

# **FIRST ISLAMIC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE CHILD 7-9 NOVEMBER 2005, RABAT, MOROCCO**

## ***Key messages***

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The 600 million children living in the world's Islamic countries are facing extraordinary challenges - from poverty and disease to education and protection - that exceed the capacity of any single organization and warrant a special focus.

Addressing the needs and guaranteeing the rights of Islamic children – who account for more than 40 percent of the Muslim population -- will in large part determine whether the world succeeds in reaching global development targets and building a more peaceful future.

Islamic countries are building upon the strength of Islamic traditions — self-help, solidarity and protection of the vulnerable — to reaffirm their commitments to their children. They have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international human rights instruments; now the challenge is to implement them.

Making a positive and lasting difference for children in Islamic countries requires active partnerships among the governments of these countries, as well as with regional and international financial institutions and the private sector to provide the necessary funding and technical expertise. Development assistance must be increased and channelled more deliberately to address the needs of children.

That government delegations representing more than 50 OIC member countries have convened in Rabat, Morocco for *The First Islamic Ministerial Conference on the Child* signals the renewed commitment of leaders of these countries to strengthen co-operation on behalf of children and to make them the focal point in the drive for greater solidarity across the Islamic world.

We hope this landmark conference will result in tangible outcomes for children and that the recommendations from the meeting will be forwarded to the next OIC Foreign Ministers meeting scheduled for 2006 in Azerbaijan and for consideration at the next OIC Summit to be held in Senegal in 2007.