

Final communiqué

Adopted by the first ministerial meeting of the executive committee of the organization of the Islamic conference (OIC troikas)

JEDDAH — KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
15 SAFAR 1427H (15 MARCH 2006)

1. Based upon the decision of the 3rd Extraordinary Summit Conference held in Makkah Mukarramah on 7-8 December 2005 and after consultations made by the OIC Secretary-General with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Yemen, Chairman of the 32nd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) and the Foreign Minister of Malaysia, Chairman of 10th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference (ISC), the OIC Secretary General convened the First Ministerial Meeting of the Executive Committee^[1] of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 15 Safar 1427H (15 March 2006).
2. An invitation for participation was also extended to the Foreign Minister of Palestine^[2] and the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq since the two issues of Palestine and Iraq were the Meeting's agenda.
3. The Meeting was chaired by Dr. Abu Bakr Al-Qurbi, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Yemen and Chairman of the 32nd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM).
4. The Meeting discussed the following items included on its agenda
 - The publication of the defamatory caricatures.
 - The issue of Palestine.
 - The Situation in Iraq.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE DEFAMATORY CARICATURES

5. The Secretary-General presented a report on the efforts made and the measures taken by the General Secretariat to address the crisis which arose from the publication of the defamatory caricatures in September 2005 until the recent visit made by the Secretary-General to the United Kingdom from 8 to 10 March 2006. The participants expressed their appreciation for the extensive efforts and the important contacts made by the Secretary-General in this regard.
6. The Meeting took note of the Tripartite Statement issued upon the initiative taken by the Secretary-General and signed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the European Union (EU) High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy on 7 February 2006. The Meeting also endorsed the Joint Doha Statement issued on 25 February 2006.
7. The Meeting considered the conclusions issued by the EU Council of Foreign Ministers on 27 February 2006, which were extremely disappointing for the Muslim World. These conclusions had clearly acknowledged that "freedom comes with responsibilities" and that "freedom of expression should be exercised in a spirit of respect for religious and other beliefs and convictions. Mutual tolerance and respect are universal values we should all uphold". Regrettably, the conclusions did not include any agreement on taking collective steps to prevent the recurrence of such defamations in the future.

8. The Meeting agreed that the OIC Member States and the OIC Secretary General would continue to review and exert efforts at all levels in order to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) The adoption of a resolution by the 61st session of the UN General Assembly with a view to preventing the defamation of religions and religious symbols, proscribing blasphemy, the denigration of all prophets, and preventing the recurrence of such defamatory acts in future.
- (b) The implementation of the Doha Statement, particularly with regard to developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent the defamation of religions and take necessary measures to that effect.
- (c) The effective utilization of both the EU-OIC Joint Forum as well as the Alliance of Civilizations, with a view to encourage dialogue and mutual understanding among cultures and civilizations.
- (d) The intensification of contacts with the international community, particularly European countries, with a view to urging them to engage in greater cooperation and encourage Muslim Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to initiate a constructive dialogue, use good offices, and follow up this issue with their European counterparts with a view to promoting the true values of Islam and underlining the tolerant and humanitarian message of Islam.

9. The Meeting urged all OIC Member States and Muslims worldwide to exercise rationality and restraint in meeting the challenges of the current crisis.

THE ISSUE OF PALESTINE

10. The Meeting commended the Palestinian legislative elections, which have demonstrated the ability of the Palestinian people to organize free and democratic elections, as attested by all observers. The meeting expressed its appreciation and respect for the will of the Palestinian people. The Meeting further reiterated its full support for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and its institutions and for the Palestinian national dialogue aimed at forming a national-unity government. The Meeting called on the international community to respect the will of the Palestinian people and avoid any preconceived judgments on the new Government. The Meeting also invited the international community to refrain from applying prohibitive standards to the elected Palestinian leadership. The Meeting called on the Quartet Committee to bring necessary pressure to bear upon Israel in order to put an end to its practices, which are in contradiction with the Roadmap and the international legality, and condemned the unilateral Israeli measures carried out by the occupation authorities, including the isolation of the eastern sector of the West Bank (the Jordanian Ghor) from the rest of the Palestinian territories.

11. The Meeting strongly condemned Israel's brutal aggression on Jericho jail on 14 March 2006, which resulted in the killing of a number of Palestinians and the arrest of the Popular Front's Secretary General and his inmates. This aggression further demonstrates Israel's violation of international agreements and conventions. The Meeting, accordingly, appealed to the international community and the Quartet to immediately intervene in order to put an end to the continuous Israeli aggression and to ensure the immediate handing over of the Palestinian inmates back to the Palestinian authority.

12. The Meeting requested the international community to stop the double standard policy in dealing with the Palestinian issue and to adopt balanced measures towards the legitimate

rights of the Palestinian people so as to relieve them from the daily suffering and aggression to which they continue to be exposed.

13. The Meeting called for empowering the Palestinian people to establish their independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds al-Sharif as its capital on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative, the Roadmap, the UN Security Council Resolution 1515, and other relevant international resolutions. The Meeting called on the international community to support and help the Palestinian people and their national economy to meet their urgent needs in the occupied Palestinian territories.

14. The Meeting reaffirmed the centrality of Al-Quds Al-Sharif for the Muslim Ummah and condemned the Israeli measures aimed at altering the Arab-Islamic identity of this holy city by attempts to isolate it through settlements and separation wall; by depopulating it; and by attacking its Islamic and Christian sacred shrines. The Meeting therefore underlined the seriousness of the Israeli threats and warned of the dangers to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque, particularly from the excavations that Israel is making beneath the very foundations of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and the attempts by extremists to assault this sacred shrine.

15. The Meeting paid tribute to the efforts of the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), including his international contacts to explain the position of the OIC on the issue of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif. The Meeting urged continued efforts to be made in cooperation with the Member States and the international community so as to exhort them to continue to provide political and material support to the Palestinian people in order to enable them to achieve their independence and establish their independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

THE SITUATION IN IRAQ

16. The Meeting expressed deep concern at the deteriorating security conditions in Iraq, including attacks on mosques and other places of worship and warned against the grave repercussions of this situation, not only for Iraq but also for the entire region. The Meeting strongly condemned all acts of terrorism and sectarian violence. The Meeting strongly emphasized the need to preserve the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq and appealed to all Iraqis to transcend their differences and exercise maximum self-restraint with a sense of national responsibility and to work with dedication towards accelerating the formation of a broad-based and all-inclusive government that meets the aspirations of all Iraqi parties.

17. The Meeting expressed its support of all regional and international initiatives aimed at achieving national reconciliation in Iraq and also commended the efforts made by the League of Arab States. The Executive Committee supports the call of Iraq's neighboring countries urging the international community to exert greater efforts aimed at achieving security and stability and rebuilding the Iraqi economy.

18. The Meeting reaffirmed its determination to follow up developments in Iraq as well as its readiness to continue to work to restore a permanent and sustainable peace and stability. The Meeting recommended to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, considering its credibility among Iraqis, to continue to work, in close coordination with the Arab League, towards establishing a climate of harmony and understanding that is conducive to building lasting peace and security in Iraq and the entire region. The Meeting requested the OIC Secretary General to follow-up and co-ordinate related activities on this issue and recommended the following measures:

- i. The establishment of an OIC Contact Group on Iraq.

- ii. Addressing the various Iraqi sects on the basis of the OIC Ten-year Programme of Action adopted by the last Extraordinary Islamic Summit held in Makkah Mukarramah.
- iii. Visit to Iraq by the OIC Secretary General.
- iv. Submit Iraq's proposal for opening an OIC coordination office in Baghdad for consideration by the forthcoming 33rd ICFM.

Jeddah: 15 March 2006.