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Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the eightieth session

Observer status for the Islamic Organization for Food Security in the General Assembly

Letter dated 22 May 2025 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to write to you in reference to rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and request the inclusion, in the provisional agenda of the eightieth session of the General Assembly, of an item entitled “Observer status for the Islamic Organization for Food Security in the General Assembly”.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, enclosed herewith are an explanatory memorandum (see annex I) and a draft resolution (see annex II).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Kairat **Umarov**
Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations



Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

I. Background

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), in accordance with article 22 of its Charter, has the authority to establish specialized institutions and confer affiliated status, subject to approval by the Council of Foreign Ministers. Following Council resolution No. 3/39-E, adopted by the Council at its thirty-ninth session, held in Djibouti on 15–17 November 2012, the decision was formalized to establish an OIC food security institution in Kazakhstan.

Subsequently, on 11–12 June 2013, the Intergovernmental Experts Meeting of OIC member States convened in Astana with the responsibility of finalizing the constituent instrument of the OIC food security institution in Kazakhstan. During that meeting, experts from 30 member States collaborated to harmonize the draft statute of the Islamic Organization for Food Security, a new specialized institution of OIC.

II. Composition and founding documents

At its fortieth session, held in Conakry on 9–11 December 2013, the Council of Foreign Ministers adopted the Statute of the Islamic Organization for Food Security, solidifying its legal framework. The Organization was officially instituted as an entity during the seventh session of the Ministerial Conference of OIC on Food Security and Agricultural Development, along with the constituent session of the General Assembly of the Organization, on 28 April 2016, in Astana.

The Statute of the Islamic Organization for Food Security received the approval of and was formally signed by 19 countries during the fortieth session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers,

Currently, the Organization has grown to include 41 member States and one observer country, out of 57 OIC member States, demonstrating a substantial commitment within OIC to tackle global food security challenges.

The hosting agreement for the Organization's headquarters was ratified by Kazakhstan through Law No. 110-VI, dated 20 November 2017.

III. Objectives

The main mission and objectives of the Organization are as follows:

(a) The Organization is committed to enhancing sustainable food security across OIC member States by fostering socioeconomic development and promoting targeted programmes in agriculture, science and technology, humanitarian aid and food trade;

(b) In coordination with member States, the Organization continually assesses the food security situation to provide timely emergency responses and humanitarian assistance. This includes the strategic creation and management of food security reserves;

(c) The Organization actively mobilizes and manages financial and agricultural resources to develop agriculture and improve food security within member States;

(d) The Organization coordinates the formulation and implementation of common agricultural policies among member States, including the exchange and transfer of appropriate technologies and the management of public food systems.

These objectives are designed to build a robust and resilient food security framework within the OIC community, ensuring that all member States can achieve and maintain high levels of food security.

IV. Institutional structure

The governance structure of the Organization consists of three levels:

(a) General Assembly, comprising ministers for agriculture and food security or their representatives nominated by member States, and convening annually to address matters within the Organization's mandate;

(b) Executive Board, composed of eight members elected by the General Assembly with equitable geographical distribution, including a permanent member from the hosting State and the Director General of the Organization as a non-voting member. Board members serve a three-year term, renewable once;

(c) Secretariat, based at the permanent headquarters in Astana, the secretariat consists of the Director General and official staff.

V. International engagement

The Islamic Organization for Food Security works closely with international and regional partners to strengthen agrifood systems and combat hunger across OIC member States. Since its establishment, the Organization has concluded over 60 agreements and memorandums of understanding with intergovernmental organizations, development banks, non-governmental organizations and research institutions as of 2024. Notable partnerships include memorandums of understanding with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Women Development Organization, the International Rice Research Institute, the Islamic Committee of the International Crescent, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture and the Developing Eight Countries Organization for Economic Cooperation.

Additional agreements have also been signed with the Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, aimed at fostering mutual cooperation and advancing food security. The Organization collaborates with major financial institutions, including the OPEC Fund for International Development and IsDB, to implement strategic initiatives such as the establishment of regional food reserves and the financing of agricultural projects.

Beyond its formal partnerships, the Organization regularly participates in international forums that focus on sustainable agriculture and food security. Examples include a major conference on food security in Tunisia, organized in cooperation with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, as well as engagements at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum in Türkiye and the International Forum of Landlocked Developing Countries on food security. Through these activities, the Organization aims to amplify the voice of OIC on the global stage, foster multilateral cooperation and promote innovative solutions for food resilience.

VI. Relations with the United Nations

The Islamic Organization for Food Security, as a specialized institution of OIC, collaborates closely with the United Nations agencies on food security. Through the OIC–United Nations coordination mechanism, the Organization regularly engages with United Nations officials and institutions, including by hosting the 16th United Nations–OIC Biennial Coordination Meeting, held in Astana in July 2024. A key outcome of that meeting was a letter of intent signed with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, setting forth plans to expand joint work in areas such as agricultural value-chain development, livestock and water resource management.

The Organization also partners directly with the World Food Programme (WFP). In 2022, it signed a memorandum of understanding to facilitate humanitarian and food security efforts in Afghanistan, followed by further cooperation in crisis-stricken regions like Gaza, where the Organization launched its “Flour for Humanity” convoy in coordination with WFP.

Furthermore, on 16 April 2023, the Organization signed an agreement with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to provide a humanitarian food convoy. On June 20, 2023, the Organization delegation participated in the second phase of the Flour for Humanity programme in Kabul. The programme involved the distribution of 70 tons of fortified wheat flour as part of the Organization’s humanitarian food assistance initiative, in collaboration with the Mission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and local institutions.

The Organization maintains active cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, particularly through the Regional Cassava Value Chain Initiative for Africa. This collaboration focuses on sharing best practices from developing countries, promoting technological solutions and identifying investment opportunities to enhance cassava production, processing and food security across OIC member States.

In its engagement with United Nations bodies, the Organization aligns its strategies with global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2 (zero hunger). By serving as a liaison between OIC member States and the broader initiatives of the United Nations, the Organization emphasizes partnership, resource mobilization and cooperative action to tackle food insecurity.

VII. Reasons for requesting observer status in the General Assembly

Granting observer status in the General Assembly to the Islamic Organization for Food Security would strengthen the Organization’s international presence and enable participation in key global discussions. Similar recognition has been extended to other regional organizations, such as the European Union, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Arab League. Observer status would enable the Organization to engage more effectively with United Nations agencies and global partners on shared priorities like food security, development and humanitarian action. It would also allow them, through the member States of OIC and the Organization, to introduce biennial General Assembly resolutions promoting cooperation, thereby increasing visibility and fostering strategic partnerships with the international community.

VIII. Satisfaction of the legal criteria

The legal nature of the Islamic Organization for Food Security is that of an intergovernmental body, as stated in its Statute, thus satisfying the legal criteria set out by the General Assembly in its decision 49/426 of 9 December 1994, in which the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee, decided that the granting of observer status in the General Assembly should be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organization whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

IX. Conclusion

In consideration of the foregoing, the Republic of Kazakhstan respectfully requests that the Islamic Organization for Food Security be granted observer status in the General Assembly. Such recognition would not only strengthen the Organization's ability to promote and safeguard the food security interests of its member States but also reinforce its collaborative engagement with the United Nations in pursuit of shared objectives. The Organization stands ready to contribute its expertise and resources to the international community, and observer status would significantly enhance these efforts.

We hope our request will receive favourable consideration, and we look forward to deepening our cooperation with the General Assembly and Member States.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Islamic Organization for Food Security in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Islamic Organization for Food Security,

1. *Decides* to invite the Islamic Organization for Food Security to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;
 2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the action necessary to implement the present resolution.
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