

**Address of Ambassador Saad Eddin TAIB**  
**on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference**  
*at*  
**The Tenth session of the U.N. Human Rights Council**  
**Geneva, 2-4 March 2009**

**Mr. President**  
**Honorable Ministers and Heads of delegations**  
**Madame Navanethem Pillay, High Commissioner on Human Rights**  
**Excellencies**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It gives me great pleasure to address this august assembly on behalf of H. E. the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Conference. I would like to begin by expressing thanks and appreciations to you Mr. President for the significant achievement that has been made under your guidance to ensure a sound and positive management of the work of Human Rights Council, and improving its apparatus to address global Human Rights Challenges. I would also like to express my gratitude to the High Commissioner, her staff, the special rapporteur and independent experts for their praise worthy work.

The OIC dedicates great importance to the issues of Human Rights, and works hard to uphold and disseminate these rights among member states. Few weeks ago the OIC along with its member states, seized the opportunity of the celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to organise an international forum in the UN premise on 19 December, 2008 to mark this historic occasion and to demonstrate its sincere and unfailing commitment to shore up and support human rights.

The OIC member states consider the Universal Declaration and the two international covenants as a metaphor of human connectivity, and as an imperative living documents which are useful mechanism for tackling present day human rights challenges.

At the internal front the OIC General Secretariat is exerting tremendous effort to protect and safeguard human rights in the OIC member states. The organization's 3<sup>rd</sup> extraordinary Summit held in December 2005 declared in its 10 years programme of action that the OIC ongoing reforms must be anchored in the principles of consultations, good governance, protection of Human Rights, transparency and accountability in the OIC member states. The programme outlined a "Road Map" for Human Rights underlining that it would strive for the enlargement of political participation, for to promotion of equality, civil liberties and social justice in the OIC member states. To amplify this, the OIC Charter adopted in March 2008, has stipulated that an OIC Independent and Permanent Commission on Human Rights be established with a views to promote the civil, political and economic rights enshrined in the organisation covenants and in the universally agreed Human Rights instruments.

As the UN Human Rights Council, is heading towards his third year, it would be a timely endeavour to reconsider its short falls and its contributions, which we expect to be based on the principles of Universality, impartiality, objectivity, non selectivity, and on constructive international dialogue and cooperation. For the OIC these are fundamental principles which should be fully applied to the working methods of the new council. The OIC member states are firmly committed to the principles of cooperation and interaction dialogue with the rest of the international community for

the success of the new Council. This commitment has been displayed by OIC member states at the stage of the institutional building process of the Council.

There should be no doubt that the OIC's call for cooperation and dialogue is not in any way, a design for the creation of a culture of impunity or acquiescence to the gross violation of Human Rights. On the contrary, the OIC is in favour of addressing egregious violations of Human Rights whenever they may occur. We emphatically also agree that selective or self-serving interpretations will complicate our work and keep the Council politicized. That is why OIC has always been in favour of a Council which is "constructive and remedial" and not driven by judgemental and selective approach.

The OIC member states greatly appreciate the universal review process (UPR) which is indeed imperative mechanism for safeguarding of Human Rights practices inside individual states. During the first year of UPR more than 15 OIC member states have been scrutinized with satisfaction by the Council.

The OIC is increasingly worried about the mounting phenomenon of Islamophobia which is considered by some western reports as worst than racial abuse, and which results in a multitude of prejudices and discrimination against all muslims, eroding their fundamental human rights. Human Rights Council's role in the fight against this phenomenon must be sustained and strengthened. We believe that the Council cannot ignore the alarming signs of regression in efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, particularly the upsurge in racist violence.

The OIC welcomes with satisfaction the ongoing discussion on Durban PrepCom and working group of follow up to Durban. We believe that the upcoming Durban review conference should provide the international community an opportunity to discuss the contemporary scourge of racism and to suggest practical and efficient solutions to deal with them. OIC member states will take active participation in that review conference and look for a successful and action oriented global meeting, whereby many obstacles should be vigorously addressed such as weak legislations and policies, lack of moral, educational and practical strategies, non implementations of international legal framework and commitment by some, persisting impunity on different grounds such as freedom of expression and sharp increase in the extreme right wing xenophobia political platforms.

The OIC would like to reiterate once again that the Durban review process should not be politically motivated process, neither should it be an anti-Semitic exercise. Anti-Semitism is a practice that neither originates within, nor does it belong to Islamic culture. Anti-Semitism could not be associated with Islam or Muslims because believing in the message of Moses as a revealed religion and a fundamental part of Islamic faith. The review should be on the contrary an inclusive process, where all stake-holders are free to address the real and serious challenges of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. The OIC calls for contributively participation of all parts to make the conference a successful international event.

The OIC would, however, like to express it deep concerns regarding Israeli practices and policies in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories which are in total contravention of the universal human rights principles and the 4<sup>th</sup> Geneva Convention. It is imperative to raise the lack of determination in the Council to tackle this matter

more vigorously. The world community witnesses Israeli illegal practices perpetrated with arrogant impunity. It also witnesses its rejection of all adopted resolution of all the UN System. Israel has never allowed any UN team to investigate its practices and in particular those voted by the UN Commission of Human Rights, neither those of our Council. Israel acts as if it is shielded from any accountability or responsibility. The role of the Council is to examine and pass judgements on all practices that go against the sound values and established rules and laws. This process is highly positive and much needed if we there were to be justice, peace and harmony and international relations. In this vain, the latest brutal massacre of several hundreds of children and women in “Gaza” few weeks ago, stands as a glaring example of this attitude. The OIC condemns all these inhuman practices of collective punishment, indiscriminate killing of children, women and civilians, extrajudicial killing of leaders of civil society, wanton destruction of infrastructure, homes and government buildings, daily usurpation of lands and building illegal settlements on occupied lands.

Most of these practices and others are blatant acts of state terrorism and came under war crimes. The OIC is of the view that the Council cannot and should not remain indifferent on these practices. The Council owe it to the thousands of Palestinians children, women and innocent civilians brutally killed or maimed by the Israel war machine to take the needed measures for dealing with the systematic violations of human rights in Palestine and device new ways to prevent Israel from further perpetrating such acts. The international community is also expected to do something more than accumulating resolutions condemning Israeli practices. The Council should take all appropriate measures to implement the adopted resolutions during its 9<sup>th</sup> special sessions concerning Gaza Crisis. The OIC strongly believes that condemning these acts, which were widely denounced by the international community, has nothing to do with anti-Semitism and should never be perceived as such. Israel officials should not be treated as if they are above the law and above the will of the entire international community.

The OIC countries care for the humanitarian situation in Darfur of Sudan. Existing efforts for promoting and protecting human rights of the people in these areas must be intensified by all involved parties. We support the efforts of the African Union, and the United Nations in resolving the conflict and their efforts to alleviate the economic hardship that has wrecked Darfur for the last few years. Without any doubt, the people of Darfur have suffered. The international community should address the root causes of the conflict towards achieving sustainable development in Darfur, as well as other affected regions in Sudan.

We are also following the humanitarian situation of Muslim minorities in non-OIC member states such as the Philippines and Thailand in close and positive collaboration with the high authorities of these respective countries. We remain keen to encourage efforts for promoting and protecting human rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. We believe positive dialogues between interested parties aimed at resolving all outstanding issues, must be intensified.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the OIC reiterates its support to the work of the Council, and will continue to do so with a view to help it to carry on its mandate under the best conditions.