1 - The Second OIC Member Countries Think Tanks Forum took place within a constructive and sincere environment in Istanbul between 30-31 March 2011. In the Forum organized by the TASAM Institute of Islamic Countries with the contribution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), it was focused on the main theme “Public Diplomacy”.

Around 50 member countries and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and a committee of H.E from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which has an observer status in the OIC, the General Secretariat Delegation from the OIC, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Gambia, the Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates, diplomatic mission representatives from the OIC countries, academicians, experts, representatives from nine think tanks and media from Turkey participated in the meeting.

During the Forum, the general situation in the Islamic Countries regarding “Public Diplomacy” was examined in detail. In this framework, the following subjects were taken into consideration: “Theorical-Conceptual Framework and Actors in Public Diplomacy”, “Education, Cultural Activities and Public Diplomacy”, “Foreign Policy and Public Diplomacy”, “Economic Activities and Public Diplomacy”, “Civil Society Movements, Democracy and Crisis Management in the OIC Countries” and “Cooperation and Institutionalization among the Think Tanks from the OIC countries in the Perspective of “Public Diplomacy”. In addition, the views regarding the cooperation among the Islamic countries think tanks have been exchanged.

2 -The concept of power is going through a transformation process and is being redefined. The development of technology is making a great contribution in the acceleration of this process. In the system where new perceptions arise and the rules change, the internal and foreign policy affect directly each other and the decisions become diversified. In this context, all the current policies have direct relations with the public diplomacy. The concept of “Public Diplomacy” is really important especially for the countries which have a strong human resources” for the aim of controlling and gaining one sided dependency.

3 - It is confirmed by recent developments that qualified human resource will be the main point of the burgeoning multidimensional power system in the world and of the competition brought by this system. A large part of the investment budgets of Islamic Countries should be oriented to the development of qualified human resources. The main objective should not be only to support the government but also to increase the human safety and welfare for gaining the trust of the folks. The role attributed to the think tanks should also be reevaluated in the context of human welfare.

4 -In the development process of the public diplomacy, the mechanism of thought and decision making should act together. The technological developments brought a compulsory transparency to all kind of transactions and implementation. Therefore, the decisions and their implementations must be realized within a preparation procedure acceptable by the public domestically and in the context of international law and universal principles internationally. And this necessitates to bring up the interaction between the intellectual community and the politics and bureaucracy to the highest level and to maximise the interaction between the think tanks, universities, NGO's and the administrative levels. The success of the internal and foreign policies in every scale is proportional with the contribution of the public diplomacy institutions to the process.

5 - With the support of the public diplomacy institutions, it is possible to eliminate islamophobia and to reinforce the present bridges between civilizations. For this purpose,it is proposed to create a unit within the OIC to fight Islamophobia.The mass communication is spreading and the transparency is increasing. At this point, it has been emphasized that the role of the media in the Islamic world is important and there are more roles to be played in this field. In order to live in peace together within the society where members of different civilizations live together, it is obligatory to increase the communication and interaction between them at the highest level. And this can be done by using the public diplomacy efficiently.

6 -The public diplomacy institutions take steps based on the reference values. Bureaucracy is limited with its own logic. The development of original strategies depends on the competence of the public diplomacy institutions. Otherwise, the official diplomacy will be extremely insufficient in the information and communication era. For the coordination of all kind of activities between Islamic countries, it is important that the public diplomacy institutions gain an international qualification. To transfer traditional concepts like justice and tolerance to the new age and to ease the tensions also depend on strengthening the public diplomacy institutions.

7 - It has been insistently emphasized that the OIC must take more initiative about regional and global issues which are especially related with the OIC countries. It is becoming crucial to support and promote the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and Kosovo in the international arena. It has been proposed to develop original approaches and to strengthen the strategic decision making mechanism within the organizational structure, for cooperation and coordination opportunities in every field. In this context, independent research units which will support the decision making mechanisms should be constituted and current research institutions and think tanks should be strengthened.

8 -The programs which are similar to “Erasmus” should be actualised between Islamic countries and the current programs should be strengthened. A series of standards should be developed to simplify the mutual recognition of the diplomas. Islamic countries should focus on the cooperation activities in the fields of student exchange programs, “know how” and technology exchange.

9 -It has been accepted to activate the “OIC Member Countries Think Tanks Platform” that was constituted during the first Forum which was held in January 2010 with the purpose of cooperation and coordination and the internet portal (**www.isttp.org**) that started to broadcast in four languages. It has also been adopted that the member countries will nominate candidates in order to institutionalize the “Board of Wisemen”, which was mentioned in the first year declaration and afterwards will finalize the processes. It has been accepted that the “Board of Wisemen” gathers in specific periods beside the annual conferences and make studies and take initiatives concerning its mission, especially conflict resolution in the presence of OIC and member countries.

10 - It has been proposed to concentrate on workshops, studies related directly to the practical work and action plans in the light of the proposals and directions of the Board of Wisemen. In this context, with the confirmation of cooperation proposal of the Islamic Development Bank’s representative, it has been accepted to constitute an “Economic-Human Development” working group. Also, it has been accepted that a working group named “Public Administration Innovation” will be constituted. It has been decided to finalize the establishment and operation processes of both working groups under the principle of participation as soon as possible.

11 - As a result of the nomination of the member organizations to the OIC Member Countries Think Tanks Platform, it has been decided to hold the 3rd annual meeting which will be hosted by SAM (Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan) between 1-2 March 2012 in Azerbaijan Baku, the 4th meeting which will be hosted by IDSC (Information and Decision Support Center) between 22-23 February 2013 in Egypt Cairo, with the experiences and cooperation of TASAM (the one that undertook the founder initiative and the management of the OIC Member Countries Think Tanks Platform).

31 March 2011, Istanbul