



# Azerbaijan

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement**  
**by H.E. Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan**  
**at the Annual Coordination Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers**

**25 September 2006, New York**

Dear colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome all Delegations to this Coordination Meeting and wish you successful deliberations and decisions.

Holding the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers in Baku and entrusting the ICFM Chairmanship to Azerbaijan confers great honor and responsibility upon my country. This year my country has hosted two important events of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The first one, which brought together the OIC Foreign Ministers, was marked by useful and important decisions. Two weeks ago Baku was the venue for the Session of the OIC Tourism Ministers.

Our today's meeting is held in turbulent and troubled times. The Muslim world, along with the rest of the globalizing world, faces daunting challenges both externally and internally. These challenges stem from the ongoing conflicts, foreign occupation, economic difficulties, insufficient social and human development, our dependencies and vulnerability, as well as our divisions and differences. As an Ummah, we are going through a defining moment in history. We have to turn the challenges we are facing into window of opportunity for the sake of our peoples.

In doing so, the role of the OIC is going to be increasingly important. The OIC and its decision-making process needs more boost in order to live up to the expectations of our peoples. In particular, a more vigorous participation of the OIC in implementing the decisions on the resolution of the conflicts adopted by the United Nations and other major international organizations is needed. Success of any major international organization is measured by the efficiency of its performance and usefulness of the

actions. We have to ensure that the Organization's structure, as well as its working modalities are constantly adapted to make it more operational, mobile and up to the standards of the globalizing world.

At present Islamophobia has become one of the growing tendencies of our time. It is a serious obstacle for cooperation in the management of global threats and challenges, including political, environmental issues, conflict prevention and crisis management. We all have to raise global awareness on the values of Islamic world, in particular among the youth. In this connection, I would like to mention the recent inauguration ceremony of the new office of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum in Istanbul, which was attended by the President of Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of Turkey. Furthermore, in accordance with the 33<sup>rd</sup> ICFM Baku Declaration, in 2007 we are planning to host the OIC Conference on the role of media in promoting tolerance and understanding.

Having suffered from deliberate policies against our Islamic culture and heritage, we fully endorse efforts invested in protection of human dignity and rights of our brothers and sisters. There should be no double standards when it comes to protecting human beings against assaults on religious, ethnic or cultural basis.

We have to once again emphasize that Muslims stand clearly against all forms of racism and terrorism. Islam protects the universal rights of humankind, while recognizing that peoples have different paths in religion, which they are free to follow. Nowadays, however, terms Islam and Muslim are often artificially associated with violence and terrorism. We condemn any connection between terrorism and any race, religion and culture.

Central role played by the United Nations, which is one of the major universal multilateral organizations makes it important for the OIC Member States to actively work within the United Nations in accordance with its Charter. On the UN reform, we strongly feel the necessity to adjust the UN mechanisms to effectively addressing critical challenges that system of multilateral cooperation faces at this juncture. We have to strengthen the collective response mechanisms, adapt the Security Council to the needs of wider UN membership and to restore the confidence of the international community in this universal Organization. This will contribute to tackling the issues of global importance that the Islamic Ummah faces together with the rest of the world.

Boosting cooperation among the OIC Member States, which is the largest non-regional organization uniting interests of 57 Member States from various continents could help us to benefit from the ongoing globalization process. Therefore, solidarity and unity of the Muslim countries take on special significance.

Another important issue is to establish a conducive environment to foster cooperation between the OIC Member States in the fields of economy, trade, science, technology, culture and education, and to launch joint cooperation programmes. The OIC countries have huge economic potential, and I think encouragement and support of mutual trade should take its rightful place in the economic policy of each Member State.

Dear colleagues,

The cause of Palestine as well as the situation in the Middle East at large continues to be a central element of the OIC activities and remains a source of great concern for us. The further support extended to the Palestinian Authority will definitely bring durable and just peace to this land. Azerbaijan supports the efforts by the Quartet and encourages all parties to return to implementation of the Roadmap. My country hopes that the resolution of the problems of the region will pave way to an early establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian State leaving side-by-side with the State of Israel and its other neighbours.

The position of Azerbaijan on the Israeli-Lebanese conflict is consistent with the principles of Azerbaijan's foreign policy and our international commitments. Azerbaijan strongly supports the implementation of Resolution 1701 for establishing a comprehensive lasting cease-fire and complete lift of all blockades against Lebanon. I would like to welcome provision of humanitarian aid by many brotherly Muslim countries and to inform you that Azerbaijan has also provided humanitarian assistance to Lebanon.

The OIC should uphold territorial integrity, sovereignty and political stability of Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. OIC should continue to add its efforts to those of the international community aimed at establishing peace and democracy in these brotherly countries in accordance with the wishes of their peoples. The United Nations must be given a proper role in rehabilitation of Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. The OIC Contact Group on Iraq would be an important tool to coordinate the OIC efforts to provide all forms of support and assistance to this country.

Another urgent issue is the question of Jammu and Kashmir that long awaits its just solution. We have to resolutely express our support to the initiatives by Pakistan launched at bilateral level with India and within multilateral frameworks. There is a role to be played by the relevant OIC Contact Group. There is an obvious need to continue these concerted efforts that will finally lead to the lasting settlement of the problem on the basis of the principles of international law and the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Azerbaijan is concerned by the lack of relevant attention of the international community to the needs of the Turkish community of Cyprus. We expect proper consideration of the issue by the United Nations. In accordance with the stated UN position, the Turkish community should not be punished for the support they have shown to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's plan, and economic and humanitarian isolation should be stopped immediately.

After signing of a milestone reconciliation agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the largest opposition bloc, there was hope that such a breakthrough would bring long-awaited peace and stability to the people of the Sudan. However, the current situation in the Sudan calls for urgent intervention of the OIC.

Dear colleagues,

My sincere gratitude goes to the Islamic Ummah for continued support to the cause of Azerbaijan in its efforts to eliminate the consequences of aggression by Armenia which resulted in the occupation of about 20 % of Azerbaijan's territory by Armenia and almost one million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons. Along with plunder of material values, devastation of cultural and historical monuments, considerable harm is done by the continuing occupation to the ecology of the region, especially resulting from the continuing fires in the occupied territories. We strongly urge the Islamic Ummah to continue its valuable support to Azerbaijan in our efforts to restore sovereignty over the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent seven regions of Azerbaijan.

The Government of Azerbaijan remains committed to the peaceful settlement of this protracted conflict based on the respect for norms and principles of international law, implementation of relevant UN Security Council and OIC resolutions as well as appropriate OSCE documents and decisions. The agenda of the current 61<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly includes item 17 "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" and recently included item 27 "Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development". I call upon the OIC Member States to display solidarity with the just cause of my country in the process of settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. I strongly believe that the OIC Member States will continue to be more actively involved during deliberations on both items of the UN General Assembly agenda.

Dear colleagues,

This year Azerbaijan is undertaking a privileged and responsible task of chairing the Conference of OIC Foreign Ministers. Let me assure you that we will spare no efforts to promote the cause of the Organization and advance the interests of its Members closely working with the General Secretariat in Jeddah, the United Nations and other international fora. The role of the OIC in the UN should be strengthened, and in this regard we should task our representatives in New York to make joint statements on all important issues on the UN agenda on a regular basis.

I am confident that strengthened cooperation and joint and coordinated actions of the OIC Member States will help us to achieve common goals for the Islamic Ummah.

Thank you.