

Delegation from
Central African Republic

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Position Paper for Organisation of the Islamic Conference

The topics before the Organisation of the Islamic Conference are: The Establishment of Islamic Centers for Education and Professional Training in War-torn Areas; Economic Development to Combat Poverty in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT); and Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims. The Central African Republic is dedicated to collaborative multilateral approaches to further developing the implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action.

I. The Establishment of Islamic Centers for Education and Professional Training in war-torn Areas

Providing Islamic education and professional training in war-torn areas is a focal point of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action (POA), which must be readdressed as recent developments have not shown the targeted progress. Countries such as Yemen or Pakistan should strengthen their efforts to tackle the radicalization of religious teaching and combat the interruption of effective education and professional training, occurring due to conflicts and political unrest, with the support of the OIC member states. On a positive note, Iraq has been showing remarkable progress in their efforts to create centers for education and professional training in previously war-torn areas. This trend must be continued and employed as a model for other countries to follow.

II. Economic Development to Combat Poverty in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)

Fostering sustainable economic growth and combating the high number of Palestinians below the poverty line in the occupied Palestinian territories must be a priority on the OIC agenda. Although there have been indicators for slight economic growth in the respective occupied territories of West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, the situation regarding the overall economic development has not much improved. Palestine will not resume peace talks until Israel halts the construction of settlements. The construction of 700 settlements in East Jerusalem presents job opportunities for the local Palestinian work force, which are regarded as necessary but humiliating. The announcement of the respective settlement has been condemned as a violation of international law by the OIC Secretary General. Due to the Israeli blockade, Palestinian factories lack the necessary commodities to remain in production. With the support of OXFAM and USAID, a number of small business and jobs

have been created, however the unemployment rate remains at 60% with 80% of Palestinians living below the poverty line. The European Union has stated their intention of donating funds, if peace talks are resumed. As this scenario remains unlikely as long as the Israeli occupational force is hindering all such efforts, further means must be initiated to foster economic development and tackle the soaring poverty among Palestinians.

III. Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims

In the past years, intolerance and discrimination against Muslim people has seen a sharp rise in countries around the world. Recently, there have been debates regarding the ban of headscarves from public schools in Germany and France, accompanied by public display of Islamophobic slogans. Such developments must be tackled immediately and sustainably. The OIC, the UN and other intergovernmental organizations must continue all efforts to unify nations in the combat of discrimination against any race or religion. The recent decline in support of the UN resolution intending to outlaw religious discrimination undermines the strong need for action.