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**OIC Youth Forum held an International Advisory Board Meeting
on “Youth for Alliance of Civilizations”
in Northern Cyprus**

(Kyrenia, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus 18-21 August)

The First Meeting of **International Advisory Board** of the global “*Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations*” Initiative was held *on 18-21 August, 2007 in Kyrenia, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)*. The event is a part of the global youth initiative to mobilize young leaders worldwide in support of the UN Initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations.

This Initiative has been proposed by the **Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC)**, an international institution affiliated to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), in cooperation with UNDP and ISESCO and in partnership with Council of Europe with the major aim of providing the powerful youth platform for discussion of pressing issues concerning dialogue among cultures and civilizations and forming an intergenerational network of proponents and activists of the UN global initiative for “*The Alliance of Civilizations (AOC)*”.

The center-piece event of the “*Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations*” Initiative, namely “**Alliance Youth Camp**” and “**Intergenerational Alliance Conference**” are scheduled to be held *in November 2007, in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan and to be hosted by H.E. Mehriban Aliyeva, the UNESCO and ISESCO Good Will Ambassador and the President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation*. During the course of the implementation of this Initiative a pool of high profile names in academia, arts and social activities will train a group of young leaders from Western, OIC and East Asian countries in historical, political and socio-cultural aspects of interaction between different civilizations. The event will culminate in 2-day Intergenerational Conference between influential policy-makers and youth leaders on the prospects of the global efforts for the “*Alliance of Civilizations*”. Final outcome document of this high-profile gathering will be reported to UN Annual Forum for the Alliance of Civilizations for shaping its youth dimension.

Advisory Board Meeting in Kyrenia brought together high level representatives of international organizations, leading academicians from the OIC and European countries and representatives of youth to discuss the thematic and organizational issues pertaining to implementation of November Baku Conference and to discuss wider prospects of the “**Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations**” Initiative.

On 18 August the Board's opening meeting was addressed by Prof. Turgay Avci, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the TRNC, H.E. Mounji Bousnina, President of Arab League Education, Science and Culture Organization and Mr. Ali Sarikaya, the President of the ICYF-DC. Mr. Elshad Iskandarov, the Secretary General of the ICYF-DC brought a detailed presentation on the pressing reasons for establishment of such an Initiative, mechanism of its implementation, activities undertaken by the OIC Youth Forum to build global partnership in support of YAOC as well as dwelled into results expected from holding the center-piece events of the Initiative. Members of the Advisory Board of the event have expressed their full support of its objectives and forms of implementation and expressed their deep thanks to H.E. Mehriban Aliyeva for her efforts to boost international dialogue of cultures and civilizations and support toward holding the center piece events of the YAOC.

Taking the floor Prof. Anas Al-Sheikh, Chairman of Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (UK), Prof. Hans Koechler from Innsbruck University (Austria) Prof. Ibrahim Kalin, Chairman of SETA (Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research), Mr. Shahid Husein, ICYF-DC Advisory Board Member, Mr. Elcin Askerov, Deputy Chairman of State Committee for Religious Affairs (Azerbaijan), Fuad Muradov, Ghairman of NAYORA and others expressed their deliberations on their experiences regarding the similar projects and made concrete proposals.

On 19 August Mr. Elshad Iskandarov introduced the topics which will be discussed within the working groups in the Alliance Youth Camp as well as the names of resource persons who will chair 12 working groups. The participants made their proposals on the titles, substance and format of programs of both the Alliance Youth Camp and the High Level Conference as well as discussed the on media coverage of the Initiative.

At the end of the meeting the participants adopted the Gyrene Communiqué on the results of the Advisory Board Meeting which contain the substantial aspects as well as the concrete proposals on the implementation of the "Youth for Alliance of Civilizations" Initiative. The Communiqué also expressed the appreciation to the Government of TRNC for its support of the holding the Advisory Board of the YAOC.

On 20 August 2007 the participants of the FABM were received by H.E. Mehmet Ali Talat, the President of the TRNC, who welcomed the participants and informed in details on the process of negotiations aimed at resolving the Cyprus conflict. He also told about the TRNC-OIC cooperation and considered the Advisory Board Meeting on Youth for Alliance of Civilizations as contribution to the development of relations between the OIC and his country.

The participants were also received by H.E. Ferdi Sabit Soyer, the Prime Minister and H.E. Dr. Turgay Avci, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of TRNC who welcomed the participants underlying that TRNC attaches a great importance to the cooperation with ICYF-DC and to participation of youth of Northern Cyprus in global events. The top governmental officials have also underlined the importance of international projects aimed at intellectual development of youth in Northern Cyprus suffering from unjust isolation their community is facing as a result of international sanctions. Dr. Turgay Avci, Minister of Foreign Affairs has also expressed the hope of his Government that intercultural dialogue would help of ending the practice of double standards like continues isolation of TRNC despite the good will of his people to unite the island expressed at historical referenda under the Annan plan.

On the side of the event the participants of the Advisory Board meeting have also participated in the cultural program revealing the rich history and acquiring them with contemporary developments of Turkic Cypriots.