



الجمهورية التونسية



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Under the high patronage of Mr Zine El Abidine Ben Ali,
President of the Tunisian Republic

Fourth Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers

Tunis Declaration on Enhancing the Efforts of the Islamic World towards Environment Protection and Sustainable Development

Tunisian Republic: 5-6 October 2010

Tunis Declaration

We, the members of the Fourth Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers, held under the High Patronage of His Excellency Mr Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Tunisian Republic, in the city of Hammamet on 26-27 Shawal 1431H (5-6 October 2010),

Based on the resolutions of the previous sessions of the Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers, held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, respectively in 2002 and 2006, and at ISESCO Permanent Headquarters in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, in 2008;

Recalling the *Jeddah Commitments for Sustainable Development* as issued by the Second Islamic Conference on Environment Ministers, held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in 2006;

Inspired by the Islamic approach calling for maintaining man's dignity and fulfilling lieutenancy on earth through good and constructive action, which is the mainstay of sustainable development, as well as for promoting integration values and the welfare of present and future generations;

Recalling the orientations of the international community, its organizations, bodies and programmes on environment protection and sustainable development, particularly the *United Nations Environment Programme*;

Also based on the Evaluation Report on the three previous sessions of the Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers;

Having reviewed the draft strategies, programmes and guidance documents submitted by ISESCO;

Having taken stock of the Final Report of the First Meeting of the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment, held at ISESCO Permanent Headquarters in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, on 18-19 January 2010, and chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Turki bin Nasser bin Abdul Aziz, General President of Meteorology and Environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Chairman of the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment;

Commending the speech of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali at the opening session of the conference wherein he laid out a clear-sighted and forward-looking vision for the preservation of nature, protection of life on the planet, response to sustainable development concerns, and promotion of international solidarity to help countries achieve their development and their peoples' prosperity; and **considering** the President's speech a keynote reference document of the conference;

Being aware of the dangers and challenges pertaining to the Islamic world and their impact on sustainable development in its States;

Being committed to our responsibilities in terms of environment protection; and

Lauding the constructive and serious discussions which have taken place throughout the Conference's sessions and the valuable studies, strategies, documents and reports presented therein,

Agree to issue this Declaration wherein we underscore the following:

1. Seeking inspiration in Islam's ideals and values related to environment protection and materializing them through the Islamic countries' national policies on environment and development.
2. Promoting cooperation between the Islamic countries on issues pertaining to environment and sustainable development, within the framework of Islamic solidarity and joint Islamic action.
3. Addressing environmental challenges, particularly climate change and its adverse impact on the future of sustainable development in the Islamic world, and coordinating the efforts and stances of Islamic countries in this regard.
4. Reiterating our commitment to the *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development* and the *Jeddah Commitments for Sustainable Development*, issued by the First and Second Islamic Conferences of Environment Ministers held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, respectively in 2002 and 2006.
5. Contributing to the international effort to address global warming and securing a massive participation of the Member States and civil society organizations in the United Nations Climate Change Conference, due to be held in Cancun, Mexico, in 2010.
6. Endorsing the initiative of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to establish, in coordination with ISESCO, a regional early warning observatory to contribute to natural disaster risk reduction, and adopting his proposal that the Tunisian Republic host that observatory.
7. Welcoming His Excellency Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's call for the establishment of the Islamic Council for Water Resources, as provided for by a relevant resolution of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States, to serve as a reference and consultative scientific institution in charge of examining the reality of water resources, building a computer system to this end and using modern technologies for the mobilization and rational use of these resources;
8. Inviting the conference to develop the means necessary for the materialization of the aforesaid proposal and the appropriate mechanisms for its implementation within the framework of the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment, in coordination with the OIC.

9. Stressing the need for the prompt establishment of a coordination mechanism for the Islamic countries, in order to enhance the local anti-desertification programmes, and to promote experience and expertise sharing for addressing the impacts of this phenomenon and benefiting from the Adaptation Funds and Clean Development Mechanisms, under the relevant Islamic action programme.
10. Urging the Member States to intensify the national and international events geared to the celebration of the *International Year of Youth*, and inviting the President of the Fourth Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers to submit the *Tunis Appeal on Youth and Biodiversity* to the various UN bodies for adoption, particularly to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) to be held in Japan.
11. Commending the *Environment Action Plan in the Islamic Countries*, and translating it into activities and projects capable of effectively addressing environmental concerns in the Islamic countries.
12. Lauding the achievements made by civil society organizations and bodies specialized in environmental action in the Islamic countries and enhancing their efforts in this regard.
13. Welcoming the adoption of the *Draft Strategy on Management of Disaster Risks and Climate Change Implications in the Islamic World*, and taking the necessary measures for devising its related executive plan, in collaboration with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the parties concerned.
14. Inviting ISESCO to effectively contribute to the Decade for Deserts and Fight against Desertification, which was launched on 16 August 2010, and supporting the *Deserts Ecosystems and Livelihoods Program for the Middle East and North Africa* in such a way as to harness the full potential of desert ecosystems, in cooperation with the World Bank and the Global Environment Fund.
15. Warning against the exacerbation of disaster-related risks and loss of property and life, emphasizing the need to address disasters through proactive monitoring, promotion of a culture of disaster prevention and adoption of disaster-control strategies, and stressing the importance of cooperation with the GFDRR in this regard.
16. Emphasizing the need to launch national projects to help the Member States benefit from the Adaptation Funds and Clean Development Mechanisms, under the *Islamic Action Programme to Benefit from Adaptation Funds and Clean Development Mechanisms*.

- 17.** Renewing the commitment of the Islamic world to the activation of the programmes scheduled as part of the celebration of 2010 as an International Year of Biodiversity, and stepping up efforts to protect biodiversity through increased awareness of its importance and a concrete response to the deterioration of ecosystems as a result of environment degradation and climate change.
- 18.** Giving further attention to desert ecosystems, particularly in the MENA region, in such a way as to ensure further protection of their biodiversity and safeguard their environmental specificities.
- 19.** Welcoming once again the establishment of the Islamic Environment Information Center, and thanking the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its initiative of creating the Center, and inviting Islamic countries, their national organizations, and the regional bodies to financially and technically support the Center and its future activities.
- 20.** Welcoming the establishment of H.R.H Prince Turki bin Nasser bin Abdul Aziz Special Chair for Environment Studies in universities of the OIC Member States most exposed to the impacts of climate change, as approved by the First Meeting of the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment.
- 21.** Endorsing the State of Qatar's candidacy to host the 18th meeting of the Conference of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 18) to be held in 2012.
- 22.** Entrusting the President of the Fourth Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers and the Secretariat of the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment with submitting the conference's recommendations and resolutions to the Islamic Summit conferences, meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States, and relevant Islamic and international conferences to adopt them and contribute to their implementation.
- 23.** Lauding ISESCO's efforts devoted to environment protection, water resources management, renewable energies, and sustainable development, and inviting it to continue its action in this connection.
- 24.** Commending the support extended by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the convening of the sessions of the Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers and the Islamic Executive Bureau for the Environment, as well as the efforts made in this regard by the General Presidency for Meteorology and Environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- 25.** Expressing deep appreciation to His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, for having kindly chaired the Conference's opening session and for the keynote guiding speech he delivered on that occasion.

26. Thanking the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the General Presidency for Meteorology and Environment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Tunisian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development for the efforts they have put in the excellent preparation of the conference; and commending the high quality of documents and organization.