

**Press Release**  
**OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC)**  
**concludes its 4th Session**

**Jeddah 6 Feb 2014:** The OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) held its 4<sup>th</sup> Session in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 2 – 6 February 2014. The Session was attended by Representatives of Member-States, Observer States, Officials of the OIC General Secretariat, as well as the media.

The OIC Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani opened the Session, and in his remarks on the occasion, he re-emphasized the expected role of the Commission in strengthening Member-States' efforts in promoting and protecting the human rights of their citizens. He enumerated a number of challenges that the Commission must confront head-on, in particular the question of finding an Islamic discourse that enriches the debate on human rights, as well as providing the right yardstick to Member-States for effectively discharging their universal human rights obligations.

The Chairperson of the Commission, Ambassador Mohammed K. Ibrahim, thanked the Secretary-General for his supportive remarks and assured him that the Commission was fully aware of its responsibilities as the first OIC independent human rights organ. In this regard, the Chairperson promised that the Commission would do its best to not only to fulfill its mandate, but also bring more international respect to OIC Member-States' human rights records.

During the five day session, the Commission and its four working groups deliberated in detail on all items on its agenda including human rights violations in Occupied Palestinian Territories; civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in OIC Member States; as well as specific mandates given to it by the CFM such as Islamophobia, impact of unilateral economic sanctions on member states; situation of Rohingya Muslim minority and other Muslim communities.

The Commission also deliberated on the issue of its relationship with the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and civil society, including NGOs, and decided to elaborate a proper framework for interaction with these important stakeholders, to be finalized during the next IPHRC Session. The Commission also called on all OIC Member States to provide IPHRC with their human rights legislative, institutional and policy frameworks related to items under consideration so as to enable it to compile a list of best practices to be shared with the Member States. IPHRC also called upon Member States to expedite ratification of the statute of OIC Women Development Organization enabling its early establishment in Cairo.

At the end of the Session, the IPHRC sent a letter to the Foreign Minister of Myanmar expressing Commission's desire to undertake a visit to discuss the issue of Rohingya Muslims.

The Commission also issued two important press releases on the subjects of combating extremism within OIC countries as well as calling for an end to the harmful practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which coincided with the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

In his concluding remarks, reviewing the work during the Session, the Chairperson indicated that the Commission deliberated in detail various human rights concerns of OIC Member-States, as well as the Islamic Ummah. He stated that the Commission was committed to doing its best to use the richness of Islamic values and traditions to nurture a new human rights culture within and beyond the OIC borders. This would help promote the principles enshrined in the OIC Charter, with respect to good governance, human rights and human dignity, he added.

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