



7TH WORLD ISLAMIC FORUM YAZD DECLARATION (DRAFT)

7th World Islamic Forum titled as “**Strategic Communication: Reference Values, Institutions, Persons**” convened in the historical and religious city of Yazd from 24th to 25th of May 2016. The forum was jointly hosted by the “Institute for Political and International Studies” (IPIS) of the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the “Turkish Asian Centre for Strategic Studies” (TASAM), with the participation of representatives of think tanks, researchers, political figures and parliament representatives of countries of the Islamic world.

The Forum wishes to extend its gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his valuable support for convening of the 7th session. The outcome of this two-day conference was adopted within the context of “Yazd Declaration”.

The 7th World Islamic Forum;

1. Guided by the exalted principles and values enshrined in the charter of organization of Islamic cooperation such as unity, brotherhood, peace, compassion, tolerance, equality, justice and human dignity. Also reaffirming the importance of promotion and strengthening of unity and solidarity within the member countries.
2. Recalling final statements of the previous World Islamic Fora.
3. Emphasizing the importance of common Islamic principles, values and goals as a collection of inspiring instructions in the communication, social, economic as well as civil and political fields.
4. Reiterating that extremism and violence are multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, multi-factorial phenomena which are mainly rooted in poverty, injustice, marginalization, discrimination, suppression, colonization, foreign dominance and occupation, as well as, violation of fundamental human rights.
5. Aware of the root causes and circumstances conducive to migration, refugees and asylum crisis and their social consequences, calls upon the international community to accept their common responsibility to strive to resolve the causes of the above-mentioned crises.
6. Expressing concern over the fact that the international community is witnessing exacerbated emergence of and unfortunate institutionalization of Islamophobia and anti-Islamic behavior in the West, the Forum strongly condemns the attacks on Muslims and Islamic centers, as well as, imposition of social restrictions on Muslims, and it calls upon the countries hosting the Islamic minorities to effectively encounter this phenomenon through inter alia taking necessary practical and legislative measures.
7. Welcoming the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations concerning the Dialogue among Civilizations, as well as, the World Against Violence and Extremism (WAVE), and emphasizing that adoption of such resolutions paves the way for further mutual understanding, reduction conflicts, and ultimately prevention of violence, extremism, and terrorism, the Forum therefore urges the Islamic community to pursue and effectively implement the above-mentioned resolutions.



8. The Forum also voices its concern over those harboring violent and extremist thoughts abusing the mass media, the Internet, and satellites, resorting to freedom of speech; the Forum, furthermore, condemns any form of discrimination, restriction, or censorship applied against independent media.
9. Emphasizes the need for an increase in the role of the academia, religious scholars, academic institutions and research centers in explaining the strategic communications, enriching inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogues, promoting respect for human rights, as well as, preventing grounds for the growth of extremist and violent thoughts.
10. Convinced that the common Islamic civilization and heritage assumes a prominent role in responding to and managing of the emerging circumstances, the Forum emphasizes that the invaluable contributions of outstanding Islamic scholars, thinkers and philosophers such as Imam Mohammad Ghazali Toussi, Molana Jalaledin Mohammad Balkhi and Allameh Mohammad Eqbal Lahouri should be borne in mind.
11. Further acknowledges the outstanding ideas, thoughts and contributions of the most important and contemporary reformer and spiritual leader Imam Ayatollah Rohullah Khomeini, the founder of Islamic revolution of Iran.
12. Emphasizing the need for protecting and maintaining religious-historical monuments as part of the common human heritage throughout the world, and while welcoming the UNESCO resolutions in this regard, it strongly condemns any destruction of the said monuments with any motivation.
13. Believing that the emergence of Takfiri groups, intensification of their terrorist attacks throughout the world (particularly the Middle East and North Africa) and launching wars and conflicts between Muslims on behalf of common enemies are the results of deceptions by oppressive states, the Forum calls upon the elites of the Islamic world to raise the public awareness about the malicious activities of the takfiri groups. The Forum further calls upon the Islamic scholars to resist and foil the nefarious plots of the same enemies and their covert and overt supports for terrorist, extremist activities.
14. Reiterating that effective confronting and ultimate uprooting of ISIL/ISIS and other terrorist-takfiri groups requires effective, collective and uninterrupted support of the international community, the Forum urges all the countries and addressees (including think-tanks, researchers, religious scholars, etc.) to confront ISIL; the Forum further emphasizes that any attempt to classify the terrorists into "good terrorists" and "bad terrorists" is counter-productive and impermissible.
15. Emphasizing the fundamental principles of international law, such as the preservation of territorial integrity, statehood and national sovereignty of all states, and reiterating the right to self-determination, the Forum underlines that any internal changes should be sought through democratic and peaceful means with the full participation of the people.
16. Emphasizing the importance of maintaining the unity, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of all countries, the Forum reiterates that Iraq - which is resisting the constant barrage of blind terrorism and violence being waged under the rubric of religion - has offered thousands of martyrs in a full-fledged fight against Daesh (ISIL) and its covert and overt military, financial, as well as, ideological supporters. Whatever happens in Iraq has grave and decisive consequences for the World of Islam; the Forum, therefore, calls upon its Member States and international community to support the people and government of Iraq to overcome this major challenge.



17. Emphasizing the vital need for safeguarding the unity, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of Syria, the Forum believes that the only way to stop violence and crisis and achieving national reconciliation in the said country is resorting to the political solution through dialogue and negotiation among all Syrian parties. In this regard, any political reform and change in Syria and any decision concerning its fate should be exclusively made by the Syrian people, while regional and trans-regional players should facilitate and support the peace process in Syria.
18. Emphasizes the necessity of continuation of convening such conferences with the aim of developing relevant mechanisms to strengthen unity and strategic relations within the Islamic societies.
19. Recommends to set up a school for reduction of Inter-Madaheb differences (مدرسه التقريب بين المذاهب) (الإسلاميه) in which Maraje and Ulama of Islamic jurisprudential excellence can discuss various issues of contentions and derive solutions.
20. To identify the causes and grounds of different challenges facing the World of Islam, and to develop effective approaches for overcoming them, the Forum believes that the Islamic World requires to develop two ethical and political charters: the first is an internal one guiding the relations within the Islamic countries, while the other regulates the ties between the Islamic World and other religions and civilizations.
21. The Forum strongly emphasizes that the issue of the occupying regime of Quds and its unbridled onslaught and atrocities constantly waged against Muslims, especially those in Palestine and Lebanon, continue to be the major concern of the Islamic World, the Forum calls upon the Member States to spare no efforts to effectively tackle this challenge.
22. Expressing its appreciation and gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the generous and appropriate hosting, especially the exemplary hospitality shown by the people of Yazd, which was instrumental in crowning the Forum with success, "the 7th World Islamic Forum: Strategic Communications, Reference Values, Institutions and Persons" welcomes the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Herat expressing its willingness to host the 8th Forum in May 2017.

25 May 2016, Yazd