

SPEECH OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY PROF. EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU  
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE  
ORGANISATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

AT THE  
MINISTERIAL MEETING PREPARATORY TO THE  
11<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE

DAKAR – REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL  
10-11 MARCH 2008.

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Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio  
Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Senegal,  
Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Heads of Delegations,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all as we begin with the help of God, the meeting of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers Preparatory to the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the Islamic Summit Conference.

I would like to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Senegal for their immense and successful efforts in organizing this great event with a view to facilitating our deliberations. We thank them for the warm hospitality given to all delegates in the country of hospitality and generosity (Teranga).

By the same token, I would like to convey our special gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for its unfaltering effort and laudable action and initiatives, devoted throughout its Chairmanship of the 10<sup>th</sup> Summit of the OIC, to strengthen the joint Islamic action and defend the causes of Islamic Ummah.

I also want to express our thanks and gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, Chairman of the Third Extraordinary Islamic Summit held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in December 2005, and which has been proven to be of historic importance in that it had introduced a Ten-Year Programme of Action to guide the Ummah on the path of solidarity, prosperity and dignity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Muslim Ummah is looking for the upcoming 11<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit with high expectations and great hope, amid extremely difficult challenges and unprecedented threats to our faith and identity. Our meeting today will allow us to prepare for our heads of State the needed instruments to fortify the Muslim Ummah against the aforementioned threats and to realize its expectations. We have the Ten-Year Programme of Action adopted in Makkah, and which charted the path to deal with all challenges facing us. You will have the occasion to take stock of what has been achieved in implementation of this Programme, and decide how we should proceed in the future.

As you can see from your draft agenda, you have a heavy work-load. The General Secretariat has submitted to you updated reports highlighting the most important developments on issues that we have to face. The documents pertaining to these reports have been done in line with the rationalization of the OIC documents. The meeting of Senior Officials that had met in two phases has managed to examine these documents and will report to you about its findings, with a view to make it possible for your august council to take action on them. Among those documents are your Draft Agenda and the Work Programme, as well as preparing the Draft Agenda of the Summit.

The global issues of Islamophobia, globalization, combating international terrorism and disarmament as well as the solidarity among OIC Member States will also be dealt with. There will be a special focus on the economic issues and science and technology, in a format of two brainstorming sessions. The questions of Muslim minorities should also be discussed besides cultural issues, dawaa, legal, and administrative and financial affairs.

There is, on your agenda, an item which carries special priority. It is related to the revision of the Charter of the OIC, a process which has started since the convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Extraordinary Islamic Summit in December 2005. As you are aware, the revision of the Charter went through many stages. It was prepared by the General Secretariat on the basis of the work of a High-Level Islamic Advisory Panel which comprised eminent Islamic personalities. Their draft was reviewed by high level prominent legal experts who finalized it from legal view point. The Senior Officials' Meeting started the final reading of the revised Charter since February 2007, with the help of an Open-Ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts.

The Senior Officials' Meeting Preparatory to the 11<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit Conference continued on 18 February 2008 and resumed again on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008 to work on the text of the revised Charter and managed to adopt almost all its provisions, but fail short of adopt in its entirety. Their work has been referred to your perusal for examination and possible adoption.

In this context, I would like to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to all the members and the Chairman of the high level advisory panel, to the high level

prominent legal experts and to all the representatives of the OIC Member States who took part in the deliberations and discussions of the draft amended text of the OIC Charter. Their dedication and hard work for long hours over many days have allowed us to have a satisfactory text.

I would like at this occasion to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the great efforts exerted by Pakistan in this context.

Honourable Ministers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pinning many broad hopes on the adoption of the revised Charter. This will permit the Organisation to usher into a new era of action, performance and services to our Ummah. It will also open new fields of work of great benefit to the Muslim world.

We have already managed to make use of the provision addressed to the General Secretariat in the Ten-Year Programme of Action to implement a large portion of them. Thanks to your unfailing support, and empowered by your guidance, the OIC reforms called for by the Ten-Year Programme of Action are now almost a reality. We, in the OIC, have committed ourselves to a process of continued reform. We have introduced innovative initiatives and forward-looking vision to carry out our mandate at the internal as well as external fronts in optimum manner.

We have stood to defend the high interests of the Muslim world in various foras and in numerous fronts, against the surging waves of prejudices and bigotry. We have made it possible for the standard of the Organisation to increase and to broaden in scope, during the last few years.

The OIC has now the capacity to play a leading role at the international level. At the same time, the OIC has become an indispensable player in the domain of dialogue among civilizations. We have managed to draw on the resources of the representatives of the OIC Member States abroad to unify and coordinate their efforts in support of the just Muslim causes. We have established “an OIC Group” in Washington D.C. with the view of playing a more active role in engaging the American policy makers.

At these turbulent times, the Muslim Ummah is increasingly required to give diligent consideration to the pressing issues confronting it, be it in Palestine, or in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somali, Darfour/Sudan, Jammu and Kashmir, Cyprus, and elsewhere.

The mounting hate waves of Islamophobia are sweeping some countries in the West and should be tackled correctly. Our values are being denigrated and should be allowed to be correctly projected abroad.

Moreover, I have terminated very successful official visits to many African countries, Members of the OIC. At the same time, we are trying to help some Member States to cope with harsh circumstances prevailing in their countries. We have succeeded in organizing a Donor Conference to alleviate food shortages and desertification in Niger and have managed to obtain a pledge of more than 350 million Dollars to that end. In the same vein, we are helping the African Member States producers of Cotton to have an added value to their commodity through economic schemes combining raw

material, Islamic capitals and technical know-how. The OIC Poverty Fund is now operational under the name of “*Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development*” and it will have its impact in alleviating poverty in many Member States.

Honourable Ministers,

We are determined to exert all efforts needed so that the 11<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit will go down the history as of the most brilliant landmark of the OIC meetings at the threshold of new millennium. We look for the wisdom and the visionary outlook of our honourable leaders to guide us to attain this goal.

I wish you a very fruitful deliberation and a very successful outcome.