

OIC

June - August 2011

Issue No. 18

JOURNAL

Issued by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

New name and emblem for OIC in Astana ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION



**OIC Humanitarian Campaign
for Somalia**

Libya after Qaddafi

Intergovernmental body and ICCL partner fosters inter-religious dialogue and Islamic cooperation



EUCLID's Zahid Ali and ICCL's ASG Attiya Ali at the signing ceremony.

Karachi, Pakistan - Syed Zahid Ali of Pakistan was the President of the Junior Chamber International Pakistan, when he founded an international NGO called the International Organization for Sustainable Development (IOSD). From its inception in 2005, IOSD has had a vision to foster dialogue and development through knowledge, which is why it developed a broad network of relationships and agreements with universities, and as early as 2006, with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). In partnership with the universities of N'Djamena (Chad being an OIC member) and Bangui (the Central African Republic being an OIC observer), IOSD almost immediately launched a project called 'Euclid' whose aim was to create extension programs in sustainable development as well as inter-religious diplomacy and bioethics.

"I was amazed" explains Syed Zahid Ali, "that these distance learning programs received so many expressions of interest from universities and government officials." Indeed, in 2008, several governments interested in using the 'Euclid' programs to train their own staff jointly signed an intergovernmental agreement establishing 'EUCLID' as an educational framework with a university charter with the full name Pôle Universitaire Euclide / Euclid University. As of June 2011, 11 countries (including 6 OIC members)

participate in EUCLID.

In 2009, as part of a 'Joint Initiative', EUCLID and ICCL began offering an MBA in Islamic Finance with an annual scholarship scheme, followed by a similar program between EUCLID and ECOWAS (the Economic Community of Western African States), an African regional organization with 16 Member States (including 9 OIC members).

Appointed as EUCLID's first Secretary-General in accordance with the Statutes, Syed Zahid Ali is more than ever convinced that education and cooperation are essential, especially to overcome anti-Islamic prejudice which he considers, even by personal experience, a significant concern, especially in the USA. For this reason, EUCLID now offers two academic programs in inter-religious dialogue and diplomacy which have a strong focus on Muslim – Christian dialogue. "IOSD and EUCLID are examples of what can happen when Islam and the West are able to cooperate in the spirit of 'A Common Word' to serve humanity" explains Zahid Ali. "It is my sincere hope that our organization will be able to make a contribution to the vision of OIC, especially by fostering a better understanding of how sustainable economic development relates to our religious values."

From IOSD to EUCLID, the organization's institutional processes were completed in May 2011 with its registration and listing by the UNESCO-based International Organization of Universities in the exclusive group of International / Regional institutions. Zahid Ali is eager to point out that out of the 5 institutions listed in the group (United Nations University, European University Institute and two intergovernmental maritime schools), only EUCLID is headquartered in Africa, specifically in an OIC affiliated country, and uniquely committed to Islamic cooperation. EUCLID's High Steward is Mohamed Toihiri, the current Ambassador of the Comoros to the United Nations.

For more information on EUCLID, visit www.euclid.int

The 5th Forum on Statistical Capacity Building for Arab Countries

Amman, Jordan - Under the patronage of Dr. Marouf Suleiman al-Bakhit, Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Fifth Forum on Statistical Capacity Building for Arab Countries with the theme "Statistics, Media and Policy Making" was held on 4- 5 July 2011 in Amman, Jordan. The delegates of National Statistical Offices (NSO) from 13 Arab Countries including Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia, and the representatives of the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS), the Arab League, EUROSTAT, the European Central Bank, the International Cooperation Agency for the French Ministries of Economy and Finance (ADETEF), PARIS21, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Statistics Netherlands, Statistics Norway, the United Nations Economic and Social

Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), and the World Bank participated in the Forum.

During the meeting, recommendations of the previous forums were assessed in the context of lessons learned from the challenges experienced in the implementation of the recommendations. Participants also discussed the knowledge and experience exchange, the role of media to create statistical awareness and increase the visibility, and reputation of the NSOs and their products. The importance of coordination with national stakeholders and strengthening role of international partners by providing financial and technical support were also highlighted for further development of national statistical systems.

At the end of the Forum, a draft resolution of the meeting was prepared and it has been decided that the next Forum be organized in the first quarter of 2013 in Lebanon.