

Concluding Statement by Amb M. K. Ibrahim Chairperson of IPHRC
During the 6th Session of IPHRC on 6 November, 2014

Respected fellow Commissioners,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

After six days' deliberations, the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), has this morning concluded its 6th Session, which is the last one in the life-cycle of the pioneer Commission. Looking back three years ago, the Commission is very proud of its achievements, which included a record time elaboration of its Rules of Procedure; construction of Website; submission of two reports and recommendations to CFM, one of which was based on a visit to the crisis-torn Central African Republic (CAR); study tour of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and participating in four sessions of UN Human Rights Council, as well the 68th and 69th Sessions of the UN General Assembly. In compliance with its mandate under Article 12 of its Statute, the Commission has within its first year of inception, written to the Member-States requesting for their various human rights legislations, with a view to harmonizing these legislations, as well as helping them to remove reservations of articles in international instruments, where necessary. About 15 countries have so far responded. The Commission has also initiated the process of signing MoUs with similar regional bodies, like the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), the NAM Centre for Human Rights and Cultural Diversity, etc. Of great importance also, is the adaptation by the Commission of the procedures of its working relationship with the Member-States' National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). Needless to state the obvious, that all these achievements wouldn't have been possible without the total support of the Secretary-General and his predecessor.

Excellencies,

2. The 6th Session has already set the tone of the Commission's operational modalities in its second cycle by deciding that henceforth each session should have a thematic seminar. Accordingly, "Combatting Extremism and Intolerance " was chosen as the theme of the 6th Session. The highlights of the outcome of the seminar were:

- (i). The total rejection of the association of Islam to extremism and intolerance, and the emphasis that Moderation and Tolerance as cardinal principles in Islam;
- (ii). The identification of ignorance, deprivation, lack of political and social justice as some of the root causes of extremism and intolerance, rather than Islam;
- (iii). The seminar re-echoed the fatwa of the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia that Kidnappings, killings, the raping of women and forceful marriage of kidnapped children has no place in Islam, and appealed to the misguided groups carrying out this criminal act in the name of Islam to stop it and

release their captives; and

- (iv). The seminar affirmed that extremism and intolerance is being perpetrated by the followers of all religions, and therefore, called the international community, and the media to come out openly and condemn this practice when committed by any group irrespective of their religious, cultural and political affiliation;

3. During the 6th Session, the Commission considered the report of its four Working Groups as well as their recommendations on a number of issues, the highlight of which are as follows:

A. ON PALESTINE:

- (i). The Commission expressed its profound sympathy and solidarity with the people of Gaza as a result of the inhuman and criminal treatment meted to them during the Israeli July-August siege in which more than 2000 people, mainly women and children were killed, and called upon countries that pledged financial and material assistance to the Palestinians to redeem the pledge because of the urgency of the plight of those affected;
- (ii). The Commission urged the OIC countries to ensure that the impunity enjoyed by Israel in almost 50 years is ended, and for the war crime and crime against humanity perpetrated against the Palestinian peoples be taken before the International Criminal Court;
- (iii). It condemned the on-going Israeli aggression against Muslims worshipper at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, as well as the deliberate desecration of the Mosque itself, and called upon all Muslims to take whatever measures necessary to stop it;
- (iv). The Com requested the OIC Secretary-General to consider meeting the new UN Special Rapporteur on Palestine, with a view to opening up a diplomatic demarche with the international community in order for the SR to gain access into the Occupied Palestinian a Territory; and
- (v). It urged the OIC countries to take immediate steps to provide relief with regard to shelter, medical care, and normal functioning of all schools destroyed during the siege.

B. ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN:

- (i). The Commission agreed to work closely with the Fiqh Academy in order to correct the misperceptions regarding the rights of women and children in Islam, as well as the protection of the family;
- (ii). The Commission agreed to conduct studies and produce publications in

Collaboration with the Fiqh Academy on the position of the Sharia in matters affecting women and children like, Child Marriage, Divorce, inheritance, rape, FGM, etc

- (iii). The WG recommended that IPHRC should start holding seminars and side events in Geneva and New York in order to counter the massive propaganda against Islam by certain international NGOs, associating Islam with almost everything accepted by the international community considers as harmful traditional practices, and
- (iv). It called upon the Member-States to work more closely with the UN Women and to participate in the forthcoming Beijing +20 conference, as well as carefully follow-up the outcome of the just concluded 5th Ministerial Conference on the Role of Women in OIC States.

C. ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT: The Working Group on RtD concentrated on what should be the outcome of the next Month International Seminar on the Negative Impact of Financial and Economic Sanctions on the Full Enjoyment of Human Rights by the People's of the Targeted Countries, the major highlights of which are as follows:

- (I). The Com observed that, "Comprehensive sanctions and interruption of economic, trade, financial and international relations for a protracted period of time, particularly when not assessed and monitored, will cause shrinking national income, which in turn leads to the violation of human rights of the peoples, mainly their right to life, health, food, education and development;
- (ii). The Commission called on the international community to concretize its commitment to defend and realize human rights for all peoples equally and with the same vigor when it comes to sanctions imposed on targeted member states; and
- (iii). The Commission expressed its support to the Human Rights Council in its efforts in condemning and rejecting unilateral coercive measures which have led, so far, to the creation of the post of Special Rapporteur on the subject of and further encourages the OIC members to continue to assist the UN HRC in this regard.

D. ON ISLAMAPHOBIA:

The Commission considered the issue of Islamophobia and Muslim Minorities. It recalled its assessment and recommendations contained in its interim report of the fourth session. It reiterated the need to finalize the comprehensive study on national human rights legislations, which the 12th Summit commissioned the General Secretariat to undertake as a matter of urgency. The Commission also concluded that OIC Member- States should consider elaborating a common strategy on combatting the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia.

5. The Commission also reviewed the situation of a Muslim Minorities in the Central African Republic and Myanmar. It voiced its support to the recommendations of the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General to CAR and Myanmar, and in particular urged the Special a Envoy on CAR to finalize his report and recommendations as early as possible.

6. The Commission has issued four press releases as follows: On the summary of the outcome of the session; on the theme of the session, "Combatting Extremism and Intolerance in Religion"; on the Situation in Palestine; and the Recent developments on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which would be posted on its website first in English immediately. The Commission has also adopted the "Protection of the Family" as the theme for 7th Session.

7. To conclude, I would like to thank the representatives of the Member States for participating in the Session and the OIC General Secretariat staff for their support without which, it would have been impossible to host the session.

Thank you.