



Newsletter



OIC RESEARCH CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC HISTORY, ART AND CULTURE

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Beirut, LEBANON (Nov. - Dec. 2015)

and the Jeddah International Book Fair

Jeddah, SAUDI ARABIA (Dec. 2015)

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Editorial

The first article in this issue outlines the proceedings of the ninth session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers held in Niamey, capital of the Republic of Niger. The OIC's comprehensive action for tourism development in its Member States involves a number of cooperation schemes operated with the participation of its subsidiary organs and affiliated institutions working in the economic, cultural and information areas. IRCICA is one of the subsidiaries concerned, particularly through its engagement in cultural tourism development. This is an objective IRCICA serves in multifarious ways. The Niamey conference was an occasion for us to inform the Member States' Tourism Ministers on recent events and activities that contributed in this direction. The said activities of IRCICA include studies and publications on history and cultural heritage of Member States, history of art, archaeology, architecture; organization of festivals, publications and exhibitions on the fine arts and traditional handicrafts. Through these, IRCICA serves as a catalyst and focal point for promoting interest in the history, the arts and cultural heritage of the Muslim countries worldwide. At the same time, it contributes in preserving, making known and facilitating access to the sources and the assets of culture, history and arts which are the focuses of touristic activity. One of the IRCICA projects contributing to cultural tourism in the Muslim world is the Database of Islamic Architectural Monuments established with sponsorship from His Royal Highness Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, Head of the Supreme Council for Tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Database was launched at the request of the sixth session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, in 2008. It is a comprehensive documentation of Islamic sites and monuments for purposes of record, education, conservation and information. It is the first of its kind to be set up in the Muslim world similar to UNESCO's World Heritage List, and aims to cover all Islamic sites and monuments. Having mentioned the World Heritage List, I would like to add in passing that this year IRCICA will launch a series of workshops aiming to upgrade the knowledge of experts from the Member States on the modalities of nomination of cultural sites for UNESCO's List.

Another activity of IRCICA contributing to tourism development is the Craft Development Program. In this context and since 1991 IRCICA organized festivals, awards, seminars and exhibitions. These were hosted at different venues, in the following countries: Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. The festival held in Pendik, Istanbul last September, is featured in the present issue of the Newsletter; the Kuwait International Exhibition on Islamic Arts and its Application on Metal Crafts,

to be organized jointly with Kuwait Centre for Islamic Arts of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs next February, will be covered in the forthcoming issue. Meantime, preparations are being made, jointly with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Gambia, towards the "Banjul International Festival of Arts, Crafts and Creativity" to be held this year. Hundreds of artisans from around the world participate in the exhibitions and award competitions organized within the framework of these festivals.

In this context reference is due also to IRCICA's contributions to the OIC's City of Tourism programs. In the context of the "Al-Quds, OIC City of Tourism 2015", IRCICA and the Ministry of Culture of Palestine had jointly organized, in Ramallah, early 2015, an exhibition of 100-years old photographs of Al-Quds; the exhibition, prepared by IRCICA with selections from its photograph archive and titled "Al-Quds in The Memory" was opened on 4 January 2015 by the President of the State of Palestine H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Abbas and the Secretary General of OIC H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani. We continued to organize exhibitions of historical photographs of both the Haramain - Makkah al-Mukaramah and Madina al-Munawara - and Al-Quds throughout the year. Some are featured in this issue, such as the exhibition on Makkah and Madina displayed during the Putrajaya International Islamic Arts and Culture Festival 2015 (Malaysia) and the exhibition on Al-Quds which was contributed by IRCICA to the UN-OIC International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem (Jakarta, Indonesia). Also relating to the OIC's City of Tourism programs, IRCICA plans to organize two events during the program "Konya, OIC City of Tourism 2016": an International Symposium titled "Konya in Islamic Civilization" and, jointly with the Municipality of Konya, an International Festival of Artisans as at Work.

The following pages contain news on the above and many other activities, including the exhibitions of Islamic calligraphy that we have held in different parts of the world from Malaysia to Tataristan and UNESCO (Paris).

Our forthcoming issue will begin with highlights from the symposium that we are inaugurating in Bangkok, Thailand in the days as this issue goes to press. A joint project of IRCICA and Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs (DVIFA) of Thailand, it deals with the theme of "Interfaith Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence in Multicultural Societies".

Thank you for your interest,

*Assoc. Prof. Halit Eren
Director General, IRCICA*

IRCICA's Governing Board held its 31st Session

1-2 December 2015

IRCICA's Governing Board held its 31st session at the Centre's headquarters in Istanbul, on 1-2 December 2015. The Board examined the activity report of IRCICA for the year 2015, took note of the work program for 2016, and finalized the work program for 2017 which will be presented to the OIC's Council of Ministers for adoption.

H.E. Mr. Iyad Amin Madani, Secretary General of OIC was represented by Mrs. Mehla Ahmed Talebna, Director General of Cultural, Social and Family Affairs, OIC. The following Board members were present: Dr. Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Turki al-Subai (Chairman of the Board, State of Qatar), Mr. Khalaf M. Alezainah (State of Kuwait), Prof. Amadou Cissé Ndiéguène (Republic of Senegal), Cheikh Boureima Abdou Daouda (Republic of Niger), Mr. Alamine Moukhtar Adoum (Republic of Chad), Prof. Mehmet İpşirli (Republic of Turkey), Mrs. Saraya Arbi (Malaysia), Mr. Mashhood Ahmad Mirza (Islamic Republic of Pakistan). Dr. Saad Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Rashid from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was not able to attend, due to an emergency. The following members of IRCICA's Executive Board participated in the session: Dr. Salih Sadawi, Dr. Nazih Marouf, Mrs. Zeynep Durukal, Prof. Dr. Amir Pasic, Mr. Abdullah Topaloğlu, Dr. Sadık Ünay, Mr. Fayçal Benaissa, Ms. Turunjan Kawthar.

Since a new term of the Board was starting, Director General Dr. Halit Eren invited the members to proceed first with the election of the Board's Chairman for the term; Dr. Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Turki al-Subai (State of Qatar) was re-elected unanimously. In his address, Dr. al-Subai thanked the members for the confidence placed in him. He welcomed the new members, namely Mrs. Saraya Arbi (designated by Malaysia after retirement of its former representative, Prof. Dato Mohammed Najibuddin Ahmed Dawa); Mr. Alamine Moukhtar Adoum (Chad) and Sheikh Boureima Abdou Daouda (Niger) who were appointed by their respective countries after the latter's becoming member states of IRCICA's Governing Board. The Board expressed its appreciation for the valuable contributions made by former Board members H.E. Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Al-Murr (Chairman of the Federal National Council of the State of United Arab Emirates), Prof. Meruvert Abouseitova, Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ambassador Sayyid Qassim Masry from the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Dato Mohammed Najibuddin Ahmed Dawa from Malaysia.

The Board's Chair Dr. al-Subai pointed out that since the Board's previous session the Centre had undertaken diverse programs and activities comprising research, studies, conferences and exhibitions which were all successful. The Centre made creative efforts, he said, in preserving and promoting the art of calligraphy.

He also commended IRCICA's efforts in the fields of Islamic history, history of culture, arts and sciences of the Muslim world. He praised the exceptional efforts made by the Centre towards preservation of Islamic heritage, notably its ambitious project concerning the study of monuments and other structures of al-Quds. Dr. Subai evoked the generous donation made by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani part of which is being used to support the Centre's projects in this important field. The Chairman of the Board conveyed his gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey, host country of the Centre, for the interest and support extended to the Centre's activities. He expressed his gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Iyad Amin Madani, Secretary General of OIC for the close attention and support extended to the Centre.

Dr. Halit Eren delivered an address in which he outlined the objectives and activities of the Centre which acquire more importance day by day amidst developments in international relations. In this context he alluded to the Centre's role in promoting the study and correcting the image of Islamic civilization and Muslim peoples. He referred to the terrorist acts committed in various places in the world and said: "We all feel profound sorrow for the incidents of terrorism which have increased within and beyond the Islamic world. On the other hand, the Islamophobia problem in the West has also increased, as did the danger which threatens everybody and disturbs world peace. One of the objectives of the Centre set at its establishment is to endeavor to show the bright sides of our Islamic civilization, project the true image of Islam and encourage the moderate religious discourse that propagates the spirit of tolerance and acceptance of the other. Today we are called upon to draw from our past, find new innovative ideas and devise programs that can respond intellectually to this overwhelming wave of terrorism that is sweeping the world and threatening international peace."



Opening session: L-R: Mrs. Mehla Talebna, Director General of Cultural, Social and Family Affairs, OIC, representing H.E. the Secretary General of OIC, Dr. Abdul Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Turki al-Subai, Chairman of the Board; Dr. Halit Eren, IRCICA Director General

Mrs. Mehla Ahmed Talebna, representative of H.E. Secretary General of OIC, read the Secretary General's address to the meeting. The Secretary General said "It is always a pleasure for me to convey messages to the premises of IRCICA, a milieu of precious collections of literature and artifacts representing the memorable history and heritage of Islam, which continue to be preserved and developed through this Centre. ... For decades now this cultural subsidiary organ of the OIC has dedicated significant efforts to protect the Islamic treasures, and to disseminate knowledge about Islamic civilization, history,

medicine, astronomy, jurisprudence, literature, architecture and artisanship; all were undertaken with good intention, for the betterment of the life of humankind. Therefore, Islam values the promotion of harmony, peace, and development. Presumably, other religions would do the same. Such holistic logic of humanity and civilization makes possible dialogue to be directed toward mutual understanding which foster harmony and peace among human beings worldwide, including among different civilizations and religions. Yet we have seen in the contemporary global context, harmony and



Mr. Khalaf M. Alcazainah (Kuwait)



Prof. Amadou Cisse Ndioguene (Senegal)



Prof. Mehmet Ippirli (Turkey)



Sheikh Boursima Abdou Daouda (Niger)



Mrs. Saraya Arbi (Malaysia)



Mr. Mashood Ahmad Mirza (Pakistan)



Mr. Alamine Mookhtar Adoum (Chad)

and heritage, as well as about the Muslim world in general. ... I would also like to express my sincere appreciation and profound gratitude to the Republic of Turkey, the host country, for its continuous support to IRCICA through the allocation of suitable premises and provision of facilities, thanks to which IRCICA was able to operate and fulfill its functions and programs. I also take this occasion to thank the distinguished Chairman and Members of the Governing Board, who are eminent scholars and experts from the Member States, who keep contributing to the Centre's progress with their valuable advice and cooperation. ... Culture and harmony are two integral parts of humankind, two sides of the same coin, for the cultural dimension is the place of human being in the natural and social world, while harmony accepts the natural and social world as it is, trying to preserve rather than to change or exploit it. Since harmony emphasizes fitting-in, being in tune with others and with the physical environment, culture in its fundamental form is harmonious and naturally peaceful. When it comes to religion, such a peaceful nature of culture should be applicable without any doubt, as 'culture' manifests itself in thoughts and practices throughout the entire range of human activities, including in the field of religion. Islam is not an exception, for the teachings of this religion prescribe its followers to be humble and compassionate, to appreciate the greatness and splendor of The Almighty's creation, and to be brothers to fellow human beings. In addition, our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had told his followers, despite encouragement to be relentless in pursuing knowledge and fighting injustice, to respect the rights of human beings without any discrimination, in particular those who are the most vulnerable in the society such as women and children, including orphans. In the light of these, Muslim scholars have also enlightened the world as pioneers of social and physical sciences such as mathematics,

peace have somehow been defeated by egoism, intolerance, and discrimination; all the latter inhibit the ability of human beings to treat one another with consideration, respect, and mutual understanding. Indeed, what I have just said is a real challenge for all, including for the Muslim world, and more particularly for IRCICA, as a kind reminder for all of us to reflect upon".

During the working sessions, Dr. Halit Eren presented the activity report of the Centre for 2015 and the 2017 program proposal accompanied by the proposed budget; he recalled that the 2016 work program was already approved by the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers. The Board members raised comments and formulated recommendations on the activities. They adopted the report of the Director General on the implementation of the activity program for 2015, and the work program and budget proposed for 2017.

A series of recommendations were made, with emphasis on possible means of diffusing information on the Centre's activities more widely around the world but at the same time more specifically to potentially interested institutions and circles; reinforcing public awareness in those areas in which the Centre serves as a focal point for the OIC such as Islamic arts and calligraphy and Islamic cultural and architectural heritage, among others.



The 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers

Niamy, 23-24 December 2015

The 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers was inaugurated by the President of the Republic of Niger H.E. Mr. Issoufou Mohamadou in Niamey, capital city of the Republic of Niger, on 23 December 2015. The Secretary General of the OIC H.E. Mr. Iyad Amin Madani was present at Session, which was attended by the Ministers of Tourism of OIC Member States.

In his inaugural address, President Issoufou stated that the tourism sector is an important support for the economy and development of OIC Member States. The President said that the huge tourism potential in Member States call for greater attention to be devoted to the sector since it provides employment opportunities and impacts on other sectors of the economy.

OIC Secretary General Mr. Iyad Amin Madani delivered an address underlining the importance of Niger as regards tourism, especially for its African cultural heritage. The Secretary General said that tourism provides 1 in every 11 jobs globally, that OIC Member States received about 147 million tourists in 2013 and recorded a tangible increase in tourism income.

During the working sessions, IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren briefed the ministers on IRCICA's activities in the area of tourism, particularly cultural tourism. These activities, some of which developed into leading initiatives on their respective subjects, met interest. They include: research, training, database development, restoration and preservation projects relating to cultural and architectural heritage that is destroyed or under threat in conflict regions; research and conservation projects on the Islamic heritage in Al-Quds; festivals, congresses, international competitions and exhibitions on the arts and traditional handicrafts of the OIC member countries.

The ministers renewed their commitment to strengthening efforts to create awareness about tourist attractions in OIC countries through exchange of documentary films. They condemned the level of destruction, theft and looting of historical artifacts and monuments due to terrorism and armed extremism in different regions.

The offers made by the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 3rd and 4th OIC Tourism fairs in 2017 and 2019 respectively were welcomed. The Member States were invited to participate in the regional project on the development of sustainable tourism through the project for the "network of parks and cross border resorts in west Africa".

The Ministers of Tourism issued a comprehensive resolution on the development of tourism in OIC Member States for the coming two years. They called on relevant OIC institutions to support the process of implementing the programme, including the establishment of an electronic Islamic tourism portal and the staging of cuisine and cultural festivals. The conference decided to proclaim Madina al-Munawarra and the Iranian city of Tabriz as the capitals of Islamic Tourism for 2017 and 2018 respectively. They commended the preparations made for the program "Konya, OIC City of Tourism 2016" adopted earlier by the OIC. In this connection, it is noteworthy that within the framework of this commemoration program, IRCICA will organize an International Symposium titled "Konya in Islamic Civilization" and an International Festival of Artisans at Work.

During the period of the conference, Dr. Halit Eren together with Dr. Nezih Maruf, Head, Craft Development Program, IRCICA, paid a visit to the President of the University of Niger.

Events and activities

Calligraphy exhibition at Kazan Kremlin Museum (Tatarstan, Russian Federation) and meetings with academic circles

Kazan, 11 September – 11 October 2015

An exhibition of Islamic calligraphy prepared by IRCICA was opened on 11 September 2015 at the Reserve Museum of Kul Sharif Mosque in Kazan Kremlin (Kazan Kremlin Museum) affiliated to the Ministry of Culture of Tatarstan (Russian Federation).

Ms. Zilya Valeeva, Director of Kazan Kremlin (ex-Deputy Prime Minister and ex-Minister of Culture), and Dr. Halit Eren, Director General of IRCICA, jointly opened the event with addresses. Cooperation that has been going on for two decades between Tatarstan Government and cultural institutions on one hand and IRCICA on the other was underlined. Director of Kazan Kremlin Ms. Valeeva thanked IRCICA for having brought a valuable collection of calligraphic works for display at Kazan Kremlin; for his part Dr. Eren expressed his appreciation to Ms. Zilya Valeeva and the Museum's Curator Ms. Nuria Garaeva for the collaboration extended towards this event. He offered to the Museum of Kazan Kremlin a copy of the album of historical photographs of Makkah al-Mukarramah and Madina al-Munawara published by IRCICA. Mr. Turhan Dilmaç, Consul General of Turkey in Kazan addressed the opening, expressed appreciation of the fact that the collection of calligraphies brought by IRCICA will become part of Kul Sharif Mosque's Reserve Museum collection and underlined the importance of the museum as a venue for cross-cultural relations.

The exhibition comprised 27 calligraphy plates by 11 calligraphers. It was on display for one month.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, Dr. Halit Eren together with Ms. Nuria Garaeva, Curator of Kazan Kremlin Museum, gave interviews to Kazan Television about the exhibition, IRCICA's



Opening of the exhibition

activities on arts, and cooperation between Tatarstan and IRCICA in various domains.

During the same period, on the eve of the exhibition, IRCICA Director General met with the President of Kazan Federal University Prof. Ilshat Gafurov and the President of Tatarstan Academy of Sciences Prof. Myakzum Salakhov, at their offices. The main topic of both meetings was the congress on Islamic Archeology to be organized jointly by: Kazan Federal University through its Institute of History and Oriental Studies, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences through its A.H. Halikov Institute of Archeology, and IRCICA. The congress will be third in IRCICA's series of congresses on this theme after those of Istanbul (2005) and Islamabad (2011). The third congress will take place in Kazan on on 17-18 June 2016.

IRCICA Director General also met with: Prof. Rafael Khakimov, Vice-President of Tatarstan Academy of Sciences and Director of its History Institute. He visited the Mufti of Tatarstan Kamil

h a z r a t Samigullin, and also paid a courtesy visit to Mr. Turhan Dilmaç, Consul General of Turkey in Kazan.



Director of Kazan Kremlin Ms. Zilya Valeeva received IRCICA's album of Makkah and Madina photographs offered to the Museum collection



President of the Academy of Sciences Prof. Myakzum Salakhov offered publications of the Academy to IRCICA.



Meeting with the President of Kazan Federal University Prof. Ilshat Gafurov: a copy of a calligraphic plate from the exhibition offered by Dr. Eren

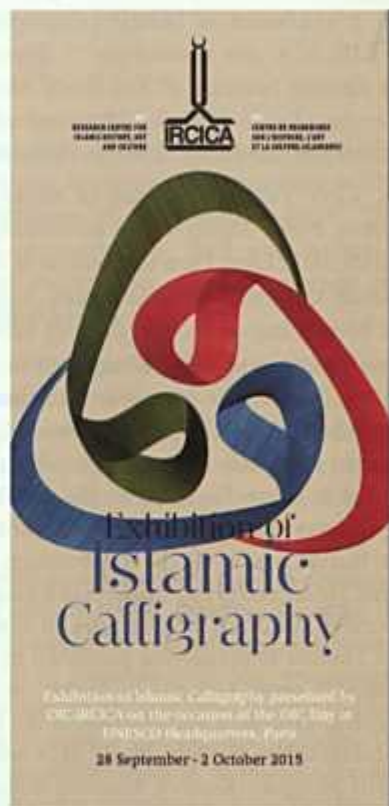
Exhibition of “Islamic Calligraphy” by IRCICA on the occasion of the OIC Day celebration at UNESCO Headquarters Paris, 28 September-2 October 2015

IRCICA organized an exhibition of “Islamic Calligraphy” on the occasion of the Third Edition of the OIC Day Celebration at UNESCO, Paris on 28 September 2015. The exhibition, on display till 2 October, consisted of works by outstanding living calligraphers and reproductions of some works having won awards in calligraphy competitions organized by IRCICA.

The opening of the exhibition was attended by the OIC Member States’ ambassadors in Paris and delegations at UNESCO. The introductory address was delivered by Ambassador Anar Karimov, Permanent Delegate of Azerbaijan at UNESCO, Dean of the Member States’ permanent delegates at UNESCO. Then IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren briefed the audience on IRCICA’s various activities as a research center and the projects and programs it conducts with the aim of promoting the art of calligraphy.

The OIC Day celebration program started earlier that day with a round-table on “Rapprochement of cultures: the contributions of the Islamic world” convened by the OIC Group at UNESCO. The speakers were Mrs. Mehla Ahmed Talebna, Director General of Cultural, Social and Family Affairs, OIC (“The Role of the OIC in the

Rapprochement of Cultures: objectives, actions and challenges”); Ambassador Ahmad Jalali, Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran to UNESCO (“Language as regards the Artistic Understanding of Theology: its role in the rapprochement of cultures”); Prof. Bouazza Benachir, Secretary General, Association of French Language Writers (“Interculturality in Question”), with moderator Mr. Osman Diop, Advisor for Education for the African Group at UNESCO.



Exhibitions of calligraphy and historical photographs of Makkah and Madina within the Putrajaya International Islamic Arts and Culture Festival 2015, Malaysia

Putrajaya, 29 October-8 November 2015

Putrajaya International Islamic Arts Festival 2015, Malaysia, highlighted the theme "The Silk Road and the Spice Route" as conveyors of the Islamic civilization. The festival, organized by the Government of Malaysia, Restu Foundation Malaysia and IRCICA, featured exhibitions of copies of the Holy Quran and publications from around the world, historical photographs, various arts including calligraphy, costumes and fashion design, handicrafts including traditional weapons, and a marketplace with objects and artifacts from different countries Algeria, China, Iran, Indonesia, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Tunisia, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Within the framework of the festival, IRCICA organized an exhibition of calligraphy comprising 20 plates and an exhibition of historical photographs of Makkah and Madina.

In the same context the Director General of IRCICA Dr. Halit Eren gave a lecture open to all, on the theme "Arts in Islamic Civilization".

The festival theme was reflected in the main exhibition, where Treasures of the Silk Road and the Spice Route were featured. It underlined that Islam is a constructive religion which brought the age of discovery into the various disciplines of the sciences and technology as well as art and literature. As a result, Islam has enriched the various cultures that it comes into contact with. In this process the Silk Road and the Spice Route were major channels of contacts and communication as well as of trade. Detailed information on the festival can be accessed at <http://www.piiacuf.com>.

During this visit to Malaysia Dr. Eren made contacts with authorities and scholars in Malaysia. On 26 October Dr. Halit Eren



Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, visiting IRCICA's exhibition

met with Tan Sri Dr. Rais Yatim, President of International Islamic University Malaysia (IKIM) and ex-Foreign Minister and Culture Minister, Malaysia; the meeting took place at Tan Sri Yatim's office at IKIM. It focused on cooperation between IRCICA and IKIM; specific projects were also touched upon.

The same day Dr. Eren had a meeting with Dr. Syed Hamid Albar, Chairman of Humaniti Malaysia, Special Envoy of OIC for Myanmar, and former Malaysian Foreign Minister.



Tan Sri Dr. Rais Yatim, President, International Islamic University Malaysia (IKIM) met with Dr. Halit Eren



Meeting with Dr. Syed Hamid Albar, Chairman of Humaniti Malaysia and former Malaysian Foreign Minister

Islamic calligraphy and historical photographs of Al-Quds, exhibits during the 31st COMCEC Ministerial Session

Istanbul, 25-26 November 2015

Ministers of the Member States attending the 31st Ministerial Session of COMCEC which was held in Istanbul on 25-26 November 2015 visited exhibitions of calligraphy and of historical photographs of Al-Quds which were organized by IRCICA in galleries adjacent to the conference halls. The exhibitions were opened by the President of Turkey H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan together with the Secretary General of OIC H.E. Mr. Iyad Amin Madani following the opening of the COMCEC session. The calligraphic plates were compiled from among winners' plates at IRCICA's international calligraphy competitions. The historical photographs of Al-Quds dating from late 19th-early 20th century were selected from the Centre's archive.



The President of Turkey H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited IRCICA's exhibitions



IRCICA's activities featured during the 4th OIC Halal Middle East Exhibition

Sharjah, 8-10 December 2015

The 4th OIC Halal Middle East Exhibition took place under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohamed Al Qassimi, Ruler of Sharjah and member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. It was opened by H.H. Sheikh Khaled bin Abdullah bin Sultan Al Qassimi, Chairman of the Department of Seaports and Customs of Sharjah. Within the framework of this large-scale event, IRCICA organized an exhibition featuring its studies and publications on the subject of the Islamic history and heritage of Al-Quds. The event was organized by the Government of Sharjah and the OIC's Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT, Casablanca) on 8-10 December 2015.



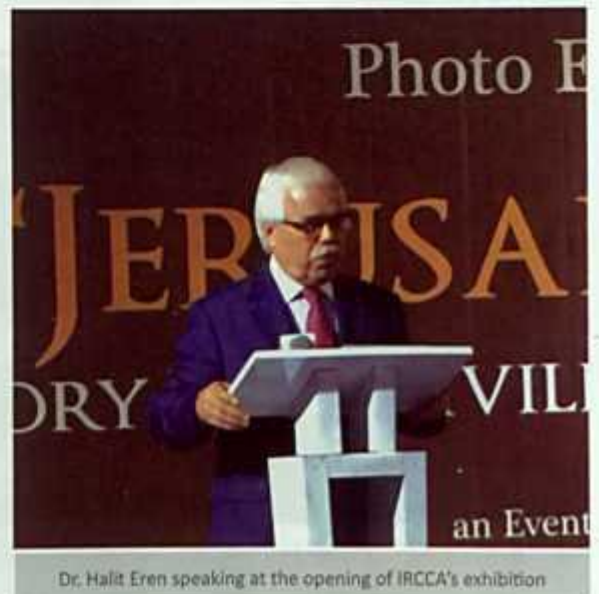
H.H. Sheikh Khaled bin Abdullah bin Sultan Al Qassimi visited IRCICA's exhibition. A copy of the album of photographs of Al-Quds published by IRCICA was offered to Sheikh Khaled on behalf of IRCICA's Director General, by the curator of the exhibition Mr. Sald Kasimoğlu (IRCICA)

“Jerusalem: History and Civilization” photograph exhibition by IRCICA during the UN-OIC International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem

Jakarta, 14-16 December 2015

The International Conference on the Question of Jerusalem, on the theme: “Addressing the present and shaping the future of Jerusalem” was organized jointly by the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation from 14-16 December 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

An exhibition titled “Jerusalem: History and Civilization” was organized on the occasion of the conference jointly by the Embassy of the State of Palestine in Jakarta, IRCICA, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Displayed at the National Gallery of Indonesia (affiliated with the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia) from 16-20 December 2015, the exhibition comprised 72 historical photographs selected from IRCICA's archives. Speakers at the official opening of the exhibition were the Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Jakarta Mr. Fariz N. Mehdawi, the Deputy Governor for Culture and Tourism, Jakarta, Prof. Dr. Sylviana Murni, and IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren. The Ambassadors of OIC Member States in Jakarta



Dr. Halit Eren speaking at the opening of IRCICA's exhibition

were present at the opening. Views of Jerusalem at present, shot by Mr. Süleyman Gündüz, photographer of Al-Quds and world heritage sites, were also displayed beside the historical photographs.

During the period of the conference, the Secretary General of the OIC H.E. Mr. Iyad Amin Madani and IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren paid a visit to the Minister of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia H.E. Mr. Anies Baswedan. IRCICA's current and planned activities in the cultural sphere were referred to among many subjects concerning cultural cooperation among OIC Member States.

Dr. Eren was also received by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Indonesia Mr. Abdurrahman Mohammad Fachir. Talks were held on various aspects of cultural cooperation and enhancing working relations between Indonesia and IRCICA.

During the period of the conference and exhibition, Dr. Halit Eren also paid a courtesy visit to Former President of Indonesia H.E. Mr. Sisilo Bambang Yodyono (in office from 2004-2014).

IRCICA participated in the Second International Congress on Preservation and Revival of Manuscript Heritage

Karbala, Iraq, 4-5 October 2015

IRCICA participated in the Second International Congress on Preservation and Revival of Manuscript Heritage which was organized by the Holy Abbas Shrine, Department of Cultural and Intellectual Affairs, Karbala, Iraq on 4-5 October 2015. Director General Dr. Halit Eren gave information to the participating scholars on IRCICA's research projects and training facilities concerning the recording, preservation and restoration of old manuscripts. Dr. Fazil Bayat (senior researcher, IRCICA) participated in the congress organized subsequently, on 6 October, by the Karbala Heritage Centre, with a paper on "The Ottoman documents and their importance in the study of the history of Karbala".



Sayyid Ahmad al-Safi, Chairman of Holy Abbas Shrine, expressed interest in IRCICA's publications

Pendik International Festival for Islamic Artisans as at Work

Istanbul, 4-13 September 2015

By Dr. Nezih Maruf

IRCICA and Pendik Municipality in Istanbul, Turkey jointly organized the 2015 Pendik International Festival for Islamic Artisans as at work which took place in Pendik, Istanbul on 4-13 September 2015. Artisans from 34 countries participated in the festival, where their pavilions formed what can be described as an international village of traditional craft heritage. They displayed their works, tools and techniques in the following branches: miniature, mother-of-pearl works, pottery, ornamentation, gilding, leather and accessories, metal repousse, copperwork, carpets, rugs, tapestry and felting, wood engraving, handmade Suzani and embroidery, traditional costumes, fashion designing, jewelry, batik, painting, mosaic, stone work, lacquer works and silk products, among others.

The opening ceremony: Dr. Kenan Sahin, Mayor of Pendik, Dr. Halit Eren, Director General of IRCICA, Mr. Erol Kaya, AKP Deputy from Istanbul, Mr. Osman Tunç, Pendik Town Governor, and guests, together with artisans

Artisans from the following countries participated in the festival: Algeria, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Dagestan (Russia Federation), Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Sultanate of Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tatarstan (Russia Federation), Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan.



The festival was organized within IRCICA's long-term Craft Development Program which places emphasis on traditional handicrafts in the OIC Member States and tries to contribute to their revival, preservation and development.

This was the second festival organized in Pendik. The first one, titled Pendik International Festival for Artisans-At-Work, was held on 20-28 September 2014. Within the framework of this program, IRCICA had previously organized the following events, jointly with the relevant governmental bodies and institutions in various OIC Member States:

1- Tabriz International Festival for Arts, Crafts and Creativity; International Congress on "Innovation Dimension in Arts and Crafts"; Tabriz International Award for Innovation and Creativity in Crafts - Awards worth US\$60,000, and the

International Exhibition of Artisans-as at-work, Tabriz, Iran, on 8-15 May 2015: Artisans came from Algeria, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Crimea, France, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tatarstan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.



2- "Sharjah Heritage Days: Islamic Heritage as One Tent" a large event which included folkloric music, culinary arts, and handicrafts from different regions of the Muslim world, organized in Sharjah, on 6-25 April 2014: It included the Exhibition for Innovator Artisans, with artisans participating from 30 different countries who came with their instruments and demonstrated their techniques to the visitors, displaying a variety of products, such as Embroidery, Weaving, Costumes, Carpets, Kilims, Sadou, Pottery, Silver Works, Metal Crafts, Engraving and Ornamentation, Leather products, Ceramic, Mosaic, Textiles, etc.



3-The First International Exhibition in Kuwait on Handmade Pray Carpets, 29 December 2013- 9 January 2014 with participation of 12 master innovators specialized in handmade weaving of pray carpets from 12 countries.



4-International Congress on: Features, Characteristics and Cultural and Economic Contribution of Arts and Handicrafts accompanied by an Exhibition of Albums, Catalogues and Books Published in the Field of Arts and Handicrafts, Tehran and Tabriz, 5-9 May 2013. Specialists of handicrafts came from the following countries: South Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Malaysia, Algeria, Bosnia, Pakistan, Mauritania, United Arab Emirates, Tajikistan, Qatar, Palestine, Tunisia, Uganda, Azerbaijan, Sudan, Yemen, Switzerland, France, Ukraine and the World Intellectual Property Organization WIPO of Geneva. The exhibition displayed masterpieces of miniature, ceramic, carpets and kilims, glass works, leather works, book-bindings, textiles, jewelry and silver works and metal works, among others.

in Crafts (Worth US\$100.000); and the International Exhibition of Artisans-as at-Work.

5-The 2012 Muscat International Festival for Arts and Crafts, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, on 3 February-1 March 2012 which attracted one and a half million visitors; it included the Second Edition of the Muscat International Award for Innovation and Creativity in Crafts (Worth US\$150.000) and the International Exhibition of Artisans-as at-Work.

7-Doha International Handicrafts Festival, Doha, 5-9 December, 2010; International Seminar on Innovation and Creativity in Crafts; Doha International Award for Innovation and Creativity in Crafts, and the International Exhibition of Artisans-as at-Work.

6-Muscat International Festival for Arts, Heritage and Creativity, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, on 27 January-24 February 2011 which attracted one million visitors; International Seminar on Innovation and Creativity in Arts and Crafts; Muscat International Award for Innovation and Creativity



11. Uluslararası İslam Ülkeleri Geleneksel Sanatçılar Buluşması
11th International Islamic Countries Traditional Artisans Meeting

- 8-International Congress on Employment of Handicrafts within the Architectural Projects and exhibitions of artisans as at work, Tunis, 27-31 October 2008.
- 9-International Congress on Tourism and Traditional Handicrafts: Exhibition of Crafts Masterpieces from the Muslim World, Bazaar of traditional handicrafts of the Member States; Exhibitions of Islamic Artisans as at work; International Award for the craft innovators of the Muslim World, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 7-14 November 2006.
- 10- International Congress on Islamic Arts and Crafts, Isfahan, October 2002;
- 11- International Seminar on Traditional Carpets and Kilims in the Muslim World: Past, Present & Future Prospects for Developing this Heritage with the continuous changes in the Market, Design, Quality and Applied Techniques, Tunis, November 1999.
- 12- International Seminar on Arabesque in Traditional Crafts of OIC Countries, Damascus, 1997.
- 13- International Seminar on Crafts in Traditional Architecture, Cairo, 1995.
- 14- International Artisans-At-Work Festival, Islamabad; Craft Awards, International Seminar on Creativity in Traditional Crafts, Islamabad, 1994.
- 15- International Seminar on Prospects for the Development of Traditional Crafts in OIC Countries, Rabat, 1991.



Artisan Parvin Kazimov, Carpet Making, Azerbaijan



Artisan Fakhria Nizami, Tezhib and Miniature, Afghanistan



Artisan Zhyiparkul Zhunusova, Fashion Designer, Kyrgyzstan



Artisan Ismet Huseinovic, Coppersmith, Bosnia & Herzegovina



Artisan Lalfali Mounira, Metal repousse, Algeria



Artisan Laila Al Khusna Rahardjo, Batik, Indonesia



Artisan Alikhan Akhmedov, Gold and Silver Works, Daghistan, Russia Federation



Artisan Monira Khatun, Embroidery and Traditional Costumes,
Assistant: Rina Akter, Bangladesh



Artisan Niranjan Jonnalagadda,
Batik, India



Artisan Tahany Nabil AbdelMonem Hassan El-Gendy,
Jewelry, Egypt



Artisan Madina AKHMETOVA, Textiles Weaving, Tapestry and Felting, Kazakhstan



Artisan Parastoo Haddadi, Miniature, Iran



Artisan Jamal AlDeen Mohammad Deeb Al-Akhras, Mosaic, Jordan



Artisan Abu Laban, Yousef Yahya S,
Pottery, Saudi Arabia



Artisan Ghaleb Ghaleb, Copper Works and Jewelry,
Lebanon



Artisan Naeem Shazad, Lacquer Works, Pakistan



Artisan Mirsaid Nigmatov, Wood Work,
Uzbekistan

A group of Artisans from Turkey took part in the exhibitions in which they displayed their works in the field of Miniature, Ceramic, Illumination, Ibru, Calligraphy as Artisan Dilek Yerlikaya and Artisan Munevver Ucer.

Artisan Khalid Said Salim,
Wood Works, Sultanate of Oman



IRCICA participated in the Beirut Arab International Book Fair

Beirut, 27 November - 10 December 2015

IRCICA displayed its publications in the 59th Beirut Arab International Book Fair which took place from 27 November - 10 December 2015. The largest of its kind in the world, the fair attracted publishers and authors from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates. The Beirut Arab International Book Fair has a diversified cultural program, including seminars, lectures, book discussions, plays, concerts and book-signing events.

IRCICA's participation was coordinated with the cooperation of Yunus Emre Institute in Beirut. On display were IRCICA's books on the history of Muslim countries, in particular the Middle East region; studies based on historical archives; and, artistic publications, particularly calligraphy albums and catalogues, predominantly in the Arabic language. Interested visitors learnt about the Centre's activities from Mr. Mustafa Şahidi Örnek, Head of IRCICA's Library and Documentation Department, who was the curator of the stand.



L-R: Ambassador of Turkey in Lebanon Mr. Çağatay Erciyes, Director of IRCICA Library Mr. Şahidi Örnek, and Director of Yunus Emre Institute in Beirut Mr. Cengiz Eroğlu

Participation in the Jeddah International Book Fair

Jeddah, 12 - 22 December 2015

Samples of IRCICA's publications were displayed at the Jeddah International Book Fair, from 12-22 December 2015. The fair was inaugurated by the Governor of Makkah Prince Khaled Al-Faisal; the Governor of Jeddah Prince Misaal bin Majed (Chairman of the Supreme Committee of the Exhibition) and the Minister of Culture and Information Mr. Adel Al-Toraifi. 440 publishers from 25 countries participated in the fair. The majority of IRCICA's publications displayed were bibliographies (particularly bibliographies of translations of the Holy Quran), albums of historical photographs of Makkah al-Mukarramah and Madina al-Munawara, books on the history of Arab countries based on first-hand archive documents, catalogues of winners' works at IRCICA's calligraphy competitions.



Meetings, Cooperation

Visits of H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary General of OIC, to IRCICA

IRCICA was honoured with the visit of H.E. Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani, Secretary General of OIC, on its premises on 5 September and on 19 November 2015. The Secretary General, who was in Istanbul for meetings, accepted IRCICA Director General's invitations to visit the Centre. These were excellent occasions for Dr. Eren's briefing H.E. the Secretary General on developments in the activities. H.E. the Secretary General recorded his impressions in the Centre's Visitors' Book, as follows: "

I was honoured to visit the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) and I took note of the immense efforts made by this centre with the aim of preserving the human and cultural heritage and disseminating studies and publications which contributed largely to researchers around the world in terms of knowledge.

I would like to take this opportunity to greet all the employees of this centre to whom the merit of the achievements is due, especially that of making known the important themes relating to the Muslim world, and at their head brother Dr. Halit Eren, Director General of the Centre.

I cannot but reiterate the OIC's commitment to support the Centre in order to allow it fulfil its noble mission."



Visit of Prof. Dr. Yekta Saraç, Chairman of the Council of Higher Education of Turkey, 2 October 2015

Prof. Dr. Yekta Saraç, Chairman of the Council of Higher Education of Turkey, visited IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren on 2 October 2015. The meeting focused on subjects of common interest and areas of cooperation between the Council of Higher Education of Turkey and IRCICA. Dr. Eren also briefed the guest on the Centre's activities and the various projects it undertook in cooperation with universities in Turkey and other OIC Member States. Prof. Saraç expressed his interest and appreciation of these activities.



Cooperation between The Gambia and IRCICA: Ministers from the Gambian Government received IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren, October 2015

Preparations are under way for joint cultural activities to be organized by the Government of Gambia and IRCICA during 2016. Steps were taken in this direction during IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren's visit to The Gambia on 14-16 October 2015.

The meeting with H.E. Mr. Benjamin Roberts, Minister of Culture and Tourism of Gambia, focused on the project to hold a "Banjul International Festival of Arts, Crafts and Creativity" in 2016. The idea of this event was formulated during the period of the Eighth Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministries (ISTM) which was held in Banjul, on 4-6 December 2013 and developed since then to be concretized as a composite event involving an award competition, exhibitions and a congress.



During the meeting with Dr. Aboubacar Abdullah Senghore, Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology of Gambia, a cooperation agreement was signed, determining the concept and modalities of an International Symposium on "History of Islamic Civilization in West Africa". The symposium, scheduled for 27-28 July 2016, will bring together specialists from around the world.

During the period of his visit to Gambia, Dr. Eren paid a courtesy visit to Ambassador Dr. Omar Jah, a diplomat and a scholar in Islamic studies who was Gambia's ambassador to Middle Eastern countries from 1982 on and represented his country in the Governing Board of IRCICA from 1990 to 2002 and chaired the Board in the latter part of his term. In Banjul Director General Dr. Eren also paid a visit to the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey in Banjul, Mr. Ergin Soner,

Visit of Mrs. Ramatoulaye Diallo N'Diaye, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Crafts, Republic of Mali, 5 November 2015

Mrs. Ramatoulaye Diallo N'Diaye, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Crafts of Mali visited IRCICA on 5 November 2015, accompanied by the Ambassador of Mali in Ankara Mr. Awb. Brahim Soumare. An extensive meeting at Director General Dr. Halit Eren's office focused on the areas of cooperation, past and eventual, between the cultural authorities of Mali and IRCICA. Then the Director General guided the Minister and the Ambassador to the library and some departments of the Centre briefing them on the activities and publications. At the end of her visit the Minister recorded her impressions in the Visitors' Book: "To the Director General of IRCICA, May Allah, the Greatest enlighten further his heart, and give him the longest time in this earth to keep pursuing his lifetime job, which has been to help, to instruct, to guide, and encourage his fellow brothers and sisters, please receive my sincere gratitude, the gratitude of the Government of Mali through my humble words."



Ambassador Awb. Brahim Soumare, Ambassador of the Republic of Mali in Ankara, visited IRCICA

17 November 2015

The Ambassador of the Republic of Mali in Ankara, Ambassador Awb. Brahim Soumare, visited IRCICA Director General Dr. Eren on 17 November 2015. Talks were held on furthering cooperation between cultural and educational institutions of Mali and IRCICA. The meeting was also a follow-up of the topics discussed during the visit of Mrs. Ramatoulaye Diallo N'Diaye, Minister of Culture, Tourism and Crafts of Mali sometime earlier. Cooperation between the Republic of Mali and IRCICA progresses in the various areas of IRCICA's activities, especially through the participation of artists and artisans from Mali in the Centre's handicraft festivals and exhibitions.



IRCICA received a delegation from Institute of Al-Quran Terengganu (IQT), Malaysia

12 October 2015

Representatives of the Institute of Al-Quran Terengganu (IQT), Malaysia visited IRCICA with the aim of establishing collaboration between IRCICA and IQT and benefiting from IRCICA's academic advice and institutional experience. Thus on 12 October 2015 Mr. Aziz bin Wahid, Registrar; Mr. Mohd Zaini bin Mohd Nor, Assistant Director (Academic), and Mr. Ahmad Mahzor bin Abdul Kadir, Assistant Director (Research and Publication) met with Director General Dr. Halit Eren. An exchange of views and information on the activities and possible collaboration took place.



Study visit by Palestinian urban planning and local development authorities within the framework of Fatih Sultan Mehmet Waqf University's program on cultural heritage, 13 October 2015

A delegation of 13 representatives from the Ministry of Local Government (Ramallah), the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, universities and other Palestinian institutions visited IRCICA on 13 October within the framework of a week's study visit organized by Fatih Sultan Mehmet Waqf University, Faculty of Architecture and Design (Istanbul) and titled "Turkish experience in cultural heritage preservation

and development". The Palestinian Ministry of Local Government is working towards formulating a national concept for regeneration planning of historic centers at the local government level. The study visit was aimed at learning about experiences in revitalizing cultural heritage and using cultural heritage sites for investment purposes. At IRCICA, Prof. Amir Pasic, Head of the Department of Architecture and

Heritage Preservation, outlined the IRCICA experiences in preservation and study of cultural and architectural heritage all over the Muslim world, with special focus on "Post-war rehabilitation of historic city of Mostar" as a case study. Assoc.

Prof. Cengiz Tomar outlined IRCICA's research project on the history of Jerusalem, speaking of "Ottoman documents related to Jerusalem".



Mr. Artur Silva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, visited IRCICA

23 November 2015

Mr. Artur Silva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, paid a visit to IRCICA on 23 November 2015. The meeting with IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren touched upon subjects of cultural cooperation between Guinea-Bissau and IRCICA. The Director General briefed Minister Silva on the Centre's various activity programs. A tour to some sections of the Centre followed.



Visit of the Consul General of the Republic of Kosovo in Istanbul Mr. Rahim Morina

10 November 2015

Mr. Rahim Morina, Consul General of the Republic of Kosovo in Istanbul, visited IRCICA on 10 November 2015. Dr. Halit Eren gave information to Mr. Morina about the various activities of IRCICA, especially its academic congresses on the "History of Islamic Civilization in the Balkans", the region where Kosovo belongs. Kosovo was represented in several conferences organized by IRCICA, such as the academic congress on "The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) on their Centenary" which was organized by IRCICA on 19-21 October 2012.



The Ambassador of the State of Palestine in Ankara Dr. Faed Mustafa visited IRCICA

11 December 2015

Ambassador Dr. Faed Mustafa, Ambassador of the State of Palestine in Ankara, Turkey, accompanied by Consul General Mr. Abdulkarim, visited IRCICA on 11 December 2015. Director General Dr. Halit Eren guided the guests to the different sections of the Centre where the staff concerned introduced the activities. The Ambassador recorded his impressions in the Centre in the Visitors' Book: "I am honoured to visit this important centre, and all I can do is to express my deep esteem for it, its Director General Dr. Halit Eren and his colleagues, for the immense efforts they are making to preserve the history of the Islamic nation and transfer the contents of history books to the coming generations for their benefit from these rich experiences. ... As the Ambassador of the State of Palestine in the Republic of Turkey, I cannot but also express my gratitude for the important place that the Palestinian cause, the city of Al-Quds in particular, are given in the context of the Centre's activities."



Ambassador Canseyit Tuymanbayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Ankara, visited IRCICA

18 December 2015

Ambassador Canseyit Tuymanbayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Ankara, visited IRCICA on 18 December 2015. The meeting with IRCICA Director General Dr. Halit Eren was an occasion to appraise the activities that resulted over the past years from cooperation between the Government and the universities of Kazakhstan on one hand and IRCICA on the other. These include the international congress on "Islamic Civilisation in Central Asia" which was organized jointly by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Ministry of Education and Sciences of Kazakhstan and IRCICA in the capital Astana, in 2007; IRCICA's publication containing the proceedings of the congress is a comprehensive reference on the subject. Another important aspect of the close interest and cooperation extended by Kazakhstan to IRCICA's activities was Kazakhstan's membership in IRCICA's Governing Board where it was represented by Prof. Dr. Meruert Abouseitova during the Board's term that ended in 2015. Kazakh artisans' active participation in the handicraft festivals organized by IRCICA was also mentioned with appreciation.



U.S. President Obama's Special Representative to Muslim Communities Mr. Shaarik H. Zafar visited IRCICA Director General

17 December 2015

Mr. Shaarik H. Zafar, President Barack Obama's Special Representative to Muslim Communities, visited Dr. Halit Eren, Director General of IRCICA, on 17 December 2015. During the meeting, Dr. Eren briefed Mr. Zafar on the Centre's activities, particularly those that highlight the cultural, scientific and artistic interactions between Muslim communities and the Western world in history and at present. With these efforts, the Director General said, IRCICA aims at opening new avenues towards acknowledgement and further study of the contributions of world's cultures to each other. Dr. Eren guided Mr. Shaarik Zafar to the library building of the Centre where he briefed Mr. Zafar on the library's book collections and services and introduced the Centre's publications resulting from research and academic congresses. At the end of the visit Mr. Zafar recorded his impressions in the Visitors' Book: "Thank you very much for your warmth and hospitality. But more importantly, thank you for the great service you are providing to the memory and history of Islamic art, culture, and civilization."



Mr. Shaarik Zafar was appointed as the Special Representative to Muslim Communities at the U.S. Department of State in July 2014. He is responsible for driving the engagement of Secretary of State John Kerry with Muslim communities around the world on issues of mutual interest, in support of shared goals and to advance U.S. Foreign policy. Mr. Zafar, of Pakistani origin, is a graduate of the Plan II Honors Program at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas School of Law. He received the 2011 Outstanding Young Texas Ex Award, which recognizes alumni under the age of 40 who have made significant achievements in their careers and service to the University. He is a recipient of the DHS Secretary's Award for Excellence, the DHS Certificate of Achievement, and a NCTC Team Award. He has also received awards from a number of civil society organizations including the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America, the South Asian Chamber of Commerce, and the North American South Asian Bar Association.



Visits of a delegation from Restu Foundation and Putrajaya city administration and development authorities, Malaysia

12 December 2015

The Chairman of Restu Foundation, Malaysia Datuk Jaffar Zainalabidin and the accompanying delegation, along with city administration and development authorities of Putrajaya, visited IRCICA on 12 December 2015. Datuk Zainalabidin and Dr. Halit Eren met for an appraisal of joint activities realized in the past and expected future ones. Then Dr. Eren guided the visitors to the library and some other sections of the Centre. On other days of their Istanbul program the visitors were particularly interested in printing houses and bookstores for copies of the Quran.



Günümüze Ulaşan Mesahif-i Kadîme. İlk Mushaflar Üzerine Bir İnceleme

(Old copies of the Quran that reached our time. A study on the earliest copies),

prepared for publication by Dr. Tayyar Altıkulaç, published by IRCICA, Istanbul, 2015; 375 p.

(in Turkish, English and Arabic editions in preparation)

IRCICA carries out a research program on the earliest copies of the Holy Quran that are located in various libraries around the world. The aim is to trace the process of transmission of the Quran starting from the first manuscripts and examine cases and developments relating to aspects such as script, orthography and physical composition, among others, with reference to historical periods and geographical locations. In this context IRCICA published six studies until the present, relating to: the copies attributed to the time of the Third Caliph, Uthman bin Affan and preserved, respectively, at Topkapı Palace Museum in Istanbul (2007) and at the Central Library of Islamic Manuscripts attached to the Ministry of Awqaf of Egypt in Cairo (2009); the copy attributed to the time of Ali bin Abi Talib and located in the Manuscripts Library near Sana'a Grand Mosque, Yemen (2011); the copy dated to the period of Uthman bin Affan and preserved at the Islamic Arts Museum in Cairo (2014); the early fragment preserved at the National Library of France, in Paris (2015).

The present book represents the culmination of the rich findings and experiences accumulated throughout the above work. It synthesizes the observations and comparisons made in the study of earliest copies of the Quran and presents them in a concise and instructive format, as the book's section titles indicate: the Introduction underlines the importance of the comprehensive field of research related to copies of the Quran and evokes efforts made in this field in the Muslim world and in Europe. Section 1 is on the origins and history of development of the Arabic language and the Arabic script. Section 2 is a comprehensive history of the earliest copies, including the processes of compilation of the Quran in book form between two covers, the "Rasm al-Uthmani", i.e. the script and orthography of the copies made under the supervision of Caliph Uthman bin Affan and the different scholarly opinions about the necessity of conformity with it, the assignment of vowel signs, reading signs and punctuation signs to the Quranic text and many other subjects. Section 3 outlines the works and contributions of Orientalists in Quranic studies and collection of Quran copies. Section 4 examines the copies that

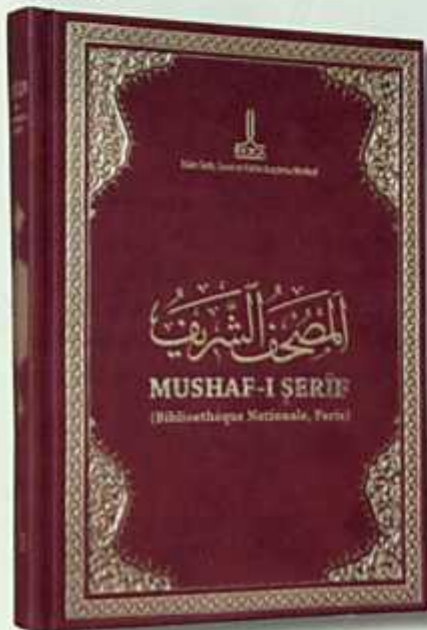


are attributed to the period of Uthman bin Affan and Section 5, those attributed to the period of Ali bin Abi Talib. Section 6 outlines the findings of detailed studies conducted within the framework of IRCICA's project on the copies located at the National Library of France, the Islamic Arts Museum in Cairo and the library of Tübingen University, Germany. The book was authored by Dr. Tayyar Altıkulaç, an authoritative scholar in Quranic studies and former President of Religious Affairs in Turkey.

Al-Mushaf Al-Sharif (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)

study prepared for publication by Dr. Tayyar Altıkulaç, IRCICA, Istanbul, 2015; 39, 281, 45 p.
(in Arabic and Turkish)

An outcome of IRCICA's series of studies on earliest copies of the Holy Quran, this book throws light on the characteristics of the partial copy which is preserved at Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. Though there is no information as to its date, it is certainly one of the earliest having reached our time, even older than some of those that are attributed to the times of the third and the fourth caliphs. The meticulous analytical study, done by Dr. Tayyar Altıkulaç, an authoritative scholar in Quranic studies, examines its features as to script, orthography and other technical criteria and compares them with those of other earliest Quran copies. The analytical text begins by an account of the fragment's journey to Paris and an acknowledgement of earlier work on it, particularly the printing of 56 folios of it (out of 79 in the same library and more elsewhere) by François Déroche and Sergio Noja Nosedá in 1998. Follows a page-by-page examination of the copy. This is the fifth study published by IRCICA in this series. It will be followed by a study on a very early copy of the Quran: the fragment found at Tübingen University Library, Germany.



Not only with its findings and scholarly observations but also with its aims, methodology and coverage, this work is a valuable contribution to studies on the history of the dissemination of the Quran across the world.

Qadi Registers in Bulgaria. A study on Ottoman court registers preserved at the St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library

prepared by Recep Çiğdem, edited with preface by Halit Eren, prepared for publication by Sadık Ünay, Series of Sharia Court Registers nr. 7, IRCICA, Istanbul, 2015, 420 p. (in English)

This book is the outcome of an extensive research work by Prof. Dr. Recep Çiğdem from Harran University in Turkey. It is published within IRCICA's Series of Sharia Court Registers. It analyzes the records of the Ottoman Sharia law courts preserved at St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library in Bulgaria. In the first chapter of the book the author gives information on the cases dealt with by these courts, the procedures for the appointment of the qadis (judges) and naibs (deputy judges), the terminology of judicial records, documents issued by the courts, and a number of other subjects of interest for the law historian. The second chapter is devoted to Muslim minority courts with coverage of such themes as the structure of the Sharia courts; the First Instance Court, the Court of Appeals, the High Sharia Court, relations between the Sharia courts and secular courts, administrative authorities, officials, lawyers, the extent of the power of these courts, among others. The third chapter, which is the main part of the study, examines individual registers. A total of 191 registers preserved in the library were scrutinized



and documents related to each case were scanned. The Foreword of Prof. Çiğdem explains in detail the salient features of each chapter and specifies that the third chapter focuses mainly on the Sharia courts of the independence period in Bulgaria, specifically between 1878-1945. The extensive bibliography and the index of personal names will

Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Islamic Civilization in Volga-Ural Region

Kazan, 14-16 June 2012, Sources and Studies on the History of Islamic Civilization Series nr. 31, IRCICA, İstanbul, 2015, 223 p. (in English, Russian and Turkish)

The fifth symposium on the theme "Islamic Civilisation in Volga-Ural Region" was organized jointly by IRCICA, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, Shehabeddin Merdjani Institute, and Russia Islamic University (Kazan) in June 2012. The papers presented dealt with specific topics and eminent figures within the history of thought and trends of modernization in Volga-Ural region, contacts and exchanges having taken place between the region and various parts of the Muslim world in cultural and educational areas, urban and architectural developments in the region and inter-cultural influences, among others.

In the preface Dr. Halit Eren points to the importance of Volga-Ural region in Islamic history. The people of the region converted to Islam over time by getting acquainted with it through contacts with merchants coming from Kharezm and Khorassan. Encouraged by this development, Almish Khan, ruler of the Bolghar State in the voga region at the beginning of 10th century, established relations with the Abbasid Caliphate by sending an envoy to Caliph Muqtedir Billah, requesting him to send religious scholars to the Boghar to teach the precepts of Islam. The Caliph responded favourably, sending an Abbasid delegation to the Bolghar State in the year 922. Almish Khan converted to Islam and his state became the first Islamic country in the region. The first account of this relationship is the travelogue of Ibn Fadlan, who was the secretary to the Ambassador in this mission to the Bolghar State. Afterwards cities were founded in the region with Islamic institutions such as mosques, madrasas and law courts. Bolghar city itself turned into a vibrant commercial center that drew merchants from Arab, Persian, Turkoman, Caspian, Scandinavian and Russian lands. Later, after foundation of Kazan city, Kazan Khanate became the second Islamic state in the region and Islam maintained its vitality for centuries as one of the most important civilizational traditions. These processes and their present heritage are highlighted in the series of symposiums



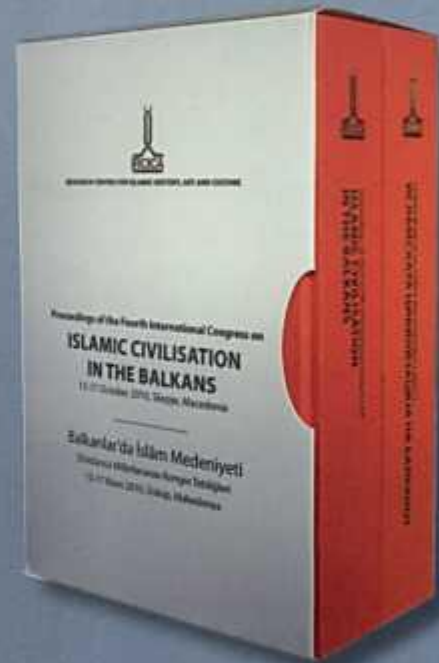
organized by IRCICA in cooperation with governments and academic institutions of the region. The first two symposiums were held in Kazan, Tatarstan, in 2001 and 2005; the third and the fourth were held in Ufa, Bashkiria in 2008 and 2010. Their proceedings were published. It is hoped that this new volume will further contribute to the work of interested scholars and researchers.

Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress on Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans

13-17 October 2010, Skopje, Macedonia, Vol. 1: 752 p. (English and Turkish), Vol. 2: 730 p. (Macedonian, Albanian and Serbian), Sources and Studies on the History of Islamic Civilization Series nr. 32, IRCICA, Istanbul, 2015

This is a collection of the papers that were presented during the international congress on "Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans" held in the Macedonian capital Skopje in October 2010. The congress, organized in cooperation with the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (MANU), was fourth in IRCICA's congress series that focus on the history and cultures of the Balkan region. The Skopje congress was accorded high patronage and opened by H.E. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the Republic Macedonia. President Ivanov also participated in the congress in his capacity as an academician and presented a paper. This State support and scholarly contribution extended to the congress underscored the importance attached to its objectives. The first volume contains the papers that were presented in English or Turkish (39 papers) and the second volume, those presented in Macedonian, Albanian or Serbian (44 papers).

Located at crossroads between Europe and Western Asia, the Balkan peoples have been in contact with the Muslim world since at least the 8th century. Various phenomena, including the long experience in trade between the two regions, helped fasten the expansion process, and enhance the notable cultural rôle, of



Islam in the Balkans. The relationship between the Muslim world and the Balkans has not only been one of encounters and exchanges but also one of coexistence. Research papers contributed to the congress addressed a wide range of topics highlighting the multicultural relations specific to the Balkan region.

IRCICA's engagement in studies on the region in connection with the history of Islamic civilisation draws from the above aspects of the theme and also takes into account that two Balkan countries are members of the OIC and IRCICA: Albania is a full Member State and Bosnia and Herzegovina is an Observer State. Previously, three congresses were held on the same theme, in Sofia (2000), Tirana (2003) and Bucharest (2006) respectively. A fifth congress was held in May 2015. This program devoted to the history of Islamic civilization in the Balkans has succeeded in drawing interest and participation from around the world in addition to the Balkan countries themselves and generated a fascinating range of studies, as the contents of this publication reflect.

