ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA

29th Session of the COMCEC

(İstanbul, 18-21 November 2013)
DRAFT AGENDA
OF THE 29TH SESSION OF THE COMCEC
(Istanbul, 18-21 November 2013)

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation
3. The Implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Program of Action
4. World Economic Developments with Special Reference to the OIC Member Countries
5. Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade
6. Improving Transport and Communications
7. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
8. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
10. Deepening Financial Cooperation
11. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
12. Exchange of Views on "Increasing FDI Flows to the OIC Member Countries"
13. Date of the 30th Session of the COMCEC
14. Any Other Business
15. Adoption of the Resolutions
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to give background information and the current status on the cooperation areas, programs and projects of the COMCEC for its 29th Session, to be held on 18-21 November 2013 in İstanbul, Turkey.

The document provides background information and the required actions on the Draft Agenda Items from 2 to 13. As the remaining Agenda Items are self-explanatory; they are not included in the Document.

The reports and studies to be submitted under each agenda item will be placed on the COMCEC’s website (www.comcec.org).
AGENDA ITEM 2

Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation

The COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation

In line with the mandate given by the COMCEC Economic Summit, held in November 2009 in Istanbul, the COMCEC Strategy has been prepared under the kind guidance of H.E. Abdullah GÜL, the President of the Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the COMCEC. The Strategy was adopted by the 4th Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, Saudi Arabia on 14-15 August 2012. The COMCEC Strategy was officially launched during the 28th Session of the COMCEC held on 8-11 October 2012 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The COMCEC Strategy is based on three principles, namely Enhancing Mobility, Strengthening Solidarity and Improving Governance. These principles guide the cooperation efforts in the cooperation areas, namely trade, transport and communications, tourism, agriculture, poverty alleviation and finance. The Strategy has a well-defined implementation mechanism. The first instrument for its operationalization is the Working Group mechanism. The Strategy ensures active and direct involvement of the Member Country experts in the COMCEC cooperation areas through the regular Working Group meetings in each cooperation area. Working Groups aim at producing and disseminating knowledge, and sharing experience and good practices. They provide a suitable ground for creating a common understanding and approximating policies among the Member Countries to respond to their common development problems.

The second instrument for the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy is the Project Cycle Management (PCM). The Strategy has a viable PCM through which member countries participating in the working groups submit projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

Implementation phase of the COMCEC Strategy has already commenced. H.E. Abdullah GÜL, the President of the Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the COMCEC submitted a comprehensive report to the 12th Islamic Summit held on 6-7 February 2013 in Cairo regarding the progress achieved under the COMCEC since the 11th Islamic Summit. Within this framework, H.E. GÜL informed the Summit that the COMCEC Strategy has become operational. The President has also briefed the Summit in detail on the preparations regarding the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. Moreover, the 29th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC held on 14-15 May 2013, in Ankara was briefed on implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. The Committee welcomed the operationalization of the COMCEC Strategy and called upon the Member States to work towards its implementation in line with the available mechanisms and also requested the OIC institutions to extend their full support to the implementation of the Strategy.

Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the first Working Group Meetings were held successfully in five cooperation areas in the first half of 2013. In this framework:

- The 1st Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group was held on March 28th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of "Transport Infrastructure Modalities: Public Private Partnerships in the OIC Member States."

- The 1st Meeting of the Tourism Working Group was held on April 25th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of "A New Trend in Sustainable Tourism Development: Community Based Tourism in the COMCEC Region."
The 1st Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group was held on June 6th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Increasing Agricultural Productivity in the COMCEC Region: Improving Irrigation Capacity.”

The 1st Meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on June 20th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Promoting the SMEs Exports in the OIC Member States: The Role of Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs)”

The 1st Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group was held on June 27th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Enhancing Productive Capacity of the Poor in the COMCEC Member Countries through Improving the Human Capital.”

The 1st Meetings of the Working Groups were held successfully with the participation of Member Country experts, representatives of relevant OIC Institutions as well as international organizations and private sector representatives. For each Working Group, general outlook of the sector in the COMCEC Region was given (e.g. COMCEC Tourism Outlook) and an analytical study has been prepared on the theme of the respective Working Group Meeting. During the meetings, participants made presentations and in-depth discussions on the selected themes, identified the challenges faced by the Member States as well as shared their experience and good practices in this field. The outcomes of each Working Group Meetings are published with the documents entitled “Proceedings” (e.g. Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Trade Working Group). The presentations and all relevant documents are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org).

The second meetings of the Working Groups were held successfully in three cooperation areas in October 2013. In this framework;

The 2nd Meeting of the Tourism Working Group was held on October 3rd, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Tourism Product Development and Marketing Strategies in the COMCEC Region"

The 2nd Meeting of the Transport Working Group was held on October 8th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Developing Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) Among the OIC Member Countries: Basic Concepts and Latest Trends”

The 2nd Meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on October 31st, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving the SMEs Access to Trade Finance in the OIC Member States.”

The remaining Working Group Meetings are scheduled as follows:

The 1st Meeting of the Finance Working Group will be held on December 12th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Enhancing Capital Flows Among COMCEC Member Countries.”

The 2nd Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group will be held on December 19th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Encouraging Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the COMCEC Region for Increasing Agricultural Productivity.”

The 2nd Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group will be held on December 26th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Targeting Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Systems in the COMCEC Region.”

The second instrument of the Strategy for the implementation is the Project Cycle Management (PCM). With a view to informing the COMCEC Working Group Focal Points about the details of the necessary documents and processes for project submission, COMCEC Coordination Office organized two training programs on the new COMCEC Project Funding. The first one was held on 19-20 August 2013, in Ankara, Turkey and the second one was organized for the West African Member Countries on August 29th, 2013 in Dakar, Senegal. In the training programs, the participants had the opportunity to make an exercise on project preparation.
Under the new PCM mechanism, the first project call was made in September 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2013. During the project submission period, Member Countries registered to the Working Groups are expected to submit project proposals in line with the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy to the COMCEC Coordination Office electronically, using COMCEC website, and paper-based through Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the relevant member country. The deadline for electronic submission is November 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2013 while for the paper-based submission is November 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2013. The relevant documents are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)

Moreover, cooperation exertions of the OIC Institutions operating in the economic domain would have particular importance for the realization of the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy. In this respect, in line with the relevant decision of the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Sessional Committee held on May 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2013 in Ankara on the sideline of the 29\textsuperscript{th} Meeting of the Follow-up Committee, the OIC Institutions have communicated their list of activities aligned with the objectives and expected outputs of the COMCEC Strategy to the COMCEC Coordination Office. In this regard, they have been organizing several activities which would serve to the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy.

\textit{Required Action(s):} COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Session on the COMCEC Strategy and its implementation.

\textit{(COMCEC Annual Progress Report: Document Code- OIC/COMCEC/29/13/D(1)}

\textbf{- Report of the 29\textsuperscript{th} Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC}

The 29\textsuperscript{th} Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC was held on 14-15 May 2013, in Ankara, Turkey. The Committee reviewed the implementation of the programs and projects on the agenda of the COMCEC and prepared the recommendations for the 29\textsuperscript{th} Session of the COMCEC.

\textit{Required Action(s):} The 29\textsuperscript{th} Session of the COMCEC will be briefed by the Rapporteur of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the recommendations of the 29\textsuperscript{th} Meeting of the Follow-up Committee.

\textbf{AGENDA ITEM 3}

\textbf{The Implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Program of Action}

The OIC General Secretariat regularly submits review reports on the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action (TYPOA) adopted by the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in 2005.

The OIC General Secretariat was requested by the 28\textsuperscript{th} Session of the COMCEC to highlight the challenges and progress achieved in its review reports.

Implementation of the TYPOA was discussed during the 29\textsuperscript{th} Follow-up Committee Meeting. The Committee acknowledged the progress in the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Program of Action and requested the Member States and the OIC Institutions to increase their efforts towards reaching the objectives of the TYPOA.

\textit{Required Action(s):} The OIC General Secretariat is expected to brief the 29\textsuperscript{th} Session of the COMCEC on the progress in the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action.
AGENDA ITEM 4
World Economic Developments with Special Reference to the OIC Member Countries

- Annual Economic Report on the OIC Member Countries

SESRIC, in light of the relevant decision of the 12th Session of the COMCEC, has been preparing an annual report on recent world economic developments and their implications on the OIC member countries and submit it to the annual sessions of the COMCEC.

In its Annual Economic Reports, SESRIC summarizes the global and regional economic and financial developments as well as provides some policy recommendations for the member countries.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to submit a report on world economic developments with a set of policy recommendations. Member countries are expected to share their views, suggestions and expectations on the subject as well as their experience concerning the recent economic and financial developments.

AGENDA ITEM 5
Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade

Trade is defined as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC Strategy. It can serve as an engine in social and economic development of the COMCEC Region if efficiently utilized. Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the 1st Meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on June 20th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of "Promoting the Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) Exports in the OIC Member States." The Meeting was attended by the representatives from 19 Member States which have already registered to the Trade Working Group as well as from the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and International Trade Centre (ITC). The representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in promoting the SMEs exports in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies namely "Promoting the SMEs Exports in the OIC Member Countries” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office to the OECD and the “COMCEC Trade Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office as the “Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Trade Working Group.” All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (http://www.comcec.org/EN_YE/icerik.aspx?iid=244).

The 2nd Meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on October 31st, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving the SMEs Access to Trade Finance in the OIC Member States.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives from 15 Member States which have already registered to the Trade Working Group as well as from the COMCEC Coordination Office, IDB, ICDT, IFC, ITC and OPUS Advisory International, a private consultant company. In order to enrich the deliberations, the COMCEC Coordination Office presented an analytical study on the theme of the Meeting. The presentations and the deliberations made during the meeting underlined that SMEs access to affordable trade finance is extremely important for the SMEs for engaging international trade. The outcomes of the Meeting will be published by the COMCEC Coordination Office as the "Proceedings of the 2nd Meeting of the Trade Working Group." All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org)
Furthermore, there are several important programs and projects on the agenda of the COMCEC to enhance cooperation among the OIC Member States in the field of trade. Some of the ongoing programs and activities are; TPS-OIC, Islamic Trade Fairs, Road Map for Enhancing Trade, WTO Related Technical Assistance, Trade Financing Activities, Trade Related Activities of SMIIC and the study on the relevance of establishing an arbitration mechanism.

**CCO Brief on Trade: Document Code: OIC/COMCEC/29-13/D(6)**

- **TPS-OIC**

TPS-OIC is the most important project of the COMCEC for enhancing intra-trade. The System is based on three agreements, namely the Framework Agreement, the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme (PRETAS) and the Rules of Origin.

The Framework Agreement, which sets out the general rules and principles for the negotiations towards the establishment of the TPS-OIC, entered into force in 2002. The PRETAS, which complements the Framework Agreement by laying out the concrete reduction rates in tariffs, entered into force in February 2010. The Rules of Origin, which will be applied for the identification of the origin of products eligible for preferential concessions under the TPS-OIC, entered into force in August 2011. Therefore, the legal basis of the system was completed.

Since the 28th Session of the COMCEC, Benin and Mauritania have signed three TPS-OIC agreements and Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger have signed Rules of Origin and PRETAS. Morocco has completed the ratifications for Rules of Origin and the PRETAS; Islamic Republic of Iran has ratified the Rules of Origin; Gambia has ratified the PRETAS; Kuwait and Djibouti have ratified the Framework Agreement.

Moreover, the ICDT has organized a Training Seminar on TPS-OIC on 17-19 March 2013 in the Republic of Iraq.

In order to make the TPS-OIC operational at least 10 Member Countries need to complete the ratifications of the TPS-OIC Agreements and submit their concession lists **at the same time**. However the number of the Member Countries having met the two conditions is currently 9. When that number reaches 10, the TPS-OIC would be operational. In this respect, the COMCEC in its 28th Session and 29th Follow-up Committee reiterated its request to the Member States which have completed the ratification of the TPS-OIC Agreements to submit their concession lists to the TNC Secretariat to make this System operational.

**Required Action(s):** On behalf of the TNC Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the 29th Session of the COMCEC on the progress regarding the operationalization of the TPS-OIC.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) Successful implementation of TPS-OIC will be very instrumental for increasing mobility of goods among the Member Countries. In addition to ongoing efforts, what measures can be taken to expedite the implementation of the System as well as to attract more OIC countries to participate in the System?

- **Islamic Trade Fairs**

Islamic trade fairs are held every two years in one of the OIC Member Countries by the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT). They aim at promoting intra-OIC trade. The ICDT has
organized thirteen Islamic Trade Fairs to date. The 13th Islamic Trade Fair was held on 24 - 29 April 2011 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The 14th Islamic Trade Fair was held from 28th October to 1st November 2013 in Tehran.

In addition to the Islamic Trade Fairs, sector specific exhibitions are also organized by the ICDT in several Member States. In this respect, the 1st OIC Halal Food Middle East Expo was held on 10-12 December 2012 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, the 1st OIC Trade Handicraft Exhibition was held on 11-14 April 2013 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, the 1st Fair on Furniture, Decoration and Household Electrical Appliances was held on 12-16 May 2013 in Medina, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the 6th Exhibition of Agribusiness Industries of OIC Member States was held on 13-16 May 2013 in Muscat, the Sultanate of Oman.

The 2nd OIC Halal Food Exhibition will be held on 16-18 December 2013 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The 29th Follow-up Committee discussed the recent developments regarding trade fairs and requested the ICDT to hold more sector-specific exhibitions and to keep on utilizing professional expertise in these activities. The Committee also requested ICDT to examine new ways and means to improve the content of its trade fairs and exhibitions in collaboration with relevant authorities in the OIC Member States with a view to attracting visitors from all around the world.

**Required Action(s):** The ICDT is expected to report the recent developments on the Islamic Trade Fairs to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) In line with the needs and capacities of the Member States, which sectors should be prioritized in Islamic Trade Fairs?

- **Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade**

The Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade was adopted by the 24th Session of the COMCEC. In line with the relevant resolutions, the Consultative Group as an ad-hoc group composed of the OIC Institutions was established to follow-up the implementation of the Executive Program of the Road Map to reach 20 percent intra-OIC trade by 2015 and submit recommendations to the Follow-up Committee Meetings and to the COMCEC Sessions.

Till now, the Consultative Group has held five meetings. The last meeting was held on 27-28 February 2013 in Casablanca, Morocco. Furthermore, prior to the Fifth Consultative Group Meeting, the OIC High Level Forum on Trade Facilitation and Single Window was held on 25-26 February 2013 in Casablanca.

**Required Action(s):** The ICDT as the coordinator of the Executive Program of the Road Map is expected to report the implementation status of the Road Map to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) For complementing the efforts under the Road Map, does your country have specific policies and programs for enhancing trade with the other Member Countries?
- **WTO Related Technical Assistance**

COMCEC encourages its members to join the WTO in order to benefit from the international trade system on an equitable and fair basis. For this purpose, the IDB Group and ICDT organize training courses, seminars and workshops on the WTO related issues for the benefit of the Member Countries.

In this framework, a “Training Seminar on the WTO Related Matters and the Accession of the Member States to this Organization” was organized by the ICDT on 17-19 March 2013 in Baghdad, the Republic of Iraq. Moreover, the Republic of Tajikistan was officially acceded to the WTO in December 2012.

Concerning the WTO-related technical assistance, the 29th Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC called on IDB and ICDT to continue providing technical assistance to the Member States on WTO-related issues and welcomed the accession of the Republic of Tajikistan to the WTO.

**Required Action(s):** The IDB and ICDT are expected to report their activities in this field to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

**Questions for Discussion:**

1) What are the challenges faced by your country in implementing the WTO provisions or acceding to the WTO? In this framework, what are your country's technical assistance requirements on the WTO-related matters?

- **Trade Financing Activities**

Access to affordable trade financing is one of the crucial factors for the business people to engage in international trade. In this context, COMCEC has initiated Export Financing Scheme (EFS) which had been operated by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) in order to enhance intra-OIC trade. Trade financing activities were mainly carried out by the IDB under the Export Financing Scheme (EFS) until the operationalization of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) within the IDB Group. Since its operationalization, all trade financing issues within the IDB Group have been incorporated into the ITFC. Moreover, in line with the decision of the COMCEC, Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit has been established within the IDB Group and provides export credit insurance to mitigate the risks of the traders.

The IDB Group regularly reports its trade financing activities to the Follow-up Committee Meetings and the COMCEC Sessions.

**Required Action(s):** The IDB Group is expected to report its activities on trade financing and export credit risk insurance to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

**Questions for Discussion:**

1) What are the trade financing mechanisms implemented in your country? Does your country have specific policies/programs for better utilization of trade financing services provided by the ITFC by the business community?
Trade Related Activities of SMIIC

Standard and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC) is one of the affiliated institutions of the OIC responsible for developing standards among the OIC countries. SMIIC aims at realizing harmonized standards and eliminating technical barriers for enhancing trade among the Member Countries.

In line with its mandate, SMIIC has intensified its cooperation efforts and activities. Recently, eight Technical Committees ranging from Halal Food issues to Service Site issues have been established under SMIIC. With a view to increasing the awareness of the Member Countries on SMIIC’s activities, SMIIC Forum 2012 was held on 8-9 November 2012 in Antalya, Turkey. Moreover, the Workshop on “Building and Enhancing Standardization, Metrology and Accreditation Capacity in the OIC LDC Member States” was organized on 7-10 May 2013 in Istanbul.

There has been a growing interest by the Member States to SMIIC. The number of SMIIC’s members has increased to 23 as of September 2013.

**Required Action(s):** The General Secretariat of SMIIC will inform the Session of the recent developments regarding the SMIIC’s trade related activities.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) SMIIC has successfully completed its institutionalization and set-up eight technical committees for fulfillment of its mandate. What measures can be taken to enhance the visibility of SMIIC and its services in the Member States?

**Arbitration Mechanism**

In line with the relevant resolution of the 26th Session of COMCEC, the IDB Group (ICIEC) has prepared a study on the relevance of establishing an Arbitration Mechanism by considering the existing mechanisms and submitted the study to the 27th Session of the COMCEC. In accordance with the relevant resolution of the 27th Session of COMCEC, the study has been circulated to the Member States to get their views. The 28th Session of the COMCEC reiterated its request to the Member States, which have not done so, to send their views on the Study to the OIC General Secretariat at the earliest convenience.

**Required Action(s):** The OIC General Secretariat is expected to brief the 29th Session of the COMCEC on the views and comments of the Member Countries on the Study of the IDB Group (ICIEC).

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Improving Transport and Communications**

The development of transport cooperation among the Member States is given utmost importance by the COMCEC. The COMCEC Economic Summit held in 2009 has identified transport as one of the three priority sectors. Furthermore, transport and communications has been identified as one of the cooperation areas by the COMCEC Strategy.

Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the 1st Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group was held on March 28th, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey, with the theme of "Transport Infrastructure Modalities: Public Private Partnerships in the OIC Member States". The Meeting brought together relevant experts from 13 Member States which have notified their focal points for the Transport Working Group. The
relevant international and OIC institutions and the private sector have also attended this Meeting. The representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in implementing the Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects in transport sector in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the studies namely "Bridging the Gaps: Implementation Challenges for Transport PPPs in the OIC Member States" commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the "Transport Outlook 2013" prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office with the document titled "Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Transport Working Group". All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (http://www.comcec.org/EN_YE/icerik.aspx?id=238).

The 2nd Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group was held on October 8th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Developing Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) Among the OIC Member Countries: Basic Concepts and Latest Trends.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives from 14 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Transport Working Group as well as from the COMCEC Coordination Office, Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers (UTİKAD), International Transporters' Association (UND). The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in multimodal freight transport in respective their countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies titled “Global Trends and Policies In Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT)” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Transport Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office with the document titled "Proceedings of the 2nd Meeting of the Transport Working Group". All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org).

*Required Action(s):* The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the 29th Session of the COMCEC on the outcomes of the 1st and 2nd Meetings of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group Meeting and the recent developments regarding the cooperation in this field.

( CCQ Brief on Transport: Document Code- OIC/COMCEC/29-13/D(19)

Questions for Discussion:

i) Is it possible for the Member States to finance their transport infrastructure needs through traditional financing mechanisms? What are the other modalities implemented in your country such as Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for financing transport infrastructure projects/programs?

ii) What are the common challenges of Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) in your country?

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector**

As an increasingly important source of income, employment and wealth in many countries, tourism has been defined as one of the priority sectors by the COMCEC Economic Summit in 2009. Tourism is also defined by the COMCEC Strategy as one of its cooperation areas. Within the framework of the operationalization of the COMCEC Strategy, the Tourism Working Group was established and the 1st Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group was held on April 25th, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “A New Trend in Sustainable Tourism Development: Community Based Tourism in the COMCEC Region.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 15 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Tourism
Working Group. The relevant OIC institutions and some academicians have also attended the Meeting. The representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in implementing the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Programs in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies namely “Community Based Tourism: Finding the Equilibrium in the COMCEC Context” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “Tourism Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office with the document titled the “Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Tourism Working Group.” All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (http://www.comcec.org/EN_YE/icerik.aspx?iid=239).

The 2nd Meeting of the Tourism Working Group was held on October 3rd, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Tourism Product Development and Marketing Strategies in the COMCEC Region.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 11 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Tourism Working Group and representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC and Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT) and some private sector representatives. The COMCEC Tourism Outlook and an analytical study titled “Tourism Product Development and Marketing Strategies” have been prepared and submitted to the Meeting. The representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in tourism product development and marketing strategies in their respective countries. Some recommendations have been made for enhancing cooperation among the COMCEC Member Countries in the field of product development and marketing. These were, among others, introducing award programmes, conducting joint exhibitions, developing joint tourism products, organizing exchange programs for experts and developing joint data base for tourism products among the Member Countries. Moreover, the Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the Tourism Working Group, which reflects the outcomes of the Meeting, was published on the COMCEC Website (www.comcec.org).

Regarding the ongoing cooperation activities in this cooperation area;

- “The OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum” was established in 2011 with the aim of providing a regular platform for the private sector representatives of the member countries to identify their common issues of concern and the ways to address them in the field of tourism. The 1st Meeting of the Forum was held on 7-8 December 2012, in Izmir, Turkey. The 2nd Meeting of the Forum is planned to be held on 16-17 December 2013 in Istanbul.

- The 3rd Conference on Health-Tourism in Islamic Countries was organized on 18-19 December 2012 in Mashhad, Islamic Republic of Iran.

- The 2nd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States was held on 19-22 March 2013 in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

- The Training Program on “Hotel Management and Travel Agency Business” was held on 16-20 April in Antalya, Turkey.

- Moreover, the 8th Meeting of the Tourism Ministers will be held on 3-5 December 2013 in Banjul, Gambia.

**Required Action(s):** The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 1st and 2nd Meetings of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group as well as the recent developments regarding the ongoing activities under the COMCEC tourism cooperation.

*(CCO Brief on Tourism: Document Code-OIC/COMCEC/29-13/D(22)*

12
Questions for Discussion:

i) How can we utilize the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum more efficiently and ensure the active participation of the private sector in the Forum?

ii) What is the role of tourism fairs in enhancing intra-OIC tourism and how can their efficiency be improved?

iii) What are your country experiences in Community Based Tourism? Do you consider Community Based Tourism as an effective tool for enhancing rural development and alleviating poverty?

iv) What are the types of tourism products developed in your country? What are the key factors for their success?

AGENDA ITEM 8

Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security

Cooperation in the area of agriculture occupies an important place in the agenda of the COMCEC. The COMCEC Economic Summit, held in 2009, prioritized the cooperation in this field. The COMCEC Strategy has also identified the agriculture as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC.

Within the framework of the operationalization of the COMCEC Strategy, the 1st Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on June 6th, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of "Increasing Agricultural Productivity in the COMCEC Region: Improving Irrigation Capacity." The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 13 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Agriculture Working Group. Representatives of SESRIC and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) have also attended the Meeting. The representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in water management in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies "Increasing Agricultural Productivity in the COMCEC Region: Improving Irrigation Capacity" commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the "COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2013" prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office as the "Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group." All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (http://www.comcec.org/EN_YE/icerik.aspx?iid=241).

The 2nd Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group will be held on December 19th, 2013 with the theme of "Encouraging Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the COMCEC Region for Increasing Agricultural Productivity."

Concerning the ongoing activities in this cooperation area,

- In line with the decision of the 28th Session of the COMCEC, the Workshop on "Enhancing the Capacity of the Member States in Wheat Production" was organized by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of the Republic of Turkey and the COMCEC Coordination Office on 15-16 January 2013 in İzmir, Turkey. The outcomes of the Workshop are available on the COMCEC web-site (http://www.comcec.org/UserFiles/File/yenisite_duyuru_ve_haberler/EN/COMCEC-Member-States-in-Wheat-Production.pdf)
- The COMCEC Task Force, established in 2009 in line with the relevant decisions of the COMCEC Economic Summit and the 25th Session of the COMCEC, has prepared the Draft Framework for Cooperation in Agriculture, Rural Development and Food Security in the OIC Member States and submitted it to the 28th Session of the COMCEC. The Session welcomed the Draft Framework and requested the Member States to convey their views on the document. Meanwhile, some Member States have conveyed their views.

- The 7th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development will be held in 2014.

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Session on the recent developments in this cooperation area.

(CCO Brief on Agriculture: Document Code- OIC/COMCEC/29-13/D(26)

Questions for Discussion:

i) What are your country experiences for increasing agricultural productivity and sustaining food security?

ii) What are the policies/programs implemented in your country to improve irrigation systems?

AGENDA ITEM 9
Report on Poverty Eradication

Poverty Alleviation has been occupying an important place in the COMCEC agenda and is defined by the COMCEC Strategy as one of its cooperation areas. The Poverty Alleviation Working Group, envisaged by the COMCEC Strategy, convened its first meeting on June 27th, 2013 in Ankara with the participation of representatives from 13 Member States, which have notified their focal points to the COMCEC Coordination Office. The Meeting was also attended by the relevant OIC and international institutions and civil society representatives. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences in enhancing the productive capacity of the poor particularly through improving human capital. The Meeting has considered the Studies entitled “Enhancing Productive Capacity of the Poor in the COMCEC Member Countries: Improving Human Capital” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Poverty Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The outcomes of the Meeting were published by the COMCEC Coordination Office as the “Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group.” All the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site [http://www.comcec.org/EN_YE/icerik.aspx?iid=245].

The 2nd Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group will be held on December 26th, 2013 with the theme of “Targeting Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Systems in the COMCEC Region.”

Moreover, the ongoing cooperation efforts in the area of poverty alleviation have been carried out under the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), Special Program for Development of Africa (SPDA), the OIC Cotton Program and the Vocational Education and Training Program for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET).

- **Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and Special Program for Development of Africa (SPDA)**

ISFD is a Special Fund within the IDB, which was officially launched in 2007 with the aim of reducing poverty in the COMCEC region through focusing on human development, agriculture and rural development, basic infrastructure and micro enterprises. The principle target capital of the Fund is USD10 billion. As of September 2013, 35 projects have been approved by the IDB within the framework of the ISFD. The total allocation regarding these projects is USD 1.20 billion.

The SPDA is another Special Program within the IDB, which was initiated in 2008 with a view to spurring economic growth, reinvigorating agricultural production and creating employment opportunities in the African Member Countries. The average level of funding for the SPDA is set as USD 12 billion for a five-year period. As of August 2013, the IDB Group has approved USD 5 billion for 480 operations and disbursed approximately half of the total approvals.

**Required Action(s):** The IDB Group is expected to submit a report on the implementation of the ISFD and SPDA to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

- **OIC Cotton Program**

Within the framework of the OIC cotton initiative, the OIC Five-Year Cotton Action Plan (2007-2011) was prepared and endorsed by the 22nd Session of the COMCEC. The period of the Plan was extended for a further five years by the 26th Session of the COMCEC (2011-2016).

Under the Cotton Action Plan, the Project Committee and Steering Committee were formed. The IDB was designated as the Chairman of the former while the Ministry of Customs and Trade of Turkey of the latter. Until now, Six Steering Committee and four Project Committee meetings have been held. The 6th Steering Committee Meeting was held on April 3rd, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey.

Under the OIC Cotton Action Plan, twenty-seven projects were proposed by the Member States. The proposals were submitted to the IDB and other possible donors for funding. Till now, two projects have been implemented. The IDB Group has approved financing six projects, the remaining ones are under consideration.

The 28th Session of the COMCEC requested the IDB Group to finalize its consideration of the projects which have already been submitted for financial support. The 29th Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC reiterated its request from the IDB Group to submit regular progress reports to COMCEC Meetings on the status of the projects under consideration for funding.

**Required Action(s):** The Ministry of Customs and Trade of Turkey, as the Chairman of the Steering Committee, and the IDB Group, as the Chairman of the Project Committee, are expected to report the current status of the implementation of the Cotton Action Plan.

- **OIC-VET Program**

Vocational Education and Training Program for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET) was initiated by the SESRIC in 2009 with a view to improving the quality of vocational education and training in the Member Countries.

Three capacity building programmes have been initiated within the framework of the OIC-VET Programme namely, Agriculture Capacity Building Programme, Information and
Communications Technology Capacity Building Programme and Capacity Building Programme on Poverty Alleviation.

The Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC) of the OIC-VET Program, which monitors the implementation status of the projects and programs under the OIC-VET Program, has convened its Fourth Meeting on 26-28 November 2012 in Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon.

Moreover, the IDB and SESRIC have been conducting a study entitled “Managing Natural Disasters and Conflicts in OIC Countries.” They briefed the 29th Follow-up Committee Meeting concerning this Study. The 29th Follow-up Committee took note with appreciation of the efforts of SESRIC and IDB Group towards finalizing the aforementioned study which will be submitted to the 29th Session of COMCEC.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to submit a report to the 29th Session of the COMCEC on the implementation of the OIC-VET Program as well as the Study entitled “Managing Natural Disasters and Conflicts in OIC Countries.”

Questions for Discussion:

i) Does your country have a strategy, master plan or program for eradicating poverty?

ii) What are your country experiences in enhancing the productive capacity of the poor?

iii) Investing in human capital is an efficient method for poverty alleviation. What kind of specific programs, such as vocational education programs, does your country have to this end?

AGENDA ITEM 10

Deepening Financial Cooperation

The recent financial crisis demonstrated the interconnectivity of financial markets and the increasing need for international cooperation among financial institutions and regulatory authorities. In this respect, the COMCEC has intensified its efforts for enhancing cooperation among the member states to mitigate the adverse effects of the recent global economic and financial crisis.

The COMCEC Strategy has identified the finance as one of its cooperation areas. The COMCEC Strategy also envisages the establishment of the Finance Working Group, which will serve to the realization of the strategic objective and the expected outcomes defined in its Finance section. In this framework, the 1st Meeting of the Finance Working Group will be held on December 12th, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Enhancing Capital Flows Among COMCEC Member Countries.”

On the other hand, the ongoing activities in the area of finance have been carried out under the OIC Member States’ Stock Exchanges Forum, COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum and Meetings of the OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities.

(CCO Brief on Finance: Document Code- OIC/COMCEC/29-13/D(36)
- **OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum**

The cooperation among Stock Exchanges has been initiated by the COMCEC in 2005. Accordingly, the OIC Member States’ Stock Exchanges Forum was established. The Forum focuses on the harmonization of the rules and regulations governing market operations, as well as opening communication channels for the stock exchanges of the OIC Member Countries and relevant institutions. The Forum established its own web-site ([www.oicexchanges.org](http://www.oicexchanges.org)) to enhance communication among Forum Members.

The Forum has convened seven times till now. The 7th Meeting of the Forum was held on September 19th, 2013 in Istanbul. The details regarding the Forum activities are available on the Forum web-site. ([www.oicexchanges.org](http://www.oicexchanges.org))

The Forum has achieved remarkable progress in deepening cooperation among the Stock Exchanges of the Member States. It has successfully finalized the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index, which has been launched on June 22nd, 2012, in Istanbul. The official launching ceremony of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index, however, was held during the 28th Session of the COMCEC. The Index was designed to measure the performance of 50 leading companies from the 19 Member States. The 28th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the launching of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index and requested the Member States and the IDB to lend their support for the promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index in the Member Countries.

**Required Action(s):** As the Secretariat of the Forum, Borsa İstanbul (formerly İstanbul Stock Exchange) is expected to inform the 29th Session of the COMCEC of the recent developments regarding the activities of the Forum.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) The S&P OIC/COMCEC Index has successfully been launched in 2012. How can the visibility of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index be enhanced in the member states as well as worldwide?

ii) What is the current state of financial literacy in your country? Does your country have any specific policy/strategy to increase financial literacy?

- **COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum**

In line with the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC, the COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum was established in 2011 to increase coordination and cooperation in regulatory and legal infrastructure with a view to achieving more harmonized policies and regulations among the Member Countries. In this framework, the 1st Meeting of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum was held on 26-27 September 2012 in Istanbul. The 2nd Meeting of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum was held in September 19th, 2013 in Istanbul. The details regarding the Forum activities are available on the Forum web-site. ([www.comceccmr.org](http://www.comceccmr.org))

The 28th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the establishment of the Forum website ([www.comceccmr.org](http://www.comceccmr.org)) by the Capital Markets Board of Turkey and called upon the Member States to contribute to the work of the Forum and its Task Forces.

**Required Action(s):** As the Secretariat of the Forum, Capital Markets Board of Turkey is expected to brief the Session on the recent developments regarding the activities of the Forum.
Questions for Discussion:

i) What are the challenges in your country for enhancing capital market development and diversifying products in compliance with international standards?

ii) Is there any policy/strategy of your country to develop market infrastructures with a view to attracting more capital flows?

iii) What are your country's experience regarding Islamic finance instruments?

Meetings of the OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities

In line with the relevant resolution of the COMCEC, the cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member Countries has been revitalized. Since 2009, the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the member states have regularly convened with a view to sharing experiences and enhancing institutional and human capacity in this field.

The 12th Meeting of the OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities was held on 14-15 May 2012 in Istanbul, Turkey. The Meeting decided to establish three working groups to prepare technical background papers in the following areas: Payment Systems, Macro-Prudential Regulations, and Liquidity Management in Islamic Finance. The 13th Meeting of OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities will be held on 27-28 November 2013 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia with the theme of "Impact of Recent International Financial Regulatory Reforms on OIC Countries."

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to brief the Session on the recent developments regarding cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member Countries.

Questions for Discussion:

i) What are the policies/programs implemented in your country for ensuring the financial sector stability?

ii) What are your country experiences in enhancing the institutional and human capacity of the Central Banks/Monetary Authorities?

AGENDA ITEM 11

Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation

Private Sector Meetings

The Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) organizes Private Sector Meetings and reports their outcomes to the COMCEC Sessions. One of the main objectives of the private sector meetings is to provide a platform for the private sector representatives of the Member States to explore new opportunities and create new linkages among themselves. Up to now, 14 private sector meetings have been held. The last one was held on 24-26 April, 2011 in Sharjah, UAE. The 15th Private Sector Meeting for Promotion of Trade and Joint Venture Investments Among Islamic Countries and the 7th Forum for Businesswomen in Islamic Countries were held on 28-30 October 2013 in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Moreover, in line with the resolutions of the 28th Session of the COMCEC, Ministry of Customs and Trade of Turkey in cooperation with COMCEC Coordination Office and Turkish Cooperation
and Coordination Agency (TIKA) organized a Workshop on “Cooperation and Experience Sharing Among the Company Registration Agencies of the OIC Member States” on 11-12 September 2013, in Ankara, Turkey. The Workshop brought together the relevant agencies from 28 Member Countries.

Furthermore, during the Exchange of Views Session of the 28th Session of the COMCEC, Turkey proposed to organize experience sharing programs in the field of SMEs. In this regard, relevant authorities of Turkey in coordination with the COMCEC Coordination Office have been organizing capacity building and experience sharing programs for the COMCEC Member Countries.

**Required Action(s):** The ICCIA is expected to submit a report on the recent developments regarding private sector meetings. The COMCEC Coordination Office is expected to inform the Session of the experience sharing programs in the field of SMEs.

**Questions for Discussion:**

i) In addition to ongoing efforts, what other additional steps can be taken for more active involvement of the private sector in economic cooperation efforts under the COMCEC umbrella?

---

**AGENDA ITEM 12**

**Exchange of Views on “Increasing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Flows to the OIC Member Countries”**

Exchange of views sessions are held regularly at the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions. The 28th Session of the COMCEC decided the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views of the next COMCEC Session as “Increasing FDI Flows to the OIC Member Countries.”

In this respect, a Preparatory Workshop on “Increasing FDI Flows to the OIC Member Countries” was organized by the COMCEC Coordination Office and SESRIC in cooperation with the IDB Group (ICIEC) on 30 September-1 October 2013 in Ankara, Turkey.

**Required Action(s):** SESRIC is expected to inform the 29th Session of the COMCEC regarding the outcomes of the aforementioned Workshop.

- **Possible Themes for the Exchange of Views Session of the 30th COMCEC Session**

During the 29th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee, the Committee discussed on the possible themes and took note of the following themes for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 30th Session of the COMCEC:

- **Theme 1:** The Role of Public-Private Sector Partnership for the Development of the Tourism Sector in OIC Member States
- **Theme 2:** Enhancement of the outreach to Islamic Financial Services in OIC Member States
- **Theme 3:** Facilitating Access to Trade Finance in the OIC Member States
- **Theme 4:** Managing the Informal Economy in the OIC Member States
- **Theme 5:** Enhancing Aid Efficiency and Developing Effective Aid Strategies and Policies
The 29th Follow-up Committee requested the SESRIC to circulate a questionnaire to the Member States to explore their views on the above-mentioned themes and report them to the 29th Session of the COMCEC.

**Required Action(s):** SESRIC is expected to present the results of the questionnaire on the theme of exchange of views session of the 30th Session of the COMCEC. The 29th Session of the COMCEC will decide on the theme of the next year's exchange of views session.

**AGENDA ITEM 13**

**Date of the 30th Session of the COMCEC**

The Session will decide on the dates of the 30th Session of the COMCEC and the 30th Follow-up Committee Meetings. Annual sessions of the COMCEC are generally held in October or November and annual meetings of the Follow-up Committee are usually held in May.

**Required Action(s):** COMCEC Coordination Office will propose specific dates for the 30th Session of the COMCEC and the 30th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee. The Session will decide on the dates of 30th Session of COMCEC and the 30th Follow-up Committee.