



DRAFT CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENTARY
UNION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE MEMBER
STATES (P.U.I.C.) AND THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ON
ORTHODOXY (I.A.O.) ON THE ISLAMIC-CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX
PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE

Following an invitation by the International Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O.), a delegation of the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Member States (P.U.I.C.) headed by the Secretary General, Ambassador Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed Auf, visited the seat of the I.A.O. International Secretariat in Athens, from 20 – 23 March 2005. Various meetings were held with representatives of the I.A.O. International Secretariat, headed by the I.A.O. Secretary General and member of the Hellenic Parliament Mr. Stylianos-Angelos Papatthemelis and the President of the I.A.O. General Assembly and member of the Russian State Duma Mr. Sergei Popov.

During these meetings it was underlined by both sides that, in the modern world of major technological achievements and globalization, the peoples of the Earth have the right to pursue their future through their own cultural accomplishments, traditions and convictions. Furthermore, they have the right to oppose the cultural leveling being attempted, on material over-consumption and the lack of spiritual pursuit.

It was noted moreover, that while the modern world is trying - through dialogue, a fundamental element of democracy - to achieve mutual understanding and tolerance, to resolve the problems threatening its long-standing achievements and the essence of its existence, parliamentarians, conveyors of the expression of these ideals, play a special and significant role in this effort.

It was also ascertained by both sides that the field of parliamentarism, an area of free and clear thought, may positively influence the dialogue between peoples and cultures, as well as contribute to mutual understanding and peace. Thus, parliamentary co-operation on issues transcending the narrow and limited borders of the current political activity and approaching the modern world through culture and history may prove useful in many ways.

It was also established that the founding documents of the P.U.I.C. and that of the I.A.O. record - inter alia - the will of their members to contribute to communication among the peoples of the world, aiming at the respect and defense of human rights and humanitarian principles, as well as the consolidation of peace based on justice and International legitimacy.

To this end, the P.U.I.C. and the I.A.O., as media of universal ideals, stemming from the two great monotheistic religions, the Christian and the Islamic, should take advantage of every possibility for direct communication and contact between the political media with common sub-goals, in order to contribute to the implementation of the modern world's imperatives.

During the meetings, ways of co-operation were discussed between the two organizations, which constitute interparliamentary unions, with the participation of the 47 parliaments representing the Islamic countries on one hand and the 24 parliaments and groups of Members of Parliaments, from countries where Christian orthodox in faith reside on the other. It is understood by both organizations that the dialogue herein envisaged excludes any discussion on the faith of either side.

By confirming co-operation between the two interparliamentary bodies, they decided to submit to their appropriate decision making organs, a series of initiatives including:

1. Participation – in the capacity of guest – of a parliamentary delegation of each organization at the other's meeting of the highest Organ, commencing from the I.A.O. annual General Assembly in June 2005 in Geneva, where an official delegation of the P.U.I.C. will be invited to participate and address the Assembly. On April 2006, an official delegation of the I.A.O. will be invited to participate and address the P.U.I.C. Conference which will be held in Istanbul. By the 1st of January 2007 the General Secretariats of both the I.A.O. and the P.U.I.C. will pursue that their competent Organs will have reached the decision, so that each organization acquires the observer status.
2. The participation of representatives from each body at the public activities of the other, commencing on 17th of April 2005, when the I.A.O. is organizing, in co-operation with the European Parliament and the European Commission, a conference in Athens with subject "NATION, RELIGIONS – ORTHODOXY AND THE NEW EUROPEAN REALITY". Two personalities from the P.U.I.C. will be invited to participate in the conference.
3. The establishment of a "Coordinating Committee of the Interparliamentary Islamic-Christian Orthodox dialogue" which will be composed of 14 members, seven from each side, to be co-chaired by the President of both organizations with the participation of the two Secretaries General. The rest of the members of the Committee will be members of Parliaments. The Committee shall meet twice per year, commencing July 2006 in a city to be chosen on alternative basis by each organization. Its main objective will be to coordinate the "Interparliamentary Islamic-Christian Orthodox dialogue" which shall determine the substantive issues of discussion within the political, economic, social and cultural fields,

as well as for the following up of the implementation of resolutions jointly agreed.

4. Following the meetings of the “Coordinating Committee of the Interparliamentary Islamic-Christian Orthodox dialogue” and the assessment of a specific agenda of its activities, the leadership of the two organizations will visit the European Parliament and the European Commission, as well as other international organizations, in order to present them with the framework of co-operation between the P.U.I.C. and the I.A.O., as well as, the efforts being made by the two organizations in the field of interparliamentary co-operation on the basis of common objectives. The first visit will be held at the headquarters of the European Parliament in Strasburg and of the European Commission in Brussels in the fall of 2006.

The present “Draft Co-operation agreement on the Islamic-Christian Orthodox parliamentary dialogue” was initiated by the Secretary General of each contracting organization in Athens, 22 March 2005, where it was initialed by both Secretaries General and shall come into force after its formal adoption by the appropriate Organ of both organizations.

For the PARLIAMENTARY UNION
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE
ISLAMIC CONFERENCE
MEMBER STATES

The Secretary General

Ibrahim Ahmed Auf
Ambassador

For the INTERPARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY ON ORTHODOXY

The Secretary General

Stylianos-Angelos Papatthemelis
Member of the Hellenic Parliament