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**PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL,
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS,
INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED FORMS OF
INTOLERANCE, FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DURBAN
DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

**Joint written statement* submitted by the Association for World Education (AWE)
and the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), non-governmental
organizations on the Roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 February 2009]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Defamation of Judaism and Jews by ISESCO (OIC): 60th UDHR Anniversary at the UN

1. In an address on 19 December 2008, at the opening of an official day-event at the UN sponsored by the OIC, organised on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the UDHR, OIC Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu declared: “What we are concerned about is the tendency of a new episode of extremist behaviour against the adherents of a particular religion who are currently subjects of defamation, incitement to hatred, violence and racial discrimination.” His reference was manifestly to Islam and “Islamophobia”.
2. In the Special Rapporteur on Racism’s Final Report [A/HRC/9/12] “Islamophobia” is the major theme, whereas “Christianophobia” merits scant attention, even grave xenophobia in the Arab-Muslim world that is linked by him to “evangelical groups”, despite rampant discrimination and the mass indigenous flight from Middle Eastern countries – notably 500,000 Christians from Iraq. Doudou Diène refers to antisemitism in Europe and South America and vaguely in Africa, however, he makes no mention of an indigenous culture of Judeophobia in the Arab-Muslim world that is spreading worldwide – especially in Europe – and that can no longer be ignored by the international community.
3. This rampant Judeophobia is confirmed by Pierre-André Taguieff, Director of Research at the Paris CNRS in three well-documented academic books: *La Nouvelle Judéophobie* ; *Prêcheurs de haine: Traversée de la judéophobie planétaire*; *L’Imaginaire du complot mondial. Aspects d’un mythe moderne* and by many others.
4. Many OIC Member States which annually sponsor the controversial resolution on ‘Combating defamation of Religions’ at the Commission / Council since 1999, and also at the General Assembly, do not condemn cases when Islamic clerics defame other religions and their adherents. A chapter in a work by the highest Sunni authority, Al-Azhar Grand Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, is noteworthy: *The Children of Israel in the Qur’an and the Sunna*.¹ One typical example occurred on *Al-Jazeera* TV (9 August 2008) when a senior Egyptian geologist and cleric, Zaghoul Ragheb, blatantly defamed Judaism and Christianity. An indignant journalist from *Al-Hayat* TV (28 August) strongly criticized such double standards stating: “If a Christian said similar things [on Islam], the next day he would be led to the slaughterhouse.”² Details of these two cases were made available in the oral statement by AWE on 23 September 2008 at the 9th session of the HRC.
5. In 1991, at the Commission on Human Rights, the Syria delegate revived the outrageous 1840 “Damascus Affair” Blood Libel against Jews / Judaism / Zionism, despite the condemnation by the Caliph and Sultan Abdul Majid in his 6 November 1840 *Firman Hatt-i Hümayun*.³
6. Similar religious-ethnic-nationalist hate is expressed in a book published by ISESCO (for OIC) in which a Palestinian official declared traditional gross defamations of Judaism and Jews.⁴
Enemies of the Almighty: Jews are the enemies of Allah, the enemies of faith and of the worship of Allah. (...) People familiar with the Torah, which we believe to have been distorted, know the extent of the evils they attribute to their prophets, corruption, treachery, fornication or approval of it. It is with these facts that we need to arm ourselves when we confront the Zionist propaganda in the world with tangible facts, as part of our defence of the faith [Islam] and the faithful on earth [Muslims] wherever they may be (...) It would also be beneficial to urge the United Nations Organisation and other

affiliated organisations to discharge their duty in defending the lofty principles for which they were created. (...) History Robbers: They [Jews / Zionists / Israelis] have even usurped ancestry, appropriating before the eyes of the Arabs, who did not lift a finger, the Semitic lineage and making anti-Semitism a synonym of anti-Judaism. Zionists even accuse Semitic Arabs of being anti-Semitic. They usurped and desecrated holy sites. (pp. 253-255)

7. This book, and another,⁵ were displayed at the 19 December 2008 event on a table outside the newly inaugurated 'Alliance of Civilization' Room XX, as the OIC Secretary General and UN dignitaries spoke at The OIC Inter-institutional Forum on Universal Shared Values: Challenges & New paradigms – "On the Occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Under the High Patronage of H.E. Mr. Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, Chairman 11th OIC Summit/And the Effective Participation of Pr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the OIC, Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director General of the UN Office in Geneva, Mr. Martin I. Uhomobhi, Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the UN and President of the Human Rights Council, and Mrs. Nevanethem Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights."⁶

8. In the book of the Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference (2004),⁷ ISESCO Director General Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri⁸ explains why the Palestinian cause is primordial for Muslims worldwide:

Time does not allow for an in-depth review of the tragedies, threats and challenges, nor for a detailed analysis of the conditions prevailing in Palestine. Suffice it to say that all holy sites and sanctities in the Palestinian territories, Islamic and Christian alike, are under serious threats that exceed in their magnitude the danger to peace and security, in this holy land and in the whole world, and all that was committed against it in the past. (...) Our responsibilities [are] to the Palestinian cause which we all believe to be the essence of all issues and the supreme task in the Muslim world and the eastern Christian circles that are part of our Arab and Islamic civilisation. (pp. 17-18)

9. In an earlier volume (Proceedings of ISESCO's 1st International Conference – 7-8 June 2002)⁹ there is another opening Address by Saudi Director General Altwaijri in which he repeats his accusations:

The crimes against humanity committed by Israel have reached an extent of oppression, injustice and aggression that humanity has never witnessed, neither in this age nor in previous ages."(p. 8)

10. There is also a 40 page text by a Jordanian engineer¹⁰ – again with crude defamations of Judaism and Jews, distortions of history and facts, and the propagation of a Nazi forgery (i.e. a "warning" by Benjamin Franklin¹¹ against allowing Jews into America), and all this under the educational auspices of ISESCO.

Archaeological excavations in the service of Torahic false allegations:

The corrupt nature of the Jews made it impossible for them to live in peace with all the peoples of the world. The Babylonians made slaves of them, the Romans persecuted them, the Byzantines were hostile to them and the Europeans and Americans were wary of them, as was expressed by Benjamin Franklin who, when drawing up the American constitution, demanded that it should include a clause forbidding Jews from entering

America. As the result of their antagonistic actions, the Jews had to live in Diaspora for long years. Then their leaders thought of establishing the Zionist Movement to gather all the Jews in one place. (p. 113)

11. In the same article, there is more of the same on Co-operation between Nazis and Zionists:

A certain complementarity [sic] existed between the roles of Zionism and Nazism, and eventually led to the establishment of a new and powerful state. The Zionist leaders co-operated with those of the Nazi movement. This co-operation culminated in the agreements concluded between Rudolph Kastner, the vice-president of the Zionist Institution, and Eichmann, the German Nazi leader, allowing thousands of Jews to immigrate legally to Palestine. Zionists assisted Hitler's administration in preventing the immigration of Jews to any place other than Palestine. This facilitated the execution of Hitler's massacres in Germany (...) Thus, the extent of arrogance the World Zionist Movement uncovered the abuse perpetrated against justice and righteousness and the barbarian practices that were used under the cover of peace, the notion of the persecuted nation, the holocaust and the quest for safety. The true essence of the Zionist movement and of its state has also become obvious: a racist power that allies itself with every evil in this world to achieve its objectives. (pp. 107-109)

12. The same expert claims the Al-Aqsa Mosque existed 1000 years before Solomon's Temple:

Al-Buraq Wall is not part of their alleged Temple [King Solomon]:¹²

Also, when the Torah mentions the western wall, it does not necessarily mean the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque. (...)

The story of the alleged Temple in the Torah:

In this part we will demonstrate the inconsistencies existing in the books of the Torah with regard to the Temple, its materials and measurements, which lack of consistency proves that these texts do not have a single origin. (...) As for the Jewish Temple, it was built in an unknown place, then it was destroyed and pulled apart after which its real site became unknown. (p. 99)

13. In a presentation on Al-Quds¹³ Melkite Archbishop of Byblos Cyrille Salim Bustros stated:¹⁴

Al-Quds [Jerusalem], the city of holiness, in the hands of the Zionists, has become today a trading centre where Arab Christians and Muslims are expelled and substituted with Jews. Al-Quds, which should be a house of prayer for all nations, has become in the hands of the Zionists a den of thieves where innocents and whoever claims a right and justice is killed. Today, the Jews allege that Al-Quds belongs to them only. They have made it the capital of their Zionist state, arguing that it is the land of their ancestors since Ibrahim. If only they followed the example of this ancestor, who accepted to sacrifice his own son for the love of God. Instead, they have no qualms about killing the children of the others for the sake of their racist ambitions (...) God does not order us to murder the fellow humans he created in His shape and model. He does not order us either to exterminate and enslave people who hail from a different race and religion. He rather enjoins us to be merciful, humane, just and peace loving. (p. 37)

14. On 12 January 2009, AWE sent a 'Complaint' with a 7-page documentation of extracts from these two books to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and all the distinguished participants listed above (§7). This complaint was also sent to the Director General of UNESCO Koïchiro

Matsuura – in view of the close collaboration between UNESCO and ISESCO for 25 years. In 2008, a programme of cooperation was signed for 2008-2009 between ISESCO Director General Dr Abdullaziz Othman Altwaijri and UNESCO Director General Mr Koïchiro Matsuura. At the 9th ISESCO-UNESCO Joint meeting in May 2006, mention was made of the framework of an official 1984 agreement signed between the two Organisations and their growing cooperation; Mr Matsuura expressed “great pleasure” at the growing cooperation with ISESCO, stating that past agreements are “producing important results.” He is also quoted as saying that: “Dialogue among Civilizations and respect for religion also forms an important part of the Organization’s work.” Reference is made also to the decision taken by the 174th Session of the Board on: “Respect for freedom of expression and respect for sacred beliefs and values and religious and cultural symbols.”¹⁵

15. After the first OIC charge of ‘blasphemy’ at the 53rd session of the Commission in 1997, we warned:

It is a dangerous precedent for charges of ‘blasphemy’ to be given credence, and even consecration at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and other UN bodies. Rather, it is real analysis which is needed if we are to come to grips with all forms of racism and discriminatory attitudes, including those which are transmitted by religious thought and teaching – from whatever the source. The struggle to combat racism in all its forms – including antisemitism – through serious scholarship and freedom of thought, opinion and expression should not be curtailed at the United Nations by auto-censorship, as a result of doctrinal accusations of “blasphemy” whose demands are legion.¹⁶

Twelve years later, we would add – as a result of doctrinal charges of “defamation” or of “Islamophobia”.

16. We urgently call on all eminent dignitaries of the UN and UNESCO and to the 10th Session of the Human Rights Council to firmly condemn these blatant defamations of Judaism and the constant demonization of Jews, Zionists and Israelis in such ISESCO publications – and on radio, TV and websites anywhere. ISESCO – with its close ties to UNESCO – is a part of the OIC, representing 56 UN Member States. Intended as a scholarly body, ISESCO should never host such Conferences or publish such literature, then displaying it at the United Nations. A higher standard of moderation and an effort at historical accuracy on such matters is to be expected from this international body with close ties to UNESCO. This grave matter should no longer be ignored. It is time for the international community to act and the time is now at this Human Rights Council.

* Text prepared by David G. Littman, historian, representative to the UN in Geneva of AWE and WUPJ.

Notes

1. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, *The Children of Israel in the Qur'an and the Sunna / Banu Isra'il fi al-Qur'an wa al-Sunna* (Cairo: Zahraa' lil-l'laam al-'Arabi, 1986-87), pp. 107-26, 129-46), in Andrew G. Bostom (ed.) *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism: From Sacred Texts to Solemn History* (New York, 2008, pp. 33; pp. 391-401).

2. MEMRI: <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/1849.htm> /<http://www.memri.org/bin/latestnews.cgi?ID=SD205508> -- Video, Special Dispatch Series – No. 2055 – 18 September 2008).

3. WUPJ written statement: E/CN.4/1991/NGO/49; *Human Rights and Human and Human Wrongs*, No. 10 & 11 (WUPJ, Geneva, June 1991; January 1992)

4. Adnane Ibrahim Hassan Al Subah – “President of the Jenine Information Centre, Jenine, State of Palestine”

5. The two ISESCO books are called, *Protection of Islamic and Christian Holy Sites in Palestine*, ISESCO, published by ISESCO in Salé, Morocco, 2004 (pp. 168) and Rabat, Morocco, 2007 (pp. 350); Website: ISESCO: <http://www.isesco.org.ma/>. (2nd Int. Conference – full text, website): <http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/Protection%20of%20Islamic%20and%20Christian%20Holy%20Sites%20in%20Palestine/Menu.php>

6. These details are from the official programme. HRC President Martin I. Uhomoibhi's text was read for him.

7. Under the “High Patronage of His Hashemite Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein”, in Amman (23-25 November 2004).

8. Deputy Director General for Culture, ISESCO, (1985–1991); unanimously elected Director General of ISESCO in November 1991 and re-elected in 1994, 1997 and 2003. Secretary General of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World; Executive Director of " Islam Today ", an Islamic academic journal published in Arabic, English and French ; and of "AL JAMIA", Journal published by the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World.

9. “Organised under the High Patronage of Mohammed VI, King of Morocco.”

10. “The City of Al-Quds and the Dangers Besetting it”. The author (Rael Yusuf Najm) is described as being from the “Jordanian Centre of Irrigation Engineers, Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.”

11. This passage is based on a forged document alleging that Benjamin Franklin warned against the admission of Jews in America at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. If the necessary measures were not taken, Franklin is supposed to have warned his colleagues, they would be cursed by their children and grand-children. This “speech” is a 20th century forgery, widely circulated by Nazi propaganda (*Franklin Institute News*, Philadelphia, vol. 13 (1938), no. 4, pp. 1-2; and *Commentary*, New York, vol. 22 (1956), p. 537). This Nazi-period forgery was revived in a lecture (Department of Public Administration, University of Beirut) by the Director-General of the Lebanese Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Fuad Ammun, a Maronite. *Studies in Lebanese Government*, Arabic, Beirut, 1956). See Elie Kedourie *The Chatham House Version & other Middle East Studies*, London, 1970, p. 338; note 72, p. 456. Like *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, this crude forgery is often used in the Arab world. In 1986, Sami Aldeeb, a Palestinian-Swiss professor of law, reproduced it in a widely-distributed pamphlet: “Point de vue d'un chrétien de Palestine.” (David G. Littman, “Les liaisons dangereuses”, *Courrier, Tribune de Genève*, 5 mars 1997).

12. The Al Buraq Wall is sacred to Muslims as the place where the Prophet Muhammad tied his steed to the wall (Al Buraq) during his Night Journey and Nocturnal Ascent to heaven. Such studies seek to prove that the Al-Aqsa Mosque was built more than 1000 years before Solomon: <http://www.jerusalemmites.org/jerusalem/alburaq/2.htm>

13. “Al-Quds in Christian Thought”. The archbishop uses the Muslim terminology for Jerusalem and for Abraham.

14. He was “Archbishop of Baalabek & its sub-ordinates of the Roman Catholic Church and Chairman of the Middle Council of Churches” In August 2004, Archbishop Cyril Bustros became Eparch of Newton, Massachusetts, which gives him authority over all Melkites in the United States. "Eparch" is a Byzantine term for chief or administrative bishop; there is one other bishop in the United States, but Archbishop Cyril Bustros has the highest rank as Eparch.

15.. “With a budget of five billion [sic] dollars, the new cooperation programme will implement 128 activities covering the fields of education, science culture, communication, external relations and the national commissions (...) ISESCO and UNESCO also agreed to organize training sessions for the staff working in the National Commissions for Education, Science and Culture in the Member States.” (see the ISESCO website: <http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/DG/DG.php?page=/Home/Director%20General> and UNESCO).

16. René Wadlow and David Littman, “Dangerous Censorship of a U.N. Special Rapporteur”, in *Justice*, no. 14, September 1997, pp. 10-17.
