REPORT

OF

THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

ON

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OIC TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ACTION

SUBMITTED

TO

THE THIRTIETH MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE OIC (COMCEC)

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INTRODUCTION:

1. The General Secretariat has continued to follow-up, and coordinate, the various operations of the OIC relevant OIC institutions working in the domain of economic cooperation, in line with the pertinent OIC resolutions, agreements and decisions. This report shall cover the various outcomes of these coordination efforts, including the series of demarches made by the General Secretariat with the competent authorities of the OIC member states as well as international partners towards implementing OIC programmes and projects upon drawing inspiration from the various feedbacks received in this connection.

2. The major activities covered in the Report include the various efforts on operationalisation of Trade Preferential System of the OIC and implementation of OIC General Agreement for Economic, Technical, and Commercial Cooperation as well as OIC Agreement for Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investment among Member States. The report also includes outcomes of coordination meeting of Consultative Group on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade, and creation of Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) of OIC Member States, in order to fast-track intra-OIC trade.

3. During the year under review, the 16th Private Sector Meeting held in Sharjah, States of United Arab Emirates on 19-20 March 2014 and the 30th General Assembly of ICCIA have provided a greater boost for the role of the Private Sector in the scheme of OIC activities. The increased awareness provided by the Private Forum for good economic and corporate governance as well as transparent business practices has brought to the fore the need to address the various constraints towards improving the investment climate in OIC Member States.

4. In the agricultural sector, the 40th Session of Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) approved the Statute of the Islamic Organization of Food Security (IOFS), while projects bearing on capacity-building for agriculture extension workers are being undertaken with noticeable progress.

5. The Report also incorporates a general assessment of the activities undertaken with regard to the implementation of OIC Ten Year Programme of Action as well as the resolutions of COMCEC during the reporting year. The strong points include the increased coordination of the activities of the various OIC institutions as exemplified in the various demarches of the new Secretary-General, His Excellency, Iyad Ameen Madani, who assumed headship of the General Secretariat on 1st January 2014. Similarly, the approval of the Statute of the Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) and the accession by 19 OIC Member States to the said Statute, as well as the mechanisms approved by the OIC Ministers of Tourism in Banjul, The Gambia on 4-6 December 2014, have increased the desire institutional capacity for the rejuvenation of intra-OIC cooperation. Conversely, the constraints continue to feature the weak mobilization of financial resources and inadequate ownership.
I. COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF TRADE:

6. Since 29th Session of COMCEC, due emphasis has continued to be placed on operationalisation of the trade preferential system of the OIC and implementation of OIC General Agreement for Economic, Technical, and Commercial Cooperation as well as OIC Agreement for Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investment among Member States. Consequently, in addition to the efforts to ensure the completion of the administrative measures necessary for the take-off of the system, other non-tariff components of the TPS were also given due consideration during the year under review. The following report covers the recent outlook of trade relations in OIC Member States, consolidating coordination of activities under the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade, trade financing and export credit insurance, and trade promotion.

7. During the year under review, trade exchanges among the OIC Member States continued to grow. Member states’ trade increased from US$ 3.88 trillion in 2011 to US$ 4.13 trillion in 2012, an increase by 22%. Trade among OIC Member States accounted for 11.34 % of world trade in 2012, compared to 10.8 % in 2011.

8. Similarly, the total value of intra-OIC trade in 2012 reached US$ 751.68 billion, as against US$ 681.60 billion in 2011, an increase by 26.5%. At the same time the share of intra-OIC trade in the total trade of Member States increased from 17.80 % in 2011 to 18.45% in 2012, which represents an increase by 4.5%.

Enhancing Coordination on Intra-OIC Trade:

9. In line with the objectives of coordination and synergy among the OIC institutions in the area of Intra-OIC Trade, the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT) and International Islamic Trade Financing (ITFC) organized the Sixth Meeting of the OIC Consultative Group for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade in Marrakesh, Kingdom of Morocco, on 3-4 February 2014. The meeting reviewed implementation of the Executive Programme of the Road-Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade and the plan of activities for 2014-2015 within the five clusters of Trade Facilitation, Trade Financing, Trade Promotion, Capacity Building and Development of Strategic Commodities. The Meeting also examined the assessment and evaluation process for the Executive Programme and made recommendations on the way forward to further enhancing the coordination of activities of the Group and achieving the goals of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action.

10. The salient recommendations for consolidating the work of Consultative Group adopted by the Meeting include: preparation of a comprehensive evaluation report on the work of Consultative Group; further consolidating coordination and synergy among the relevant OIC institutions in the trade area on the implementation of joint activities; expediting implementation of activities in the area of: Aid for Trade at the OIC sub-regional level. It further provide for enhancing access to financing and strengthening SMEs; establishing the Global Network of TPOs in OIC Member States; and funding of the existing projects on cotton action plan and assisting OIC project owners in repackaging their projects; enhancing
consultation and cooperation with Regional and international organizations as well as regional
economic blocks within the OIC. Other recommendations feature ensuring support for ICDT
in its capacity as the Technical Secretariat of the Consultative Group; and encouraging all
reporting agencies to submit an assessment of their respective activities under the various
clusters.

Network of OIC Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs)

11. The First Meeting of the Global Network of the OIC Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) was
jointly organized by Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT) and Sharjah Chamber
of Commerce and Industry in Sharjah, State of the United Arab Emirates on 17-18 March
2014. The Meeting was attended by representatives of Governments and Trade Promotion
Organs of OIC Member States as well as OIC, regional and international institutions and
Private Sector operators.

12. The Meeting agreed inter alia to launch the Network of OIC TPOs; entrust the ICDT the task
of the Secretariat of the OIC TPOs; establish a dedicated dynamic website for the Network;
hold a Global Conference of the Network; create a trophy of the best TPO in the OIC Member
States and mobilize resources for the implementation of Projects adopted by the Network. The
Meeting also elaborated on the possible mandate of the Network in the area of capacity
building, trade promotion, trade information, studies and business missions, as well as trade
and investment facilitation,

Trade Facilitation:

13. Efforts aimed at securing Member States execution of the multilateral instruments for the
Trade Preferential System of OIC (TPS-OIC) continued to feature prominently in the activities
of the Organization. So far, 41 Member States have signed and 30 ratified the Framework
Agreement on Trade Preferential System of the OIC, 33 Member States signed and 16 ratified
the PRETAS, and 32 Member States signed and 15 ratified the Rules of Origin, while 12
Member States submitted their list of products. Accordingly, the TPS-OIC mechanism should
soon take-off after the expected submission of required documents by an additional member
state. The status of signing and ratification of OIC economic agreements as of 31 March 2013
is annexed to this Report.

14. In this context, Member States which are yet to complete the signing and ratification
processes of TPS-OIC or forward their lists in line with the relevant provisions of CFM
resolutions are being requested to do so as early as possible. This includes the submission of
their specific annual installments of reduction along with the list of products (schedules of
concessions), sample of certificates and specimen impression of stamps used in their customs
and to complete internal and legislative and administrative measures.

15. Hopefully, the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) would be convened in 2014, as soon as
the required number of ratifications and lists of concessions is available.
16. Similarly, the General Secretariat has renewed its call on OIC Member States to give effect to some important multilateral trade instruments in force among OIC Member States. Both the General Agreement for Economic, Technical and Commercial Cooperation among OIC Member States and the Agreement for Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments among OIC Member States had entered into force in April 1981 and February 1988 respectively.

17. The General Agreement for Economic, Technical and Commercial Cooperation among OIC Member States has been signed by 47 Member States and ratified by 32, while the Agreement on Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments has been signed by 38 and ratified by 27. While the former Agreement provides for facilitating trade exchanges among Member States, the latter provides for the commitment of OIC Member States to creating, in their respective countries the necessary and favorable conditions for promoting intra-OIC investment and to offer various incentives for free movement of capitals, *inter se.*

**Trade Promotion:**

18. During the year 2013, the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT) in collaboration with relevant authorities in Member States organized various Trade Fairs and Specialized Exhibitions, including; the 1st Handicrafts Exhibition of the OIC Member States, 11-14 April 2013 Casablanca - Kingdom of Morocco; the 6th Exhibition of Agribusiness Industries in the OIC Member States 13-16 May 2013, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman; the 1st OIC -China Expo and the Economic and Trade Forum, 15-19 September 2013, Yinchuan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Province, People's Republic of China; the 14th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States, 22-23 September 2013, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran; and the 2nd Halal Food Exhibition of the OIC Member States, 16-18 December 2013 Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

**Trade Financing and Export Credit Insurances:**

19. During the year 2013 the ITFC kept expanding its operation in developing intra-OIC trade accompanied by adequate precautions so that the ITFC resource could be preserved. In 2013, the trade approvals of ITFC reached about US$ 4.938 million, as against US$ 4.466 million in 2012, which represents an increase of 10 percent. Similarly, the level of utilization of the credits reached around US$ 3.900 million in 2013, which is 80% of approvals, compared to 90% of approvals in 2012. Accordingly, over last 6 years the volume of ITFC trade financing approval reached US$ 5.0 billion as of end of 2013, which indicates almost double, up from US$ 2.5 billion in 2008.

20. Similarly, during the year under review, the new commitments of the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC) reached to US$ 1.791 million compared to US$ 1.657 million for the year 2012, registering an increase of 8%. In the same vein the business insured by the Corporation in 2013 reached US$ 2.439 million compared to US$ 2.343 million in 2012, representing 4% increase and an achievement of 71% of the set target for the period. However, the Corporation was not spared the effects of the increased credit and investment risks, particularly in Southern Europe and North Africa, resulting in
paid claims amounting to US$ 1.58 million, compared to US$1.30 million, thereby registering an increase by 22% compared to the same period last year.

21. Since its inception, the ICIEC has cumulatively insured US$ 12.4 billion in Member States export, and US$ 8 billion in Member States imports. ICIEC paid US$ 28.5 million in claims during this time.

**Standards and Metrology:**

22. The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) has organized the Workshop on “Building and Enhancing Standardization, Metrology and Accreditation Capacity in the OIC Least Developed Countries (LDCs)” with cooperation and support of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), Turkish Standards Institution (TSE), Turkish Accreditation Agency (TÜRKAK) and National Metrology Institute (TÜBİTAK-UME) on 07-10 May 2013, in TSE Quality Campus and UME premises in Gebze-Kocaeli, and TSE Headquarters in Ankara, Republic of Turkey. The Workshop was attended by 21 representatives from 19 OIC LDCs.

23. Four other Workshops on “Building and Enhancing Standardization, Metrology and Accreditation Capacity in the OIC Member States” in the following regions are planned to be organized during the coming year: a) North African Arabic Speaking Countries, b) African French Speaking Countries, c) African English Speaking Countries, and d) Central Asian Countries (CACs).

24. The General Secretariat sensitized Member States on the new agenda of SMIIC with regard to the mutual recognition of Halal Certificates issued by SMIIC member bodies, in line with the decision of the 5th General Assembly Meeting of SMIIC held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey in November 2014.

25. SMIIC has published the OIC/SMIIC Halal Food Standards,. The Republic of Turkey, has officially adopted the OIC/SMIIC Standards, has accordingly been certifying Halal certificates for the last two years. It has signed the “Agreement between SMIIC and Member States for the Distribution and Sales of OIC/SMIIC Standards” document. TSE, within the short period of time and has already issued more than 200 Halal certificates according to OIC/SMIIC 1.

26. The 7th Board of Directors and 5th General Assembly meetings of SMIIC, were held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey on 22-24 November 2013.

II. TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT:

**Dakar-Port Sudan Railway Project:**

27. Sequel to the Validation Workshop on the Final Report of Pre-Feasibility Studies on the Missing Links on the AU/NEPAD Dakar-Djibouti corridor, which was held in Djibouti on 18-19 December 2012, at which IDB participated as one of the donor agencies, arrangements for
the feasibility stage of the Project commenced in earnest. Participating Member States have been requested to include the missing links in their national development priorities in order to secure adequate financing.

28. Consequently, the General Secretariat obtained the complete set of the Pre-Feasibility Studies on the Missing Links of Dakar - Djibouti and transmitted the same to OIC Member States and development partners/institutions. The General Secretariat also requested the OIC Member States and development partners/institutions to consider possibility of extending technical and funding support to OIC project-owners in the elaboration of feasibility studies of their national segments along the proposed OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway line.

29. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the Pre-Feasibility Study focused on the feasibility of the missing links of the Dakar Djibouti Transport Corridor with its both road and rail components. The Study examined the technical-economic characteristics and performance of the existing railways and assessed the feasibility of constructing railway missing links of Dakar Djibouti corridor. The Study also proposed two alternative routes for constructing railway missing links of Dakar Djibouti corridor in standard gauge as well as estimated cost of upgrading the existing railway networks to standard gauge.

30. The Study further recommended moving to the completion of missing links’ conceptual design studies. It also recommended creating and putting in place national committees comprising officials from various concerned institutions in the transport sector for monitoring and evaluation of the planned activities’ implementation. Furthermore, it emphasized the crucial role of the regional economic communities crossed by the corridor, namely ECOWAS, ECCAS, COMESA and IGAD in consolidating efforts of the concerned countries and development partners in this regard.

31. In reply to the General Secretariat’s request, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development has indicated its readiness to consider contributing to financing projects covering the respective national segments along the proposed OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway line, upon receiving an official request from the concerned OIC member states to this effect. Similarly, the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Turkey has also indicated its willingness to extend support to OIC project-owners in the form of expert assistance and training relating to Due Diligence. The concerned OIC Member States have been informed accordingly.

32. In a related development, the General Secretariat has also reached an understanding with the United Nations’ Office for South-South Cooperation on the extension of necessary technical and consultancy support, through its Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE) to needy project-owners among OIC Member States during the implementation phase of the Dakar-Port Sudan Railway Project. This support would be in the form of assistance to OIC Member States in packaging their respective projects for their segments along the proposed transport corridor. Such action would facilitate the mobilization of funds from OIC traditional partners.
33. In this regard, the concerned OIC Member States are being sensitized on the need to commence national actions so as to take advantage of offers by the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Turkey. These measures would facilitate the early convening of the Second Stakeholders meeting on the OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway Project as recommended by the 40th Session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM). In the same vein, the OIC General Secretariat and the IDB have been invited to the rescheduled Dakar Financing Summit for Africa’s Infrastructure, which will review the implementation of the AU/NEPAD Dakar-Djibouti Transport Corridor, among other projects, and showcase OIC contributions to the AU Presidential Initiative for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIIDA), which enjoys IDB funding.

11th Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Communications Forum

34. The General Secretariat attended the 11th Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Communications Forum, which was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 5-7 September 2013 under the auspices of the Turkish Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications. This event provided a good platform to apprise the participants on on-going activities of the OIC in the area of transportation and communications. Furthermore, OIC interventions at the Forum focused on the need to support the current approach of the OIC on building wider partnerships for the implementation of its transportation and infrastructure projects, particularly the OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway Project.

Maritime Transportation

35. The Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA) conferred with the Secretary-General at the OIC General Secretariat on 17 February 2014 to explore ways of revitalizing the operations of the Organisation, including its new projects, namely: the Bakkah Shipping Company, the Islamic Protection and Indemnity Club and the Cooperative Information System.

III. TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT:

8th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers:

36. The Eighth Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) took place in Banjul, the Republic of The Gambia on 4-6 December 2013, under the theme ‘Fostering Wealth Creation through Tourism Development’. The Conference was attended by 28 member states, comprising Ministers in charge of Tourism and heads of delegation as well as representatives of relevant OIC institutions, regional and international organizations.

37. The Ministers reviewed and approved, among other issues, the Mechanism and Criteria for the selection of OIC City of Tourism, the Mechanism and Criteria for the award of OIC Seal of Excellence for Handicrafts and the establishment of the Heritage Centre for Islamic Countries.
38. The introduction of the OIC City of Tourism Award is aimed at galvanizing intra-OIC activities in an identified city, thereby developing the socio-economic potentials of the city in question, while scaling up intra-OIC trade in goods and services. This mechanism is also aimed at enhancing intra-OIC solidarity through rendering considerable assistance to OIC member states in the crucial areas of tourism infrastructure development, human capital development and harmonization of standards.

39. The establishment of the award of OIC Seal of Excellence for Handicrafts is also aimed at preserving, promoting and developing traditional and contemporary crafts in the OIC member states. The Conference reviewed the proposition by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the establishment of the Heritage Centre for Islamic Countries as an international specialized institution against the background of the similarity between the mandate of the proposed Centre and the functions of such existing OIC institutions in the relevant domain. Accordingly, the Conference requested IRCICA and ISESCO to include the stipulated functions of the proposed Centre in their respective mandates.

40. The Conference also adopted various resolutions on how to accelerate the implementation of the OIC Framework for Development of Tourism, including the activities of the various OIC institutions working in the domain of tourism promotion. The Conference elected new members to the re-constituted Coordination Committee, charged with the implementation of the OIC Framework and the new award mechanisms.

41. The Conference also examined a number of issues concerning the implementation of the OIC Framework for Promotion of Tourism among OIC member states, reiterating the need for tourism infrastructure development; policy and standard harmonization; promotion of Shariah-compliant tourism products; increasing competitiveness among SMEs in OIC member states; and facilitation of movement of tourists among the OIC Member States. The 9th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers will be held in the Republic of Niger in 2015. The Conference also adopted the offer of the Republic of Indonesia to host First OIC International Forum on Islamic Tourism in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, on 2-3 June 2014.

42. The Government of The Gambia has agreed to host the Fourth Meeting of the Coordination Committee on Tourism in Banjul, The Gambia, in the last week of May 2014.

Regional Project on Sustainable Development of Tourism in a Cross-Border Network of Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa

43. The 8th ICTM requested the participating Member States in this Regional Project to include the project in their respective development programmes submitted to bilateral and multilateral donors and to submit the respective national segments of the project. In this regard, the General Secretariat has renewed its request participating Member States to submit details on their respective segments of the Project, in the traditional bankable format, to facilitate mobilization of funds for their implementation. Essentially, Member States were urged to submit these re-packaged projects expeditiously, bearing in mind the need for the participating member states to include the proposed project in their development plans. Other actions
required include an allocation of internal resources for the launching of activities identified in their national territory, with a view to building the capacity of National Focal Points (NFPs) in order to implement this project, and to explore ways and means for a greater involvement of the private sector in the management of parks and protected areas.

3rd Conference on Health Tourism in Islamic Countries (CHTIC)

44. The General Secretariat participated in 4th Conference on Health-Tourism in Islamic Countries (CHTIC) held in Mashhad, Islamic Republic of Iran, on 26-27 November 2013. The meeting highlighted the enormous potential of OIC Member States in the field of health tourism and its role in spurring sustainable economic growth among countries.

45. The meeting resolved, among other things, to discuss the provisions of an OIC Accreditation System - taking into account national accreditation systems- so as to facilitate this important branch of the service sector. It also called upon the insurance companies and authorities to devise means and ways of mutual collaboration towards providing joint medical insurance services to boost health tourism among OIC Member States. The Meeting also agreed to establish the Health Tourism Information Center. The official web-site of the Health Tourism Information Center is: www.hicois.com

2nd Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum

46. The General Secretariat participated in the 2nd Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, on 16-17 December 2013. The Forum was attended by 16 OIC member states as well as one observer-country. The Republic of Turkey (COMCEC Coordination Office), SESRIC and ICDT were also in attendance. Several presentations were made by keynote speakers from both the Public and Private Sector agencies as well as SESRIC. In addition, delegations from 13 OIC member states presented their national experiences on promoting tourism in their respective countries.

47. The Forum recommended the need for training and exchange programs, B2B Meetings and workshops for the private sector representatives. It also underlined the importance of developing cultural tourism routes and joint tours in the OIC region, while underscoring the necessity of creating online platforms to promote the tourist destinations and facilitate communication and networking among the private sector representatives in OIC member states.

48. Notwithstanding the fact that the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum aims at bringing together public and private players in the tourism sector in order to exchange information, ideas and discuss some of the most important present and future challenges of tourism development in OIC countries, majority of the participants of the 2nd Forum was from public sector. It is, therefore, essential for OIC and its relevant institutions to encourage more inclusive participation of the Private Sector agencies in the future meetings of this nature.
IV. AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Establishment of OIC Food Security institution in Kazakhstan

49. The 40th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), which was held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea on 9-11 December 2013, approved the Statute of Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) as recommended by the Expert Group Meeting held in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan on 11-13 June 2013, the Islamic Commission and the Special Committee successively. Following the approval of the Statute, 19 OIC Member States signed the document. These Member States are: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Palestine, Sierra Leon, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Turkey, Uganda and Union of Comoros.

50. The IOFS is the newest OIC specialized institution, headquartered in Astana, Kazakhstan, specially created for coordinating and implementing OIC policies on agriculture, rural development and food security. To this end, the IOFS will aim: at providing expertise and technical know-how to Member States on the various aspects of sustainable agriculture, rural development and food security, including addressing the problems posed by desertification, deforestation, erosion and salinity as well as providing social safety nets. It will also strive to assess and monitor the food security situation in Member States in order to determine and make necessary emergency and humanitarian assistance, including the creation of food security reserves; mobilize and manage financial and agricultural resources for developing agriculture and enhance food security in Member States; and to coordinate, formulate and implement common agricultural policies, among others.

51. The Statute of IOFS provides that it shall be applied provisionally upon signing by at least ten OIC member states and definitively enter into force when ten member states submit their instrument of ratification. Since the required number of signature has been secured for provisional application of the Statute, the General Secretariat is presently working with relevant authorities in Kazakhstan on the consolidation of the structures of IOFS as earlier as possible.

52. To this end, IDB has approved a Technical Assistance grant amounting ID 200,000 (approximately US$ 300,000) for the establishment of IOFS. The grant will be utilized for covering the cost associated with the preparation of necessary Terms of Reference, Operational Guideline and Short-Term Action Plan for the take-off of the new OIC specialized institution.

53. The General Secretariat hereby renews its request to other OIC Member States to conclude all necessary arrangements to accede to the Statute of IOFS at their earliest convenience. On its part, the Government of Kazakhstan has concluded arrangements to designate an Interim Director General of the Secretariat of IOFS, which would facilitate the early take-off of the IOFS.
Training of Agricultural Extension Experts

54. In line with the relevant resolutions on developing technical capacity in agricultural sector, the General Secretariat interceded with the Islamic Development Bank, which provided appropriate funding for the organization of a training workshop for agricultural extension experts in OIC member states. In this regard, SESRIC, in collaboration with Islamic Development Bank, organized a training programme for agricultural extension experts in OIC member states in Izmir, Turkey on 21-24 May 2013. The main objectives of the training programme was to introduce new techniques and best practices to agricultural extension experts and to identify the needs and capacities as well as to enhance intra-OIC cooperation in the field of agriculture.

55. During the three-day training programme the agricultural extension experts from 18 OIC Member States took part in the exercise, thereby deepening their knowledge on innovative agricultural extension and consultancy applications, agricultural extension methods and techniques and international and public-private cooperation on agricultural extension. They also visited Agricultural Extension and In-Service Training Centre (TAYEM) in Aydin, Turkey.

56. At the end of programme the experts came up with a set of recommendations, which highlighted the importance of: institutional capacity, technology and research efficiency; improvement of short-term vocational courses and informal educational opportunities; Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in agricultural extension through the establishment of a nation-wide and systematic Geographical Information Systems (GIS); the research-extension-farmer linkage among the national agricultural research institutions, universities, NGOs, private sector and farmers; and projects encouraging women entrepreneurship with emphasis on improving employment of women in rural areas; among others.

OIC Cotton Action Plan

57. Towards implementation the OIC Cotton Action Plan (2007-2016), the General Secretariat has, on January 2014 renewed its communications with all project owners, requesting them to resubmit the proposed Cotton projects in a comprehensive bankable format through the normal official channel. This measure will enable the IDB and other financial institutions to take further necessary action on the projects. To date, IDB Group has provided US$ 16.5 million to finance 6 projects approved within the framework of the Action Plan in Cameroon, Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Mozambique. For a follow-up, Agriculture Department of the IDB is sending project identification missions to specific countries. First mission was in Mozambique in the first half of March 2014 and will be followed by a mission to Uganda.

58. Having circulated the project on enhancing the productivity of cotton submitted by the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute/Development and Textile Fabrics Company (SODEFITEX), one of the Centers of Excellence for the OIC Cotton Action Plan to relevant stakeholders, the General Secretariat has received the reactions of the Kuwait Fund for
Economic Development and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), requesting necessary details to facilitate positive consideration.

59. On its part, the SESRIC has organized, within the framework of its capacity building programmes, five training courses on agronomy and fiber technology of cotton in a number of OIC countries, namely Uganda, Mozambique, Togo and Mali in 2013.

60. In addition to the on-going consultations with the UN-South-South Office on technical support for OIC Cotton project-owners, the General Secretariat has noted the offer of the Government of Turkey to grant similar technical support. Similarly, the General Secretariat has included this project on the agenda of its cooperation with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, considering the French expertise in supporting Cotton producers in developing countries.

V. POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES:

a) Second Phase of the Special Programme for Development of Africa (SPDA):

61. In November 2012, the approval phase of SPDA was accomplished and the level of funding commitments to the Programme by IDB Group reached US$ 5 billion. In addition, an amount of US$7 billion has been mobilized from other development agencies for projects under the SPDA. Accordingly, a total of 480 projects have been approved for financing under the SPDA in 22 OIC African member states. Most of the projects relate to infrastructure, agriculture, industry, education, health and financial sectors.

62. It is noteworthy that at the end of the implementation of all the projects under SPDA, the following outcomes would have been realized: In infrastructure: over 2,500 KM of roads would have been either constructed or upgraded in 13 Member States, in addition to two new airports in Senegal and Sudan. Similarly, more than 900MW of electricity would have been produced in six countries with increased access to over 40,000 households; while almost 700 KM of power lines would be laid. On human development, more than 325 new primary and secondary schools and over 1000 classrooms would be built and equipped. This will be in addition to the building of three technical colleges and 8 university faculties built or equipped; over 10 new hospitals and over 120 clinics, health centers and primary healthcare centers, resulting in an increase in bed-capacity of about 1200. On agriculture, over 800,000 hectares of land would be developed and cultivated, in addition to the execution of 8-10 strategic grain reserves to support food security programmes, including the building of about 5-6 soil and/or seed research laboratories.

63. The successes achieved in the course of the implementation of the SPDA underscored the need to elaborate a successor programme for OIC countries in Africa (SPDA-2), so as to consolidate the progress recorded by these countries in the various domains. To this end, the 40th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea on 9-11 December 2013, urged all OIC Member States to actively support, and contribute to, the elaboration and eventual implementation of a successor programme of SPDA.
64. Consequently, the General Secretariat requested all OIC Member States communicate their views on the implementation of SPDA as well as any relevant proposals for the impending successor programme of SPDA. In addition, the General Secretariat is presently working with IDB on convening of an Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting to deliberate on a successor programme of SPDA.

65. In view of the foregoing, the OIC Member States are hereby invited to react to the request of the General Secretariat on the proposals for a successor programme.

b) The Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)

66. The Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) has continued to expand its activities towards alleviating poverty and improving social services and infrastructures in OIC member states. The ISFD is exploring possible opportunities for securing complementary resources, through mechanisms such as Trust Funds, allocation of Waqf assets, enhancing co-financing for ISFD projects, and donations from Philanthropists, private sector, etc.

67. ISFD had developed a framework on establishing Trust Funds to support poverty reduction programmes with interested donors including governments, philanthropists, private companies, development institutions and others, which was approved in the 40th Meeting of the ISFD Board of Directors on 1st April 2013, giving the means to ISFD to strengthen its alternative/complementary resource mobilization efforts. The ISFD is now engaged in developing the operational structure of Trust Funds, while it maintains close relationships with interested donors, such as the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists and is also discussing with some Member Countries, to begin launching Trust Funds focused on various poverty reduction themes.

68. The Fund has also put in place a comprehensive investment policy with a view to ensuring a stable source of income for the Fund, consistent with the resources needs and the long-term preservation and appreciation of the real value of the invested principal amounts of the Fund.

69. To-date, the ISFD has approved 49 projects with direct funding from its income, in addition to co-financing from IDB, governments and other financiers. The cumulative project cost of these projects is estimated at US$1.86 billion. The Fund contribution to these programs is US$264.10 million, while the remaining amount of US$1,597.90 million has been leveraged from the IDB (US$1061 million), governments and other financiers (US$537 million). The Least Developed Member Countries (LDMCs) have been the main beneficiaries of these operations, enjoying more than 80% of the Fund’s financing. In fact, 61% of these approvals were made Africa, 15% to the CIS countries, and 12% to Asia and Middle-Eastern countries.

70. So far disbursements stand at US$42.0 million. The low disbursements are due the fact that the ISFD portfolio is relatively young and its financing usually targets the ‘soft’ components of the financed projects which are implemented towards the end of the project implementation cycle.
71. The ISFD has launched Sustainable Villages Project (SVP) in May 2011 to be initially implemented in six countries in Africa over the next three years. The program, which is partially inspired by the UN Millennium Villages Project (MVP), is aimed to offer a multi-sector, integrated model of development for addressing extreme poverty among the rural communities. Two SVPs have already been launched in Chad (Salamat Region) and Kulbus in West Darfur in Sudan. The amount approved for the program is US$120 million (an average of US$20.0 million per project) as loan, and small grants. The Fund is currently working on the next batch of countries in the program. The program will be implemented in collaboration with the Earth Institute of the University of Columbia, MDG Centre in Nairobi, Arab Bank for Development in Africa (BADEA), Qatar Red Crescent, and other partners.

72. The ISFD is currently working on developing new flagship programs such as the Urban Poverty Reduction Program, the Renewable Energy for Poverty Reduction Program, and Save the Mothers Program.

73. The ISFD intends to take a number of steps aimed at achieving and intensifying the efforts for resource mobilization and advocacy. These steps include:
   a. Enhancing the efforts for resource mobilization through consultations with member countries, tapping non-conventional sources, such as philanthropists, in-kind donations, donations of Waqf lands in member countries, etc.
   b. Engaging with the private sector under the Fund’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, as well as approaching high net-worth individuals and institutions within member countries to solicit contributions to the Fund.
   d. Setting up specific poverty-related Trust Funds under the umbrella of the ISFD. These funds will be aimed to finance the provision of basic services to the poor, such as primary education, primary health care, microfinance, agriculture and rural development, energy for the poor, emergency relief and institutional capacity building.
   e. Vigorous implementation of the approved ISFD Investment Policy to increase the Fund’s income.
   f. Widening partnerships to enhance the financing leverage of the Fund.

74. The ISFD looks forward with optimism that member countries will implement the relevant OIC resolutions on supporting the activities of the Fund in addressing poverty in member countries, including the Board of Governors’ Resolutions relating to the ISFD to enable it mobilize its target capital of US$10.0 billion. The strategic focus of the Fund over the next three years will be to exert utmost effort to realize all the unpaid commitments and increase in commitments from members countries.
VI. COOPERATION IN FINANCIAL AND STATISTICAL SECTORS

a) Promotion of social finances

75. The General Secretariat continues to interface with its institutions and other partners with a view of devising ways and means of mainstreaming the cooperation in the financial sector among Member States. In this connection, the General Secretariat is exploring with the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) modalities for sharing best practices among OIC member states for promotion of traditional social finance, namely: the institutions of Zakat and Awqaf, thereby making them part of the broader framework of financial sector reforms in OIC member states. This is against the background of the need to coordinate and harmonise the activities of the various OIC institutions working in the domain of Zakat and Awkaf and to remove over-lapping and duplication attendant on the creation of such institutions/forums known as the International Conference on Zakat, International Zakat Organisation (IZO), the World Zakat Organisation (WZO), and the Association of Tax Authorities in Islamic Countries (ATAIC).

76. Similarly, the intensification of contacts with national stakeholders and institutions for the implementation of this cooperation framework informed recent demarches with King Abdulaziz University Jeddah, an institution that is closely involved in the organization of the past eight International Conferences on Islamic Economics and Finance (ICIEF). The 9th edition of ICIEF took place on 9-11 September 2013, in Istanbul, Turkey, under the theme “Growth, Equity and Stability: An Islamic Perspective” of which the latter is a co-organizer with both IDB and SESRIC.

77. In the same connection, the General Secretariat continues to attend and follow-up on the outcome of the OIC Meetings of Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member States whose sessions for 2013 and 2014 will be held in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Indonesia respectively. It is giving due visibility to the activities of the OIC Stock-Exchange Forum in its coverage of OIC events; much as it continues to encourage relevant authorities in Member States to partake in the various capacity building programmes organized by SESRIC in this domain.

b) Annual Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities

78. The Annual Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member States, which was jointly organized by the SESRIC and the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 27-28 November 2013. The two-day meeting was comprised of an Expert Group Workshop (EGW) on the first day and a Governors Meeting on the second day.

79. During the EGW, experts from the central banks and monetary authorities of the OIC member states discussed issues relating to the recent developments in the international financial regulatory reforms, including Basel III framework, and their expected impacts at both the national and international levels, particularly on the Islamic financial industry in the OIC countries. In addition, country experiences and perspectives on the prospects and challenges
brought about by the recent global regulatory reforms for the Islamic financial industry were also presented by experts from Malaysia, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

80. The Governors Meeting, which was chaired by H.E. Dr. Fahad Almubark, Governor of the SAMA, reviewed the progress report of the Three Working Groups on Liquidity Management in Islamic Finance; Macro-Prudential Regulations; and Payment Systems, which were established by the decisions of the 2012 Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member States. The meeting also listened to presentations by Mr. Svein Andresen, Secretary General of Financial Stability Board, and Mr. Karl Cordewener, Deputy Secretary General of Basel Committee. This was followed by an open discussion and exchange of views related to the recent developments in the global financial reform agenda and the possible future repercussions on the financial and monetary policies of OIC member states, and possible intra-OIC cooperation areas in the domain of financial regulation.

81. Based on its deliberations, the Meeting adopted the Final Communiqué featuring mainly:
   - The call on the international regulatory bodies to accommodate the Shariah Compliant financial products when setting standards; and
   - Reaffirmation of the need for enhancing technical cooperation among the Central Banks of the OIC countries through experience-sharing and joint initiatives in order to strengthen institutional capacities for better policy making and supervision, among others.

82. The Meeting also welcomed the offer of the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Suriname to host the meetings in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

   c) Fourth Session of the OIC Statistical Commission

83. The Fourth Session of the OIC Statistical Commission will be co-organized by SESRIC and IDB in Ankara, Turkey, on 21-23 April 2014. This session deliberated on issues relating to sharing experiences and best practices on development of open data, enhancing national capacities on poverty statistics, post-2015 development agenda and implications for NSOs, developing a more comprehensive system on health statistics, integration of statistical and geospatial Information, as well as improving capacities on tourism statistics. In addition, the Session reviewed the activities of the OIC-StatCom since its last session held in Ankara, Turkey in April 2013. Based on its deliberations, the session adopted relevant decisions on each agenda item.

VII. ENHANCING THE ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR

84. The General Secretariat has intensified its coordination activities with the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and other relevant institutions in order to implement the various OIC resolutions bearing on increasing the role of the Private Sector. Among other issues, the establishment of a Special Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) received particular attention during the year under review. However, the issue of the proposed creation of a network of Business and Technology Incubation Centers; as well as a
database of Business Angel Investors in OIC Member States is being vigorously pursued with the ICCIA and other Private Sector establishments.

**Private Sector Meetings**

85. Since the 40th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) organized the 15th and 16th Private Sector Meetings in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 28-30 October 2013, and Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, on 19 to 20 March 2014, respectively.

86. The major recommendations of 15th Private Sector Meeting featured, among others, a renewed call for reviving the OIC Network of SME Agencies (ONSA); and an increase in the value of trade financing allocations to SMEs and other Private Sector operators. The Meeting also recommended the importance of further developing handicraft industries as a means for providing employment for women and youth. The Meeting underlined the need of the OIC Member States to encourage their Private Sector establishments to utilize the existing agreements of OIC Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC) as well as the creation of necessary institutional and regulatory frameworks to attract FDI from the Islamic financial market, thereby fostering intra-OIC FDI.

87. The 16th Private Sector Meeting was held in Sharjah, UAE on 19-20 March 2014 under the theme: “Benefits of Trade Preferential System TPS-OIC for the promotion of Intra-OIC Trade”. The Forum was jointly organized by Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and ICCIA and was held under the auspices of His Royal Highness Sheikh Sultan Bin Muhammad El-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah. Participants were drawn mainly from the Private Sector establishments and Civil Society organizations of OIC Member States, with the attendance of delegates representing OIC institutions and relevant international organizations.

88. The Forum addressed such topical issues as the role of Chambers and Private Sector in maximising the level of intra-OIC trade, the role of OIC trade organizations, financial institutions and other stakeholders in enhancing intra-Islamic trade; and the impact of the TPS-OIC on the economies of the OIC Member States. It came out with several recommendations, notably the need for the Private Sector to take advantage of the numerous trade-enhancing instruments of the OIC, including the General Agreement for Economic, technical and Commercial Cooperation, the Agreement for Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investment among Member States of OIC; and the Framework Agreement of TPS-OIC, including PRETAS and Rule of Origin. Similarly, the Forum saw the need for an early implementation of the Strategic Plan for promotion and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises Sector in OIC Member States, including the creation of mechanisms for networking and exchange of expertise among the economic actors in such sectors as agro-food industry, business and technology incubation and social finance. The Forum was attended by about 250 members of the Private Sector from various OIC Member States.
The 7th Businesswomen Forum

89. The 7th Businesswomen Forum was organized by Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 29 October 2013. The Forum discussed the socio-economic challenges facing women in OIC countries and elaborated on the need for developing capacity building programmes for women, with the objective of empowering women through promoting awareness, training and creating active networking. The Meeting also discussed the modalities for creating a special mechanism for facilitating access to Islamic micro-finance and micro-credits by businesswomen. The Forum also underscored the need for creating enabling business environment through support for SMEs owned by businesswomen, while scaling up capacity-building activities for women entrepreneurs, including knowledge-sharing.

Establishment of a Special Fund for SMEs

90. The General Secretariat has identified the relevant OIC institutions operating special funds for micro-credits and micro-finance and commenced discussions on modalities for synergizing and harmonizing the various interventions made by these institutions, in order to achieve the desired objectives. The ITFC, ISF, ICD, and ISFD do have micro-finance operations that can discharge the functions traditionally carried out through a Special SME Fund. On the whole, over the last five year a total approvals by these OIC institutions has reached US$ 303 billion in 2013.

Entrepreneurship Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa

91. The General Secretariat has recently notified Member States of the 1st Annual Business Plan Competition for SMEs in Sub-Saharan Africa, being organized by the Islamic Development Bank Group. The programme is aimed at stimulating and promoting entrepreneurial initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa and in encouraging entrepreneurs in the region with several financial and non-financial benefits. Essentially, the Competition would enable the IDB Group, other leading Multilateral Development Banks and Private Sector Organisations to identify, educate and mentor high-impact entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa to foster entrepreneurship in the region. The said Competition is expected to take off in 2014, after the expiration of the deadline of end of April for submission of applications.

X. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Intra-OIC Trade:

92. It is advisable that OIC concentrates on consolidating non-tariff measures, in conjunction with its current demarches at encouraging more members to join the TPS tariff concessions framework. Hitherto, the support of Member States is needed for new initiatives and projects such as Aide for Trade, Single Windows modality, electronic data exchange; and modernized custom clearance.
93. The mission of the Consultative Group for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade is crucial in coordinating various activities of OIC institutions in the area of trade. This coordination mechanism should be supported appropriately.

94. Similarly, the Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) of Member States are invited to actively participate at the TPOs Forum of OIC, in order to give effect to the various trade-enhancing instruments of the OIC.

95. There is the need to continue on-going high level consultations with Member States on accession to TPS-OIC, including regional economic blocs, especially during Secretary General audiences with senior policy-makers. It is also suggested that the mechanism for compensating participating Member States in the TPS-OIC against revenue losses should be articulated and explained clearly to expand the membership of the OIC tariff reduction system.

96. While commending the enormous interventions made in the area of trade financing by ITFC, ICD and ICIEC, it is apparent that Member States, Private Sector establishments and Community Based Organizations would need to be better informed on the series of projects and activities financed by these institutions. In this regard, an illustrative catalogue of past and on-going projects of these OIC institutions should be widely published and distributed among OIC Member States and relevant user institutions.

OIC Cotton Action Plan:

97. There is a need to encourage all concerned Member States to prioritize their cotton projects and include these in their national development priority list. The recent assurances by IDB to place on the agenda of its Member Country Partnership Strategy (MCPS), projects under the OIC Cotton Action Plan represent a step in the right direction.

98. In order to facilitate the immediate take-off of the approved projects, Member States are hereby requested to resubmit their cotton projects in a comprehensive bankable format through the normal official channel to the IDB and other financial institutions.

Tourism Sector Development:

99. The establishment of the two awards of OIC City of Tourism, and Seal of Excellence for Handicrafts will undoubtedly generate intra-OIC activities in the tourism domain. In this regard, Member States are encouraged to forward their nominations in a timely fashion and to publicize this information among their respective tourism stakeholders, especially among the Small and Medium Enterprise-owners.

100. Similarly, the convening of the First International Conference on Halal Tourism by Indonesia will add another interesting chapter to the efforts aimed at scaling up Islamic products as crucial contribution by the OIC to the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as it relates to development of indigenous cooperation strategies.
Role of Private Sector:

101. The outcome of the 16th Private Sector Forum held in Sharjah with regard to the need for greater advocacy by the Private Sector for TPS-OIC is commendable. So also are the issues of good corporate governance and promotion of Islamic financial products, including entrepreneurship and support for youth and women empowerment.

102. The call for the implementation of the relevant strategy for the development of the SME sector should be given priority in the next phase, so as to give effect to the various resolutions and decisions on scaling up the role of the Private Sector in OIC Member States. To this extent, the long proposed projects on the creation of a Network of Business and Technology Incubator and Database on Angel Investors and Venture Capital Organizations should be activated in no distant time.

Poverty Alleviation

103. The activities of the various poverty alleviation funds, such as the ISFD and the ISF have been constrained by inadequate funds. The mobilization of the various pledges under these funds and the required allocation of Waqfs to enable on-kind contributions, are necessary and should be accorded the utmost priority.

The General Secretariat
Organization of Islamic Cooperation
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
10 April 2014
## MEMBER STATES THAT SIGNED / RATIFIED THE TPS-OIC AGREEMENTS (As of 30 March 2014)

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