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### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

#### Report of the Secretary-General

#### Addendum

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VI. CO-ORDINATION MEETING OF THE FOCAL POINTS OF THE LEAD  
AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, by its resolution 43/2 of 17 October 1988, recommended that a co-ordination meeting of the focal points of the lead agencies of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) should be organized during 1989 at a time and place to be determined through consultations with the organizations concerned. Similarly, the Eighteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held at Riyadh adopted a resolution recommending that the focal points of the lead agencies of the two organizations should organize a co-ordination meeting in 1989 as approved by the General Assembly.

2. Following consultations between the lead agencies of the United Nations system and OIC, it was decided that the proposed co-ordination meeting would be held in Geneva from 13 to 15 September 1989.

3. In preparation for the Geneva meeting, the focal points of the United Nations system decided to hold a preliminary co-ordination meeting at Vienna on 3 and 4 August 1989. The remarks and conclusions adopted by the Vienna meeting were subsequently transmitted to OIC. A senior official from the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship of the Secretariat visited the OIC secretariat on 5 and 6 August for consultations and to explain the proposed approach of the United Nations system in future areas of co-operation with OIC. The focal points of OIC also held a preliminary co-ordination meeting at Jeddah on 27 and 28 August 1989.

4. The objectives of the co-ordination meeting were as follows: to undertake an extensive review of the experience gained in the respective priority areas of co-operation with OIC, to assess the role being played by the lead agencies in the follow-up action to strengthen co-operation, to examine difficulties encountered in enhancing co-operation, and to work out a pragmatic plan of action for the next two years.

B. Organizational matters

5. The co-ordination meeting was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 13 to 15 September 1989.

6. The meeting had before it the conference room papers prepared by the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship and the OIC secretariat, and other information materials presented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Statistical Economic and Social Research and

Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC) and the Islamic Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).

7. At the opening session the meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting:

- (a) Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship of the United Nations Secretariat;
- (b) Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Organization of work.

4. Review of co-operation and appraisal of progress.

5. Consideration of proposals for a two-year plan of action.

6. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.

7. Other matters.

8. The meeting devoted the first two days to the consideration of the first five items on the agenda. The third day was devoted to the consideration of proposals for the two-year plan of action and adoption of the conclusions.

#### C. Conclusions and recommendations

9. The meeting reviewed co-operation and made a critical evaluation of the activities of the focal points of the lead agencies relating to co-operation in the seven designated priority areas between the United Nations system and OIC and agreed to the following conclusions and recommendations for the two-year plan of action:

##### 1. Food security and agriculture

10. The meeting proposed the following activities in the area of food security and agriculture for future co-operation between FAO as the lead agency, other agencies of the United Nations system and OIC and its specialized institutions:

##### Activities relating to ongoing projects

(a) FAO, in close co-operation with the Ankara Centre, is to prepare a report on the food security situation in OIC countries for the next OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development;

(b) FAO is to continue its co-operation with the Ankara Centre in the field of training in agricultural project and sectoral analysis, and to jointly undertake follow-up activities relating to the effects of these training programmes;

(c) FAO may consider providing financial and technical assistance to those member countries of OIC which have yet to complete their studies in agricultural development in accordance with the resolution of the first OIC Agricultural Ministerial Meeting. FAO may also assist in convening an expert consultation meeting to finalize studies already completed by member countries. The consultation could include concerned member countries, FAO and other related United Nations agencies, the general secretariat of OIC and the Ankara Centre;

(d) FAO may continue to assist OIC in preparing a background paper and documents for OIC agricultural ministerial meetings;

(e) FAO may provide data relating to trade in agriculture to the Islamic Centre for Development Trade (ICDT) of OIC.

#### Proposed projects

(a) FAO may consider participating in the Ankara Centre project on the medium-term training programme, the identification of centres of co-ordination, and the network of research and training centres in agricultural development;

(b) FAO may assist the Ankara Centre in convening a meeting of a group of experts to sharpen the focus on livestock, poultry and fishery development, pursuant to the resolution of the Third OIC Agricultural Ministerial Meeting;

(c) FAO may assist OIC in preparing a study on forestry development, including a tropical forestry action plan;

(d) FAO may extend assistance to OIC in preparing a mechanism for the establishment of an OIC food security reserve in accordance with the resolution of the Third OIC Agricultural Ministerial Meeting;

(e) The Ankara Centre proposed that FAO may assist the Centre in:

(i) Preparing the revised edition of the Research Institutions Directory of the Ankara Centre;

(ii) Development of an information system for technical co-operation;

(f) The Ankara Centre also proposed that the following studies be jointly undertaken by FAO and the Centre:

(i) Optimum use of natural resources (wind and water erosion, salinity, etc.);

(ii) Incentives and agricultural development in OIC countries;

(iii) Irrigation projects in the OIC countries;

(g) ICDT proposed that FAO assist in organizing a joint workshop on enhancing trade flows of specific agricultural products among OIC member countries;

(h) ICDT proposed that joint FAO/ICDT studies may be undertaken on OIC regional groupings such as the Arab Maghreb Union, the Gulf Co-operation Council and the Arab Co-operation Council in the field of agricultural trade.

11. The representative of FAO assured the meeting that the above proposals would be forwarded to the relevant departments of FAO for consideration.

## 2. Development of science and technology

12. The meeting emphasized that development of science and technology should continue to be one of the priority areas in view of the importance that member countries of OIC attach to modern technology as a vehicle for accelerating their development. It was noted that financial constraints were the major impediment to realizing specific programmes or projects with OIC.

13. The Centre for Science and Technology for Development agreed to bring to the attention of members of the Task Force on Science and Technology for Development of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination the relevant proposals of the OIC Plan of Action, for examination in the light of its own biennial programme of work. It would also request them to indicate the possibilities and procedures for the involvement of the relevant unit or organization in projects with high potential for implementation. CSTD would initiate correspondence with the OIC secretariat to finalize details of implementation, including financial responsibilities.

14. Of the four programmes indicated by the Fund for Science and Technology for Development of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the meeting assigned high priority to the TOKTEN programme (Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals). The meeting agreed that the Director of the Fund should prepare options for a programme of action to be implemented in 1990 in a selected number of countries, to be jointly agreed upon between UNDP, the programme, and the Department of Science and Technology of the OIC secretariat.

## 3. Investment mechanisms and joint ventures

15. Future co-operation between UNIDO and other concerned agencies of the United Nations system and OIC and its specialized institutions in the areas of investment mechanism and joint ventures will, inter alia, include specific projects which were considered by both focal points and proposed for implementation.

16. Co-operation between UNIDO and the OIC institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), may continue and be further strengthened in the following specific areas:

(a) Rehabilitation of investment projects in which IsDB holds equity through trust fund arrangements, technical assistance or investment promotion;

(b) Identification and promotion of joint-venture industrial investment projects among OIC member countries;

(c) Technology transfer (check-list for contract negotiations, data base of experts from member countries);

(d) Co-ordination between the Area Programme Division of UNIDO and the OIC institutions, including IsDB;

(e) Engaging UNIDO to prepare pre-investment studies for IsDB (the question of bidding and competing with other consulting firms);

(f) Identification of documents and other information for regular exchange between OIC and UNIDO;

(g) Enhancing national capabilities for investment project identification, formulation and analysis using UNIDO's "PROSPIN".

17. UNIDO would be prepared to consider requests from the Ankara Centre in the preparation of the following activities:

(a) Joint ventures and joint investment companies in OIC countries (ongoing project on the development of a data base at the Ankara Centre on existing joint ventures by the OIC member countries);

(b) Revision and expansion of the Ankara Centre's Directory on Foreign Investment Laws;

(c) Ankara Centre's Directory of Banking Laws for Africa;

(d) Ankara Centre's publication on financial structures in OIC countries for Africa;

(e) Development of small-scale industries in the OIC countries.

18. UNIDO would be prepared to consider a request for assistance to the Ankara Centre in a study aimed at developing prospects of establishing industrial estates in OIC countries in Africa.

19. UNIDO and the Islamic Foundation for Science, Technology and Development (IFSTAD) may intensify their co-operation in the following areas:

(a) Transfer of technology in the field of renewable energy;

(b) Manpower development through exchange of experts.

20. UNIDO and ICDT may consider exchange of information and publications, particularly on trade of industrial products and how to start manufacturing industries.

21. UNIDO and OIC took into account the report sent by the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodity Exchange (ICCICE) and considered favourably the developments relating to its ongoing work on joint ventures and the existing co-operation between UNIDO and ICCICE. The parts of the report relating to future commitments will be considered in due course by UNIDO and other relevant agencies of the United Nations system.

22. UNIDO was prepared to consider requests from OIC for assistance to the Ankara Centre, ICDT, ICCICE and IFSTAD in organizing training facilities and seminars for identification, formulation, screening and promotion of industrial investment projects.

#### 4. Education and eradication of illiteracy

23. Proposals for future co-operation include the following: co-operation between UNESCO and ISESCO will be developed within the framework of the three UNESCO regional programmes (the Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa, the Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education, and the Eradication of Adult Illiteracy in the Arab States Region and the Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in Asia and the Pacific) as well as within programmes of the International Literacy Year.

24. The co-operation also extends to the implementation of the respective plans of action of the two organizations, and in particular:

- (a) Use of the Arab language in the literacy process;
- (b) Rehabilitation of para-scholastic structures (Koranic schools, mosques, Madrasa, etc.) and their use in the universalization of primary education and adult literacy;
- (c) Common action in favour of certain underprivileged groups of population, such as women, nomads, emigrants, the handicapped, refugees and rural populations;
- (d) Research on and use of better adapted and less costly teaching methods (one-teacher schools or multigrade classes);
- (e) Promotion and local production of teaching materials;
- (f) Implementation of preventive measures against scholastic failures (school drop-outs, repeating of classes);
- (g) Teacher training for literacy and adult teaching personnel.

25. The two organizations will endeavour to promote co-operation at regional and subregional levels in the above-mentioned fields.

26. The two organizations will formulate and evaluate their co-operation programmes within the annual consultation commission.

27. In this respect, priority will be given to:

(a) Pilot or experimental joint projects, in particular within the framework of the mobilizing project envisaged under the draft programme and budget of UNESCO for 1990-1991;

(b) Joint undertaking of training activities (seminars, workshops, etc.);

(c) Development of exchange of information, specialists and consultative services;

(d) Promotion of production at the local and regional levels of post-literacy and permanent education teaching materials.

28. For the implementation of this co-operation programme, the organizations need the support and participation of other institutions of the United Nations system, including UNDP, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), FAO, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

29. They also need the active participation of such financing institutions as the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), IsDB, the African Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

30. The two organizations agree that the World Decade for Cultural Development, the World Conference on Education for All (Bangkok, 5 to 9 March 1990) and the International Conference on Education (Geneva, 1990) will provide opportunities for the promotion of co-operation in the fields of education and of eradication of illiteracy.

31. UNESCO also took note of the request of the Ankara Centre for possible assistance in the development of its data base on mass media.

32. In view of the priority attached to education and training in agricultural development in OIC countries, ISESCO proposed close co-operation with FAO in this field. It was proposed that the procedure for this co-operation would be initiated and worked out by the two sides and reported to the next General Meeting in 1990.

#### 5. Assistance to refugees

33. The meeting noted with satisfaction the development of wide-ranging co-operation between OIC and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the area of assistance to refugees.



34. The meeting also noted with appreciation the assistance extended by OIC and its member countries to the large number of refugees in the OIC region, and further noted with satisfaction and gratitude the role of UNHCR in providing international protection and assistance to refugees.

35. The meeting took note of the readiness of the OIC participation in UNHCR meetings on a reciprocal basis in accordance with the existing practices of the two organizations.

36. The meeting also took note of the desire of UNHCR to continue its contacts with IDB in order to expand the existing co-operation between UNHCR and IDB in providing assistance to refugees.

37. The meeting recognized the importance of the two organizations exchanging on an urgent basis, information relating to all refugee situations involving OIC countries to ensure close co-operation and prompt response to the needs of the refugees.

38. The meeting expressed its support for the ongoing collaboration between UNHCR and ISESCO to conclude practical arrangements in the field of providing educational assistance, placement opportunities and allocation of scholarships to refugee students. In this connection, the two sides have agreed to take steps to establish a programme for the eradication of illiteracy in Afghan refugee villages in Pakistan.

39. The meeting further noted the desire of UNHCR to organize a seminar on asylum and refugee law in the Islamic countries. OIC gave its approval, in principle, for active participation in this seminar.

40. The meeting also noted with satisfaction the productive working relationship between the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and OIC and its affiliated and subsidiary institutions in the field of providing assistance to Palestinian refugees.

41. The meeting noted with great appreciation the adequate assistance being extended to refugees by WFP and called upon that organization to continue such aid.

## 6. Technical co-operation among Islamic countries

42. The meeting noted that because all member countries of OIC are developing countries, the objectives of technical co-operation among Islamic countries remain consistent with the principles of technical co-operation among developing countries as enunciated by the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries held at Buenos Aires in 1978, and contained in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action adopted by that Conference. 1/ Thus, the policies and programmes being designed and improved to support and promote technical co-operation among developing countries would, in most instances, also apply to and benefit technical co-operation among Islamic countries.

43. Experience since the inclusion of technical co-operation among Islamic countries among the areas of co-operation between OIC and the United Nations system in 1986 reveals the need for harmonizing the co-ordination mechanism among agencies and organizations of the United Nations system on such matters. To this end, it was felt that in every agency and organization the focal point functions for such co-operation should either be handled within the unit responsible for technical co-operation among developing countries or at least a close relationship should be fostered between the two.

44. In the light of the recommendations of the meeting of technical co-operation among developing countries focal points of the United Nations system held in New York on 25 and 26 February 1988, the following areas were identified for future co-operation:

(a) Integration, whenever possible, of technical co-operation among developing countries or among Islamic countries in development projects using this as a modality for project implementation;

(b) Utilization of the capabilities of Islamic countries in technical co-operation programmes and activities;

(c) Active involvement of the relevant United Nations agency or organization and subsidiary bodies of OIC in programming exercises for such technical co-operation, and the absorption, as far as possible, of the strengthening activities deriving from these exercises into the country indicative planning figure or the projects financed;

(d) Intensifying the exchange of information about objectives, procedures and activities. This would include collaboration in improving the quality and magnitude of the technical co-operation among developing countries Information Referral System (INRES) South Database and the relevant data bases maintained by the OIC institutions; co-ordinated efforts in publishing activities and experiences in technical co-operation among developing countries or among Islamic countries within the agencies and organizations and among national focal points; and co-ordinated staff training and orientation in related policies, procedures and methods.

## 7. Development of trade

45. The meeting took note of the agreement between UNCTAD and ICDT for the following future co-operation projects:

(a) Documentation:

(i) Exchange of publications;

(ii) Provision of experts to assist in organizing the Documentation Department of ICDT and providing on-the-spot technical training;

(b) Information: Provision of an expert to assist in the computerization of the Documentation Centre;

(c) Training and conferences:

(i) Holding of joint seminars on systems of trade preferences and other trade-related issues;

(ii) Holding of joint forum on trade promotion among the Maghreb countries in early 1990;

(iii) Participation, at the invitation of UNCTAD and ICDT, in training seminars and conferences organized by one of these institutions.

Joint collaboration in the provision of training of officials from regional economic groups within OIC, such as the Arab Maghreb Union, the Arab Co-operation Council and the Gulf Co-operation Council, through the proposed project entitled "Train for trade".

(d) Studies: Joint studies on the potential of trade exchange within groups of OIC member countries. A first study could focus on the trade exchanges among the Maghreb countries. The two organizations also agreed to collaborate in conducting further studies, as requested, covering other OIC regional economic groups.

46. The Ankara Centre requested the technical assistance and co-operation of UNCTAD in the realization of the following projects in its work programme:

(a) Development of a socio-economic development index for OIC countries;

(b) Expansion of the study on trade in services in OIC countries;

(c) Study on regional integration schemes among OIC countries;

(d) Study on development strategies for African OIC countries.

47. The representative of UNCTAD expressed confidence that the relevant organizational units of his organization would give due consideration to the requests to be forwarded to them directly by the Centre concerning these proposals.

48. As a consequence of the reference made by the Assistant Secretary-General of OIC to human resources development, environment and disaster relief, the meeting noted the items listed below.

## 8. Other proposals

### Human resources development

49. The meeting recalled the discussions held at the third general meeting between the United Nations and OIC and agreed that the new sector on human resources

development should be added to the list of priority areas and that a sectoral meeting on human resources development should be organized in 1990 with the fullest co-operation and participation of the United Nations and OIC and their specialized organizations and institutions.

50. The meeting recognized the importance that all agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and OIC assigned to this particular problem in their comments. It took note of the statement made by the Administrator of UNDP to the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council on 6 July 1989 2/ concerning UNDP's decision to issue a human development report starting next year on the status of education, health, nutrition, shelter and environment in the developing countries. The report will draw on the experience of all relevant arms of the United Nations system and will integrate their statistical data and information.

51. The meeting noted that, at the request of OIC, three officials from the Department of Administration and Finance of OIC will participate in a training programme on programme budgeting to be held in 1989 at United Nations Headquarters for a period of three to four days.

#### Environment

52. In view of the concern of the OIC member countries with protecting their environment as an integral part of the development process, and their commitment to make the greatest effort to study and eliminate the causes of environmental degradation, the meeting recommended that the United Nations system of organizations should, within the realm of its existing constraints, make a meaningful contribution to OIC by assisting in its efforts to protect the environment in such areas as the prevention of pollution of water, land and air, land degradation, deforestation and desertification.

53. The meeting noted the determination of OIC to work closely with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and institutions and co-operate in joint action in the protection of the environment.

54. The meeting called upon the OIC secretariat to establish contact with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to explore ways and means of protecting the environment.

#### Disaster relief

55. The meeting agreed that a system of exchanging information on natural disasters between the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and OIC should be institutionalized and the progress reviewed at the next general meeting between the United Nations and OIC.

9. Next meeting

56. It was agreed that the date and venue of the next full meeting between the United Nations and OIC should be left to the discretion of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of OIC.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

2/ See E/1989/SR.18.

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