasan Tombs were built for the princes of the province near their capital in the Sixteenth Nome, known in ancient times as the “Gazelle Province.”

In his book “Beni Hasan Tombs in the Middle Kingdom”, Shedid notes that this province extended along the course of the Nile River, and that governing the region was among the responsibilities of the local prince based at Beni Hasan.

Shedid adds that the standing of Beni Hasan’s rulers shifted over the course of Egyptian history. At the height of their power and prosperity, their wealth was reflected in the size and elaborate design of their impressive funerary monuments.

Given the historical importance of these tombs and their richly decorated wall paintings, teams of Egyptologists and researchers have sought to establish the chronology of the tomb owners. To that end, they used various methods, including comparing inscriptions on the tomb walls and examining changes in architectural styles.

For a long time, however, the art of mural painting received compara-

tively little attention, until the Supreme Council of Antiquities initiated a collaborative project involving archaeologists, Egyptologists, restorers, photographers, and researchers from several German institutions, including the Roemer and Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim and the Institute of Egyptology at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. The work of this Egyptian-German team provided a clearer picture of the condition of the tombs, especially their valuable and richly detailed murals, while also offering fresh analysis of the architecture and wall paintings of these tombs that today attract thousands of visitors from around the world.

According to Waziri, the Beni Hasan tombs date back to different periods of ancient Egyptian history. Some belong to the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, others to the Old Kingdom of Egypt, in addition to burial shafts from the First Intermediate Period of Egypt.

The Supreme Council of Antiquities describes Beni Hasan as one of the country’s most important archaeological sites. It lies on the eastern bank of the Nile River and falls within the administrative district of Abu Qirgas in Minya Governorate, about 277 kilometers south of the capital, Cairo. The tombs are carved entirely into the rock of the mountain.

The site has attracted many explorers, travelers, and Egyptologists. Among the most notable visitors were Jean François Champollion in 1828, the French explorer Frédéric Cailliaud (1787–1869), and the Prussian Egyptologist Karl Richard Lepsius.

Egyptologists, including the German scholar Arne Eggebrecht, who took part in an Egyptian-German project to document, restore, and protect the tombs of the provincial princes of Beni Hasan, consider the wall paintings in these tombs to be among the most precious treasures of ancient Egyptian art.



“A Journey into Egyptian Cuisine” Where Flavors Meet History

Cairo – Hajjaj Salama (DPA):

“A Journey into Egyptian Cuisine” is a book that invites readers to explore the rich traditions, flavors, and rituals of Egyptian cuisine, revealing how deeply food is woven into the country’s culture. From Ramadan dishes to sweets for the Prophet’s birthday and the Eid cookies, the book traces the culinary practices Egyptians have inherited and cherished over generations.

Published in Cairo in both Arabic and Japanese, the book is part of an academic project at Cairo University. It was prepared by four researchers who guide readers through the sensory landscape of Egyptian food: from the aroma of fava beans (“ful”) in the early morning to the scents of spices in local markets; from traditional festivals to the kitchens of grandmothers and mothers where girls learn to prepare Ramadan sweets and Eid cookies.

Notably, in the opening pages of this 380-page book, the authors, Rabab Mahmoud, Norhan Essam, Karma Mohamed, and Nari-

man Ali, express gratitude to their mothers for their role in preparing the famous Egyptian dishes and sweets featured in the book. The authors emphasize that this is not just a cookbook, it is a cultural exploration. Through flavors, aromas, and culinary customs, the book seeks to illuminate the identity and history of Egypt.

As described in the Introduction, the book takes readers on an enchanting journey through Egyptian cuisine, where tastes blend with history, and each dish tells a story. It links meals to festivals, religious observances, social rituals, and everyday life, and introduces readers to recipes that have shaped the Egyptian culinary imagination and gained recognition worldwide.

Food, the authors argue, is more than just a means of survival; it is a cultural language that transcends borders and bridges societies. Tasting a dish from another country is not just about flavor, it’s a glimpse into its people, their spirit, and their history. Just as “sushi” symbolizes Japanese culture and “pizza” em-

bodies Italy, so too can “falafel”, “koshari”, and “molokhia” stand as authentic icons of Egypt’s culinary heritage, deeply rooted in history.

The book thus invites readers to see everyday foods as reflections of Egyptian society, exploring their origins and their connections to seasonal and cultural traditions, from festivals and religious rituals to simple everyday habits.

Structured into three chapters, the book charts the journey through Egypt’s culinary landscape. The first chapter explores spices in Egyptian culture, showing how they go beyond cooking to become markers of Egypt’s cultural and geographic richness. The second focuses on food in social and religious contexts, highlighting how meals bring Egyptians together, regardless of faith. The third celebrates “popular dishes”, emphasizing their enduring presence, their role in preserving Egyptian heritage, and their continuing expression of simplicity, generosity, and national identity.



Young Germans Inclined to Embrace Islam

Lea burst into tears the first time the call to prayer reached her ears, instantly realizing she had arrived at the truth. Eva arrived after her Christian religion teacher failed, through lengthy and exhausting discussions, to convince her of the doctrine of the Trinity. She embraced Islam altogether, along with her mother, and later her son and daughter.

For Max, the final straw was Gaza and his inability to comprehend how its people endure such loss while remaining steadfast despite everything that has befallen them and their faith. He began searching in the Muslim holy book for answers, asking himself: What shapes their consciousness? How do they hold onto such conviction?

Salman (who changed his name after embracing Islam) will never forget the purity he felt the moment he began reading the Quran, following a long journey of alcohol, drugs, and wandering through the filthy streets of Berlin before entering prison.

Lea, Eva, and Max are only a few examples among the hundreds of “new Muslims” who have recently filled social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram.

Type the phrase “konvertieren zum Islam” into YouTube, and you will find thousands of photos and videos explaining how and why people embraced Islam, and how their lives transformed for the better after making a life-changing decision. The journey is not without obstacles, especially for those who convert while still being financially dependent on their parents and living in the family home, in what Germans jokingly call “Hotel Mama”. Through the stories of Lea, Eva, and Max and the positive impact Islam has had on their lives, one can say that these three have been fortunate, because social media is not free of black sheep.

According to the latest report issued by Germany's domestic intelligence service, “extremist influencers skillfully use social media

to spread their radical ideas among young people, exploiting platforms such as TikTok and Instagram to attract teenagers with fast, simple, and engaging content. These teenagers interact with and share this content without realizing they may be committing crimes punishable by law”.

This phenomenon concerns German intelligence; at the same time, it concerns the country's 2750 mosques and hundreds of Islamic centers, all of which are keen to ensure that young people like Lea, Eva, and Max are not easy prey for extremists.

A unique study conducted by the specialist organization “Mediendienst Integration” shows that the majority of mosques (480) and Islamic centers (more than 100) included in the survey have intensified their use of social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and X in recent years to reach interested audiences, noting that Facebook remains the most widely used platform.

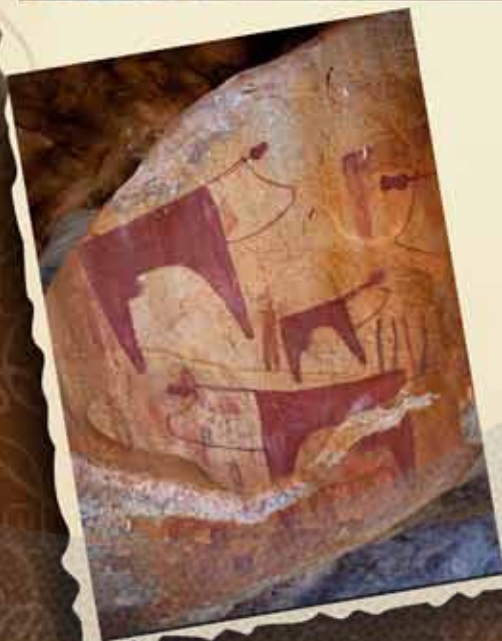
"Laas Geel": Somalia's Window Onto the Dawn of Humanity



"Laas Geel," meaning "camel watering place" in Somali, is a major historic site in the Federal Republic of Somalia. Dating back roughly 5,000 to 9,000 years to the Neolithic era, when Africa's climate was more humid, this site stands as one of the country's most remarkable heritage landmarks.

The site's paintings portray vividly adorned cattle, human figures in ceremonial poses or distinctive garments, as well as wild dogs and other animals. Red, yellow, and brown pigments have astonishingly survived for thousands of years.

Together, these artworks tell the story of an advanced pastoral society, with a deep symbolic and artistic bond with animals. They represent an early expression of cultural identity in the Horn of Africa, a region in which Somalia has long played a central role.





Dr. Tarek Ladjal

Chief Editor

Director in charge of the Information Department

As an international organization operating at the heart of these transformations, and with such crises occupying a central place in its agenda, the OIC sees its role as extending beyond monitoring violations to building a “media immunity”.

The Battle for Certainty in the Age of Unrestrained Digital Flow

Media work today is faced with an existential challenge: it is the hyper-speed at which information flows. Vast volumes of false news now flood screens at staggering speed and scale, particularly during critical moments such as military attacks or sudden economic shocks, with social media platforms turning into arenas where competing narratives spread like wildfire. This dynamic is further amplified by the rapid evolution of artificial intelligence and the proliferation of smart applications capable of producing videos, media content, and even deepfake materials, making the distinction between truth and fabrication a battle in itself, one that confronts media work with a profound existential question.

Recent international projections indicate that AI-generated or AI-modified content could account for up to 90% of total internet content by the end of 2026. Software analyses for 2025–2026 suggest that between 50% and 60% of general news articles, blog posts, and product reviews already rely, wholly or partially, on large language models (LLMs). The image production sector, in particular, is undergoing a dramatic transformation, driven by models such as “Nano Banana 2,” “Sora,” and others.

In just one year (between 2023 and 2024), over 15 billion AI-generated images were produced, roughly equivalent to the total number of photographs taken by humans since the invention of photography 150 years ago. Estimates further suggest that one in every four images currently circulating on platforms like Instagram and TikTok has been either generated or significantly enhanced by AI.

Amid this sweeping transformation, fabricated content is expanding at an alarming rate. Cybersecurity statistics this year point to a 900% increase in deepfake visual content compared to the previous three years. Thousands of AI-generated news websites have also been identified, publishing vast volumes of content every day, often for political influence or advertising revenue.

Further compounding these challenges that AI imposes on truth are the security restrictions and blockades that prevent journalists and field teams from accessing conflict zones, such as Israel's tightening control over its internal media landscape in recent years. As a result, some media outlets are compelled to rely on unverified sources, further exacerbating the crisis. This reality underscores the urgent need for international organizations and their media institutions to move beyond observation and play an active role in providing logistical and technical support; thereby ensuring objectivity, protection, and professional training for journalists, and enabling them to gather information from its original sources with integrity and professionalism.

As an international organization operating at the heart of these transformations, and with such crises occupying a central place in its agenda, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) sees its role as extending beyond monitoring violations to building what may be termed “media immunity” on two interconnected levels :

- The first level concerns media institutions in Member States, through intensified training for media professionals, delivered by OIC media organs, particularly the Union of OIC News Agencies (UNA), the OIC States Broadcasting Union (OSBU), and the Standing Committee on Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC).
- The second level targets the peoples and youth of Member States, through the media platforms of the OIC and the efforts of its various institutions, including the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), the OIC Youth Forum, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRI), and the Union of Muslim Scouts. These institutions are exerting tremendous efforts to reshape awareness among broad segments of Muslim youth; thereby building the intellectual resilience needed to confront campaigns that aim to erode our cultural values.

Against this backdrop, the OIC Information Department's new action plan emphasizes expanding specialized training workshops, equipping media professionals with tools to manage information crises, developing secure digital platforms, and supporting fact-checking initiatives. Partnerships with local institutions are also designed to foster a media environment that is “resilient to disinformation”, one that produces thoughtful, solution-oriented content, rather than merely monitoring crises.

Remaining confined to reactive, short-term responses to the chaos of digital flux and fake news has itself become a threat to the cohesion and unity of our Member States. Today, we live under the shadow of a “media crossfire” across social media spaces, fueled by fictitious, AI-controlled posts that target above all our unity, identity, solidarity, and joint Islamic action. Accordingly, coordinated joint action, under the umbrella of the OIC and its institutions, to confront fabricated media content, is no longer an option; it is an existential necessity for our security, our unity, and even our survival.

In a region where crises never abate, principled, mission-driven media, imbued with a strong sense of social responsibility, remains the most powerful tool for building peace and shaping a resilient and constructive collective awareness. Our commitment as an international organization will remain firmly focused on supporting this honest, bold, and responsible voice. For in the face of the storms of change, truth is the last fortress to which we all cling.