

**STATEMENT BY HON. ISAAC MUSUMBA MINISTER OF STATE FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS (REGIONAL COOPERATION) AT THE 34TH ICFM
SESSION, ISLAMABAD PAKISTAN, 14TH -18TH MAY 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies fellow Ministers and,
Heads of Delegations,

Mr. Secretary General,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I start by extending to you our greeting of peace; Assallam Alikum
Warahmaturullah Ta-aalah Wabaraktuh.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a great honour for me to be yet again participating in this session, as
leader of Uganda delegation.

On behalf of my delegation, and on my own behalf, let me take this
opportunity, to extend gratitude to you, and your bureau, for the excellent
manner in which you have handled the proceedings of this meeting, and
to congratulate you, and your bureau, for having been bestowed with the

honour to do so. Your Excellency, Minister Khurshid Kasuri, Congratulations and thanks.

In no less token, too, I, extend gratitude and appreciations to the President, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the hosts of the 34th session of the ICFM, for the excellent hospitality extended to us since we arrived here, and the Secretary General in particular, and the General Secretariat as a whole, for the various roles played towards arranging this meeting.

In a similar vein, we wish to register our appreciation to H.E. Elmar Mamdyarov, the outgoing Chairman and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan for a job very well done during his tenure of office.

The excellent arrangements that have been put in place for this meeting therefore, only serves to reinforce our already strongly held conviction that, the outcome of a meeting held in such a serene and excellent environment, as we are having in this beautiful city of Islamabad, cannot be less than a successful one.

Mr. Chairman,

As far as the issues of the day are concerned, the Republic of Uganda wish to submit as follows:

1. We in principal support the review of the OIC Charter to make it more responsive to the present challenges.
2. We applaud the OIC stand of supporting the AU Peace Initiative in Somalia, and appreciate the OIC's own initiative to contributing to the peace-making process in Somalia through its Contact Group on Somalia.
3. We reiterate our support to the two-state solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict, and applaud the initiatives being taken by the various International partners of the peace process, the Quartet Group, the United Nations, the Arab League, and the OIC, to make it a reality.
4. We welcome the new OIC strategy of direct engagement and interaction with events as and when they occur, which we believe will greatly enhance the Organization's role, in resolving conflicts in the Muslim World, such as those in Iraq, Palestine, Somalia, Kashmir, Philippines, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, to mention but a few.
5. We reiterate our resolve and determination to combat International Terrorism and join other Member States to express our condemnation of acts of Islamophobia and attempts by certain sections of the International Community, to associate Islam with terrorism.
6. We pay tribute to the OIC, and the concerned fellow Member States, for the various forms of assistance extended to Uganda, financial or technical, significant of which, is assistance to the

Islamic University in Uganda. Special thanks to the Custodian of Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, H.E. the OIC Secretary General, Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the Islamic Solidarity Fund and the Islamic Development Bank for their most valuable support to the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU). We also thank the Ruler of Sharjah, H.E. Sheikh Dr. Qassami for his support to the Islamic University in Uganda.

7. We support the peaceful use of nuclear energy as provided for by the International Non-Nuclear Proliferation Treaty and therefore support Iran's right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

International unity becomes imperative when dealing with grave situations such as that in Somalia. Only then can international efforts positively and significantly compliment local efforts in addressing such a situation, and finding sustainable solution to it. On this note therefore, I wish to take this opportunity, to request you, to appreciate, the serious need of international unity and harmony, in addressing the grave situation in Somalia. The African Union has deployed a peace support mission in Somalia, to assist the fragile peace process by helping the Transitional Federal Government to restore order and reconciliation so that sustained dialogue between warring factions commences, but the initiative may face challenges, if no more international support especially financial one, is extended. Uganda has participated in the AU mission by contributing 1500

Peace Support Troops, who are already in Somalia - spearheading various aspects of the AU peace support mandate, such as encouraging warring parties to cease hostilities and to voluntarily hand over weapons to the AU, for resumption of the peace and reconciliation process.

It is my hope therefore that Member States will do what they can, especially financially, to help brother Somalia, deal with the humanitarian crisis that it is facing, and rehabilitate her national infrastructure, which has been destroyed by decades of war.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies Heads of Delegation,

I have the honor to submit that your Excellencies consider Uganda's request to be granted the privilege to host the 35th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, in the capital city of Kampala. The African countries through the presentation of H.E. the distinguished Head of Delegation from the Republic of Guinea, have already placed our request. I wish to, however, add a formal country request as follows:

Uganda is a country that has been described as the 'Pearl of Africa' by various visitors, notably Sir Winston Churchill of England in 1908. It is located along the source of the great and historic Nile River which travels for 4800 Miles to 7680 Kms the Mediterranean at Alexandria in Egypt and is home to the

fresh water Lake Victoria - the biggest on the African continent and the second largest in the world, which also through the River Nile, supplies Sudan and Egypt with fresh water.

Since inception, Mr. Chairman, Member States - South of the Equator in Africa, have not had the opportunity to host the august ICFM Conference. So, holding the next Session in Kampala, is not only an honor for Uganda, but for the entire Region, as this would be the first ICFM to be held in the Region.

Holding the conference in the central and southern part of Africa, will not only attract interest of even regional non-OIC Member States and offer them opportunity to learn more about the noble causes of this framework, it will also provide opportunity to you the Member States, to learn more about African potentialities and challenges through experiencing a sisterly African country's environment.

The hosting by Uganda of the 35th ICFM will be taking the OIC Membership beyond merely membership of States to an international Organization, but also reach out to the very many Muslims in Tanzania and their Coastal people of Zanzibar, in Kenya and their Coastal people of Mombasa, Malindi, Kenyan Somalis etc, the people of Rwanda and Burundi and Zambia, Malawi etc., all of whom are Muslims that we need to reach out to and give a sense of belonging, but who, due to political/historical reasons do not belong to OIC.

When Uganda hosts this Conference, the Muslims from those countries will have hosted the Conference.

Mr. Chairman and Excellencies, we base our prayer to you to allow us to host the next ICFM on the following grounds:

1. The part of Africa where Uganda lies, has not hosted the ICFM session. In fact, the continent of Africa has not hosted this august meeting in the years recently gone by. It is our prayer that basing ourselves on the principal of regional rotation, Uganda as a part of Africa, be availed the privilege of hosting the next ICFM.
2. Uganda has been a Member of OIC for the last 33 years. It has not hosted this august Conference. We respectively seek the indulgency of your Excellencies to permit us this rare and much coveted opportunity.
3. Uganda has the requisite infrastructural and other necessary capacity to host the ICFM meeting, because it will in November this year host the Common Wealth Heads of Government Meeting, which will bring to Kampala 53 Heads of State and Government, and all their Foreign Ministers - totaling about six thousand Delegates. We believe that if we can host Queens, Kings, Princes and Princesses, Presidents and Prime Ministers, we surely can host you, the distinguished Ministers. The ICFM will, if granted by your Excellencies happen only about six months after the CHOGM.

4. Uganda is host to the Islamic University, which is owned by the OIC. Holding the ICFM in Uganda will give all of us opportunity to make on-spot assessment of the University as well as enhance the profile of the university in the region. The University serves Muslim students from even non OIC states such as Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Rwanda, Burundi, to mention but a few.

I take this opportunity to reiterate my request to you, Excellencies, to support Uganda's bid to host the 35th session of the Islamic conference of Foreign Ministers.

Thank you very much for listening to me.

Assallam Alleikum Warahmatturullah Wabarakatuh.