



**Standing Committee
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

Proceedings of the 12th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group

Improving Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs in the OIC Member Countries



**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
November 2018**



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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 12TH MEETING OF THE
COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP
ON**

**“Improving Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs in the
OIC Member Countries**

(November 6th, 2018, Ankara, Turkey)

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

November 2018

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Introduction

The 12th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group was held on November 6th, 2018 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Improving Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs in the OIC Member Countries”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 19 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Trade Working Group. Representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office, ITFC, ICDT, SESRIC, World Customs Organization (WCO), UNESCAP, APEC and International Association of AEO Customs and Logistics have also attended the Meeting.¹

At the outset, the representative of the COMCEC Coordination Office informed the participants about the trade outlook of the Member Countries. Then the participants considered Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs through focusing on the Research Report titled “Authorized Economic Operator Programs in the Islamic Countries: Enhancing Customs-Traders Partnership.” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for the Meeting with a view to enriching the discussions.

Moreover, the Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs in their respective countries. The participants had the chance to discuss the policy options for enhancing the cooperation in this important field. The Room Document based on the findings of the Research Report submitted to the Trade Working Group Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions were the main inputs for the discussions during policy debate session.

¹ The list of participants is attached as Annex 4.



1. Opening Session

In line with the tradition of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Meeting started with the recitation from the Holy Quran. At the outset, Mr. Burak KARAGÖL Director in the COMCEC Coordination Office introduced the COMCEC and its activities briefly.

Mr. Bilal Khan PASHA, Consul General from Consulate General of Pakistan in İstanbul was elected as the Chairman of the Meeting. Mr. PASHA introduced himself and thanked all the participants for electing him as the Chairman of the Meeting.

2. The COMCEC Trade Outlook

Ms. Vildan BARAN, Senior Expert from the COMCEC Coordination Office, has presented some of the key findings of the COMCEC Trade Outlook 2018.

In her presentation, Ms. BARAN focused on the recent trends and main characteristics of the trade between the OIC Member States and the world, recent trends in intra-OIC trade and trade facilitation in the OIC Member States.

Concerning the trade between OIC Member states and the world, Ms. BARAN stated that total OIC exports increase by 17.1 per cent to 1.6 trillion \$ in 2017. She mentioned that total OIC imports increased by 8.0 per cent and amounted to 1.7 trillion \$. Thus, she stated, the total OIC trade increased to 3.4 trillion \$ in 2017, down from 3.0 trillion \$ in 2016. T

Ms. BARAN pointed out that several factors accounted for the strong performance in total OIC exports in 2017 including the revival of global economic activity and rising commodity prices. On the other hand, ongoing political developments in many countries in the Middle East constrain further increases in the OIC trade. Ms. BARAN also shared figures about total OIC trade, share of OIC trade in global trade and the breakdown of total OIC exports and imports by countries and sectors.

She stated that top performers in total OIC exports were, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and Turkey together accounting for 60 per cent of total OIC exports in 2017. Mineral fuels, oils, electrical machinery and equipment, pearls, precious stones, mechanical appliance and plastics are represented 45 percent of the total OIC exports.

Ms. BARAN also stated that total OIC exports are highly concentrated. Accordingly, share of mineral fuels, oils and distillation products in total OIC exports was 45 per cent in 2017. This sector was followed by electrical machinery and equipment, pearls, precious stones, ores, slag and ash and machinery, mechanical appliances. These five sectors as a whole accounted for 63.2 per cent of total OIC exports in 2017.

She also elaborated on the intra-OIC trade. She shared figures about intra-OIC trade and commodity composition of intra-OIC exports. She emphasized that although the intra-OIC trade remained weak in the last two years, it rebounded strongly in 2017. Intra-OIC trade increased by 16.5 per cent to 319.4 billion dollars in 2017

Ms. BARAN concluded his presentation by sharing figures on border compliance costs and times for exports in the OIC Member States. She stated that border compliance costs and times vary immensely across the member countries and reducing trade costs in the OIC member states is important to be more competitive in the international markets.



3. Trade Facilitation in the OIC Member Countries

Mr. Yuhua ZHANG, Economic Affairs Officer of the UNESCAP, made a presentation on “Trade Facilitation in the OIC Member Countries”.

Her presentation consisted of four sections: A Brief Introduction, Results of the UN Global Survey, Impact of Trade Facilitation and a Conclusion.

She started his presentation by pointing out that reducing trade costs is essential for economies to effectively use trade as an engine of growth and sustainable development. Thus, trade facilitation plays a pivotal role in reducing trade costs, on top of existing efforts to dismantle tariff and non-tariff barriers and enhance physical connectivity. Ms. ZHANG added that trade facilitation and the digitalization of trade procedures have taken increasing importance as evidenced by the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, as well as the growing number of regional and sub-regional initiatives for facilitating the electronic exchange of information along international supply chains, including more recent Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

She expressed that the results of the United Nations Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation in 2017 covered 34 members of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC). According to her presentation the Report reveals that:

1. OIC implementation rate of the measures stood at 53 per cent, below the global average of 60 per cent. Among OIC members, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates had the highest implementation rate, exceeding 90 per cent.
2. OIC has made a good progress. Implementation rate of OIC as a group improved from 43 per cent to 55 per cent between the first and second Global Surveys.
3. Comparing with global average levels, OIC members have well-implemented trade facilitation measures related to women and trade facilitation, as well as Institutional arrangement and cooperation, with the implementation level exceeding the global average.
4. OIC countries have already implemented many of the WTO TFA related measures, in particular transparency measures. However, cross-border paperless trade implementation remains low and there is still much room for improvement.
5. Implementation of “inclusive” trade facilitation measures to promote SME and agricultural trade remained below global average and OIC may further promote such measures in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

She also mentioned that analysis of the impact on trade cost of increasing implementation rates in OIC found that achieving basic OIC-wide compliance with the WTO TFA may reduce trade costs of the group by about 10 per cent, while a more ambitious strategy involving digital trade facilitation and cross-border paperless trade could reduce trade costs by approximately 27 per cent.

Finally, on her closing remarks, she emphasized that the OIC Members shall continue efforts on trade facilitation and the digitalization of trade procedures. To do so, OIC Members who are also member of the ESCAP are encouraged to actively participate in the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade, to advance regional cross-border paperless trade through pilot projects, information sharing and coordinated adoption of international standards and implementation models. She informed the participants that non-ESCAP OIC members can participate in the processes as observers.

Q/A

Question: Among the OIC Member Countries, there are some countries which have not ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and some countries even have not been a member of WTO. For that reason, is there any possibility for these kind of Countries to benefit from the trade facilitation measures. Are there any alternative ways?

Answer: Trade Facilitation Agreement presents important measures and principles to be implemented by countries. Therefore, for implementing this measures, a country do not have to be a member of WTO or ratify the TFA. Moreover, many international organizations have capacity building programs for trade facilitation efforts.

Question: Is there any trade facilitation agreement for the OIC Member Countries?

Answer: Among the OIC Member Countries, the Trade Preferential System is close to be operationalized. However, there is no specific agreement for trade facilitation in the OIC now.

4. AEO Programs: Conceptual Framework and Global Overview

Mr. Christopher KRISTENSSON, Senior Advisor to the World Customs Organization (WCO), delivered a presentation on the topic of “AEO Programs Conceptual Framework and Global Overview”.

The presentation has four parts which are Background and Objectives, Global Overview of the Implementation, New Features of the WCO AEO Programme, Lessons Learned & Way Forward.

Mr. KRISTENSSON, started his presentation by giving a brief introduction on WCO. He emphasized that WCO has 182 Members which are divided into 6 regions, responsible for producing 98% of international trade. Then, he mentioned about WCO’s vision by emphasizing the key activities of the Organization in this regard.

He stated that, WCO AEO Programme is a part of the SAFE Framework of Standards which secures and facilitates the global trade and provides overarching framework for the Security Programme. He pointed out that 169 Member Countries of WCO have signed the letter of intention for implementation of SAFE Framework.

Then Mr. KRISTENSSON defined AEO as a party involved in the international movement of goods in whatever function that has been approved by or on behalf of a national Customs administrations as complying with WCO or equivalent supply chain security standards. Then, he shared information regarding the WCO AEO Criteria. He gave examples of many criteria such as Demonstrated Compliance with Customs Requirements, Satisfactory System for Management of Commercial Records, Financial Viability, and Consultation, Co-operation and Communication etc.

He also mentioned the benefits of AEO. According to his presentation, these benefits are such as increasing improvement of the efficiency of a company’s internal processes, direct benefits from other countries in case of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA), certification as reliable, predictable partner etc.

He emphasized that there are 77 operational AEO Programmes and 17 AEO Programme under development in the world. Besides, there are 60 MRAs and 34 MRAs under development. There are 31 Operational Customs Compliance Programme as well.

Mr. KRISTENSSON also informed the participants regarding the difference of the WCO AEO compared with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Authorized Operator. He firstly explained by emphasizing that WCO AEO requires both security requirements and an appropriate record of compliance. However, he continued, WCO Authorized Operator focused only the security standards.

In his closing remarks, Mr. KRISTENSSON focused on the lessons learnt and way forward. He stated that AEO is a harmonization of other security programmes. He, finally, suggested that AEO should expand to e-Commerce stakeholders as well.

5. AEO Programs in the OIC: Case Studies and Recommendations

Prof. Nazire Nergiz DINÇER presented the study titled “Authorized Economic Operator Programs in the Islamic Countries: Enhancing Customs-Traders Partnership” that has been prepared specifically for the 12th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group, with a view of enriching the discussions.

The objective of this study is to improve awareness on the AEOs and learn from the international AEO best practices; explore the state of the play in the OIC members’ AEO programs including their implementation and trade facilitation impacts; provide policy options for designing/implementing AEO programs in the OIC countries; and lay out actions for MRAs and regional AEO programs in the OIC members.

The presentation focused on 5 main topics: AEO in OIC member states; best international practices; OIC case studies; comparison of AEO programs in OIC with best practices; and general evaluation. Next, Prof. DINCER laid out the methodology of the study that is composed of comprehensive research and review of the AEO literature followed by collection of data on OIC AEOs and convergence analysis as well as in-depth case study analysis.

A. AEO in the OIC Member States

The desk research conducted suggests that the OIC Member States exhibit a great degree of heterogeneity in terms of AEO adoption, implementation and mutual recognition agreements. In order to document and analyze the current status of the AEO programs in the OIC members, an extensive amount of data was collected. Data collection included surveys distributed online and by e-mail as well as secondary source analyses (such as collecting information from relevant webpages and quantifying those).

Survey responses were analyzed by using a convergence matrix, which is frequently used for its straightforwardness. The comparator matrix used in this analysis, in essence, is a simple tool to compare different approaches to the AEO concept within a group of countries. The qualitative comparator matrix is composed of 7 major themes and 15 variables for operational AEO programs that are supported by 92 questions.

Among the OIC Member Countries’ AEO programs, the highest levels of convergence are observed for self-assessment mechanism along with physical security and compliance requirements. However, the lowest levels of convergence appear to be in the areas of SMEs, MRAs and types of operators.

B. Best International Practices

The objective of this section is to evaluate the outcome of different AEO programs by looking at different measures of the Customs performance. Prof. DINCER first explained the rationale behind choosing three best international practices: Japan, Canada and the EU. After giving a brief picture about each program, she evaluated these programs.

C. OIC Case Studies

Public and private sector interview questionnaires with open-ended questions were designed and implemented to complement the surveys for the case study countries (Jordan, Turkey and Uganda). For each of these countries Prof. DINCER presented a brief country information, features of the AEO program, benefits provided, challenges, lessons learned and needs for further improvement from the government and public sector perspectives.

D. Comparison of AEO programs in OIC with Best Practices

When the trade facilitation impacts of operational AEO programs in the OIC Member Countries are considered, it is observed that average time and cost to import and export during 2014-2017 is much lower for the countries implementing an AEO program compared to the ones without an AEO program. Nonetheless, time to export and import on average for the AEO programs in the OIC Member Countries is much higher than the best practice countries.

E. General Evaluation

In the last part of the presentation, Prof. DINCER synthesized the information gathered from best international practices, survey results of OIC AEO programs and experiences of OIC Member States visited for the case studies and presented a general evaluation.

Success Factors

The synthesis of the best practice experiences, country convergence analysis and three case studies conducted during this study identified the success factors in the OIC AEO Programs as follows: (i) Active participation of at least one best-practice-developed country in the design process of the AEO program; (ii) Regional AEO design and implementation to align the programs from their inauguration; (iii) Development of bilateral/subregional/regional MRAs to increase the benefits to the AEO certificate holders and reduce the costs of designing the agreement; (iv) Consultation with Customs prior to application; (v) Awareness about the importance of private sector partnership; (vi) Adoption of Client Relations Management

Challenges and Recommendations

Lengthy AEO approval times

(i) Online application capability should be developed; (ii) Frequently asked questions should be posted on web sites to reduce the trivial questions in regards to AEO implementation; (iii) Ex-ante consultation of the prospective AEOs with related Customs officials should be incorporated into the program design; (iv) An anticipated processing timeline should be developed and then announced on the website of the Customs Authority; (v) The Customs Authority should be responsible from standardization of processing times by operator type; (vi). The data on actual processing times should be published on the website along with the targeted time frames; (vii) In case of significant delays, the Customs Authority should be held accountable through predetermined and announced rules.

Lengthy self-assessment questionnaires

(i) Online application capability would help this challenge as well by providing a time-saving opportunity for the applicants; (ii) Identification of the information needs in a systematic way

rather than gathering all available information about the firm; (iii) An extensive guideline regarding the questionnaire should be posted on the web site of Customs; (iv) A dedicated phone-line to answer the questionnaire related questions should be established.

Difficulties in communication of Customs Authority with private sector

(i) The Customs Authorities should formalize the communication methods such as regular and inclusive meetings, regular email correspondence or designated phone-lines; (ii) A survey of AEO company satisfaction should be incorporated to the post-authorization procedures.

Difficulties in communication of Customs Authority with other government agencies

A centralized and automated data exchange system between the different AEOs and related government agencies should be adopted.

Employing existing staff for the AEO design/implementation, which causes scarcity or misallocation of resources

(i) Existing staff of the Customs Authority should not be spread thin to design and implement an AEO program; (ii) The risk management departments should form a new AEO sub-department staffed with AEO-devoted personnel.

Difficulties in identification of tangible benefits

(i) The private sector should be involved in the design of the AEO program from the beginning to pinpoint the needed tangible benefits; (ii) Awareness about the security of supply chain should be created among prospective AEO status applicants

Insufficient number of MRAs

(i) Trade identification numbers should be harmonized; (ii) The Customs Authorities should invest in capacity building initiatives to exchange data in a safe and secure manner across MRA participants; (iii) Regional MRA efforts should increase; (iv) The institutions such as rule of law and control of corruption should be improved.

Sustainable and regular training programs

(i) Formal and regular training programs should be designed and implemented both in headquarters and in the regional offices of the Customs Authority; (ii) International organizations related to OIC countries, including COMCEC, should provide training programs; (iii) Self-learning tools should be made available to all involved parties.

Participation of SMEs

(i) The Customs Authorities should first design an AEO-like program as a stepping tool; (ii) The governments can provide guidance or financial aid for SMEs to be eligible for applying to the AEO programs; (iii) The governments can choose to subsidize large domestic firms to pull up the SMEs that are in their supply chain to be more compliant and secure in their transactions.

Data Security

- (i) A new genre of personnel who are well-versed in technology and law should be employed;
- (ii) Dissemination of data (when and if required) in a safe and secure environment should be broadened to all the relevant public sector institutions.

Questions and Answers

1. *Among the reasons for not implementing the AEO program, you mentioned financial capability. Can you explain the link between implementing AEO program and financial capability?*

The eligibility requirements for the private sector companies to become AEO certificate holders entail high-cost alterations in their premises and procedures. Furthermore, in some countries there are application costs or requirements for holding specific certificates that are costly particularly for the small and medium-size enterprises.

2. *Although some countries, for example Algeria, have AEO programs these countries are not classified as AEOs in the study. Can you explain the reason?*

In the study, the WCO definition of the authorized economic operators is followed while making classifications. Since Algeria's program is classified as a customs compliance program in the WCO Compendium (2018), this programme is not classified among the countries with active AEO programs in this study.

3. *In the presentation, it is mentioned that a previous trade facilitation measure becomes an obstacle for Turkey. How can this happen?*

Authorized Traders Status (ATS) adopted and implemented after 2001 in Turkey has many trade facilitation benefits without the security requirements in an AEO program. When Turkey launched the AEO program in 2013, the AEO status did offer marginally higher benefits with more stringent and costly security requirements. Therefore, the ATS holders were reluctant to apply for the costly AEO status.

4. *Among the 57 Member Countries, the study only covers 8 member countries. Do you consider that these countries can represent all the OIC Countries?*

Among OIC member states, currently there are 12 active AEO programs. We have received responses from 8 of these countries to the survey questionnaires. In other words, the study represents the two thirds of the AEO programs in the OIC member states.

5. *Time to export and time to import data in the presentation do not reflect the real situation in Indonesia. Our times to export and import are much shorter. Can you clarify this point?*

The data that you refer to belong to the World Bank. We accept that there might be sampling issues and statistical problems in the World Bank data. However, this data set is the only one that is available for a large set of countries that provide the advantage of making international comparisons.

6. Policy Options for Authorized Economic Operator Programs in the OIC Member Countries

The session was moderated by Mr. Bilal Khan PASHA, Consul General from Consulate General of Pakistan in İstanbul. At the outset, Mr. PASHA stated that “the Room Document for the Moderation Session of the 12th Meeting of the Trade Working Group”, prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office in light of the findings of the analytical study prepared specifically for the Meeting and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions which have already been sent by the CCO.

At the beginning of the session, Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director from the COMCEC Coordination Office, made a brief presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions on authorized economic operator programs sent to the Trade Working Group focal points by the CCO. After presenting the questions and responses of the Member Countries, he introduced the draft policy advices included in the Room Document.

Afterwards, based on intensive deliberations, the participants agreed on the policy advices given in the attached room document to be submitted to the 34th Session of the COMCEC as an outcome of the 12th Meeting of the Trade Working Group.

The policy recommendations highlighted by the participants are as follows:

1. Encouraging the design of an attractive package where benefits provided by the AEO program to the private sector outnumber costs borne by firms and traders in order to attract companies to participate in the program
2. Promoting an integrated approach in the legislative, organizational and operational dimensions with other government agencies during the design phase of AEOs in order to eliminate duplications and redundancy as well as burdensome procedures
3. Encouraging the adoption of and increasing the number of mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) as they enable AEO holders to enjoy trade facilitation benefits provided by the partner countries
4. Enhancing the communication with the private sector with AEOs through utilizing client relations management
5. Supporting the participation of SMEs in the supply chain for the operators in order to benefit from the AEO programs to their full extent

7. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Mr. Deniz GÖLE, Expert at the COMCEC Coordination Office, made a presentation on the COMCEC Project Funding. At the outset, a short video on COMCEC Project Funding has been showed to the participants.

Afterward, Mr. GÖLE informed the participants about the essentials of the COMCEC Project Funding. Mr. GÖLE continued his presentation by highlighting the timeline for the project submission. He stressed the importance of finding a project idea and informed the participants on how they can find project topics. He introduced the COMCEC Project Funding Webpage and invited the participants to check put the COMCEC Project Funding webpage.

Mr. GÖLE underlined the supported themes in trade area and shared brief information with participants regarding online project submission system. At the final part of his presentation, he informed the participants on the funded financial cooperation projects in 2018, namely:

- Feasibility Study on the Interoperability of Selected Single Window Systems in the OIC Region
- Boosting Intra-OIC Trade through Improvement of Trade Facilitation Measures in the OIC Region
- Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Single Window Systems in the OIC Member States
- Harmonization of National Halal Standards with the OIC/SMIIC Halal Standards

8. Success Stories of the Member States

8.1. Algeria

Ms. Amira GHAZLI, Office Manager in Legislation and Trade Regulatory Directorate in Ministry of Trade from Algeria has delivered a short speech regarding the situation of AEO Program in Algeria.

In her speech, she stated that the status of authorized economic operator is a customs facilitation for the most reliable companies that fulfil a number of conditions set by a specific regulatory framework, making them partners in the customs administration. Moreover, Ms. GHAZLI shared information with the participants regarding the total number of AEOs in Algeria. She pointed out that the total number is 431 and it's increasing fast.

8.2. Oman

Mr. Saleh AL-SHEREIQI, from Directorate General of Customs and Ms, Widad AL-RAHIBI from Supreme Council for Planning made a presentation on Implementation of AEO in Oman.

In the beginning of his presentation Mr. AL-SHEREIQI gave a definition of Authorized Economic Operator, objectives of implementing AEO in Oman, the legal framework and the benefits and privileges of authorized economic operator in Oman. Next, he mentioned who can get AEO in Oman for examples: Manufacturers, Exporters, Freight forwarders, Warehouse keepers, Customs agents, Carriers, Importers and Port operators. After that, he concentrated on the steps of the implementation of AEO in Oman:

The beginning of the idea was like political will, that's mean any global country or any member in WCO or any customs administration so to implement this program must have the political will and it must come from the highest authority in the government or from decision maker.

When the policy makers have the desire or political will, they must start on training and seek training. He continued with conveying these words:

- The policy makers called the World Customs Organization and the officers from WCO came and helped us to hold a workshop for one week. They explained what the roadmap is, how the government can start, what are the foundation that should follow it and what are the criteria.
- Also, the officers from WCO explained the procedures in SAFE framework, global practices in this area and we did some practical implementations.

After that, he stated, a team consisting a group of employees from different departments was formed. This team consists of higher committee which has set the main foundations and the executive committee has set standards and conditions.

He pointed out that the officers started to work and develop the plan and this program was included in the Strategic Plan 2016-2020. Also, he emphasized that a specialized team was

created from different departments such as, auditing, risk management, it, customs affairs and international cooperation.

Finally, he explained the procedures how they can apply in AEO program in their BAYAN System.

8.3. Pakistan

On behalf of Pakistan, Bilal Khan PASHA, Consul General from Consulate General of Pakistan in İstanbul, made a presentation on AEO Program in Pakistan.

In starting of his presentation he gave some information about definition of AEO. According to his presentation, AEO is a party involved in the international movement of goods in whatever function that has been approved by or on behalf of a national Customs administration as complying with WCO or equivalent supply chain security standards.

Then, Mr. PASHA emphasized the importance of security in international trade. He stated that the growth of global trade and increasing security threats to the international movement of goods have forced customs administrations to shift their focus more and more to securing the international trade flow and away from the traditional task of collecting customs duties. Recognizing these developments, the WCO, drafted the WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (SAFE). He also pointed out that in the framework, several standards are included that can assist Customs administrations in meeting these new challenges. Developing an Authorized Economic Operator program is a core part of SAFE.

He mentioned that SAFE is based on four core elements; which are harmonization of the advance electronic cargo information, each country that joins SAFE commits to employing a consistent risk management approach to address security threats, request of the customs administration of the receiving nation, the customs administration of the sending nation will perform an outbound inspection of high-risk containers and cargo.

Mr. PASHA expressed that Pakistan already has in place a robust Risk Management System (RMS) to channelize all its imports and exports through red, yellow or green channels on the basis of traders' profiling. Almost 40% imports and 80% exports are cleared through green channel based on the credible profile of trader. Also, he stated that RMS based risk profiling ensures secure clearances as risky consignments are marked to red or yellow channels; and only such consignments are routed through green channels which are secure and have lower risk rating.

He pointed out that Pakistan has initiated the process to introduce AEO program through statutory change in the Customs Act, 1969. A new Section 212A, regarding Authorized Economic Operator Program, has been added in the Customs Act, 1969 and by Section 212A, Federal Board of Revenue has been empowered to frame rules for the implementation of AEO Program in Pakistan.

He conclude his presentation by expressing that Draft AEO rules for Pakistan have been framed which are currently under consideration at Federal Board of Revenue. Draft AEO Rules have been framed after taking into account international best practices.

8.4. Tunisia

Mr. Ben Zaied KAIS, Chief Cell AEO in General Directorate of Customs of Ministry of Finance of Tunisia delivered a presentation regarding the status of the Authorized Economic Operators in Republic of Tunisia.

He firstly started his presentation with defining AEO in national level. He stated that Authorized Economic Operator is a status granted under an agreement concluded between the General Directorate of Customs and the operator concerned, to any company established in Tunisia, carrying out an activity in connection with foreign trade and / or a logistic activity, having the confidence of the customs administration and fulfilling the minimum conditions laid down by the governmental decree.

Mr. KAIS, also explained the categories of the AEOs. He stated that the customs administration shall grant the status of the authorized economic operator according to one of the following categories: namely, simplifications of customs procedures, safety and security and the complete of first and second. He also pointed out that the current trend is the third one, the complete of simplification and safety.

Mr. KAIS finally gave information benefits of the AEO status. He explained that main benefits for the companies are immediate removal of goods at the border points, alleviation of physical controls, simplification of customs clearance procedures, best assistance in attaching to a single office and designation of a single interlocutor. Besides, he continued the main benefits for the customs are more effective control and targeting, focusing on real risks, maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of customs work through redeployment, promoting, developing and strengthening a relationship of trust with companies.

8.5. Turkey

Mr. Bülent Emre YASAL, the Customs and Trade Expert from Directorate General of Risk Management and Customs Control, Ministry of Trade, delivered a presentation about the Authorized Economic Operator status in Turkey.

Mr. YASAL started his presentation by underlining that Turkey's strategic vision for customs and foreign trade was to enhance its commercial activities towards making customs transactions and foreign trade easier and safer, and that Turkey utilized, amongst other things, the Authorized Traders Status, a customs compliance programme, and the Authorized Economic Operators Status to achieve those aims.

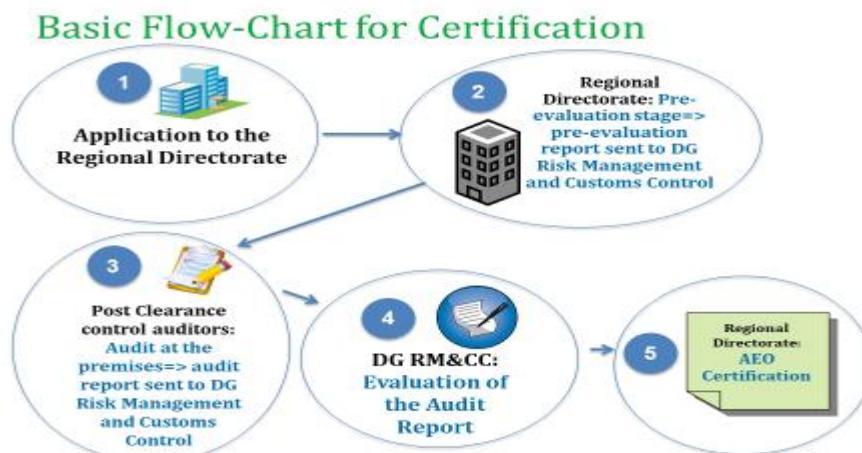
Mr. YASAL then went on to explain the development process of the AEO system in Turkey, which was in the form of researching of international sources such as the WCO AEO Implementation Guidance, relative EU legislation regarding AEOs, participating in workshops and other activities with, amongst others, the Dutch and the Korean customs administration representatives, holding meetings with public and private sectors partners within Turkey, and carrying on location surveys at the premises of private sector partners throughout the drafting process of the secondary legislation required for the implementation of the AEO system in Turkey. As a result of these activities, Mr. YASAL stated, that the Turkish customs administration;

- Created the procedures for new simplifications,
- Organized the functions at customs offices,
- Determined the eligibility criteria,
- Designated the certification process,
- Prepared the Self Assessment Form to be used by applicants during the application process for AEO certification.

Mr. YASAL then underlined that the AEO system in Turkey is a partnership programme between the customs administration and AEOs where AEOs were considered trusted partners awarded with customs simplifications and trade facilitation measures in return for compliance, transparency, and auto-control on the part of the AEO.

Mr. YASAL explained that any applicant that met the criteria would be certified as an AEO and given benefits in the form of various customs simplifications and facilitations of customs controls relating to security and safety, and that the greatest benefits for certificate holders would come as a result of mutual recognition agreements regarding the AEO status to be signed with other country customs administrations. Also Mr. YASAL mentioned that an MRA was signed with the Korean Customs Administration on June 9th, 2014 and that there were ongoing negotiations for the signing of an MRA with the Customs Administration of Kazakhstan.

The application process, as detailed by Mr. YASAL, was summarized in the following flow chart;





Mr YASAL also mentioned the steps taken to promote the AEO, such as the holding of various seminars, training programmes both for the relative customs officials and for the private sector representatives, and the issuing of guidelines, manuals and booklets regarding the AEO system.

Mr YASAL concluded his presentation by stating that there are currently 379 AEO certificate holders in Turkey and that The Turkish Customs Administration is currently carrying out preparations for mutual recognition agreement negotiations with other parties which have an AEO programme.

9. The Efforts of the International Institutions / Private Sector

9.1. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

“Best Practices and Cooperation Efforts under APEC on AEO Programmes”

Mr. Akhmad BAYHAQI from APEC Secretariat (Policy Support Unit) delivered a presentation on the Study of APEC Best Practices in Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programs.

Mr. BAYHAQI stated that there were 7 main themes identified in the study that described how a good AEO system could be implemented which includes strong verification/audit, clear benefits, and mutual partnership between public and private sector; among others. To create a convergence analysis, these themes were disaggregated into the 15 variables. The key findings under these 7 key themes are further described below.

1. Scope of AEO Program.

The survey result indicate that a variety of sectors was represented in the various AEO programs with the convergence score of 58.8% for the scope of AEO Program and 52.9% for the types of Operators. Around 88.2% of programs were open to importers and exporters and 64.7 % of the programs included customs brokers. Only 41.2% of programs had multiple classes in the program with multiple tiers of benefits and associated security/compliance standards. The resulting low level of convergence may be due to different security priorities in each member economy.

2. Application, Verification and Authorization Requirements.

Most AEO application processes were similar, requiring the same types of documents. However, timeframes diverged greatly, between 1 to 6 months. All AEO programs in APEC were required to undergo an onsite validation and verification audit. But only 35.3% of programs conducted a risk check on applicants with other ministries/databases beyond the customs authority.

3. Security and Compliance Requirements

The survey found generally high levels of convergence in security and compliance requirements whereby APEC AEO programs have adhered to the SAFE Framework closely. Almost all programs required site, goods and document security; but only 58.8% of programs required a recovery plan according to the SAFE Framework Standards.

4. Post-authorization, Audit/Revalidation, Suspension, and Revocation Policies

Some APEC member economies required the AEOs to reapply, while other economies based their revalidations on identified changes in the business's operations, paired with ongoing monitoring. All AEO programs had regular re-validation and auditing mechanisms. Around 52.9% of programs require AEOs to conduct an internal audit. Most programs had mechanisms to suspend AEO status if administrative orders are ignored; but only 58.8% had an appeals process.

5. Customs Organizational Structure for AEO Programs and their Major Roles

The development of AEO programs tended to involve consultations with stakeholders. Most programs had high levels of checks and balances, and openness to foreign companies and other government agencies. Only 23.5% created an AEO program-

specific position and there was also a wide variety in the organizational levels for authorizing and validating AEOs.

6. Partnership Initiatives Between Customs and Private Sector

Since AEO programs are voluntary, customs authorities and the private sector must form strong partnerships to ensure the programs' success. Lack of consultation with private sector is problematic as robust and targeted benefits required to encourage private sector to pursue AEO status. However, if trade efficiency is already high, then AEO participation might only provide marginal benefit for firms. For Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), low level of convergence unsurprising as only a small proportion of SMEs are export-oriented and there could be high costs involved to meet AEO requirements.

7. Accessibility of Information on Customs' Website about the AEO Program

Websites are important to provide centralized information. Almost all websites had explanatory information and listed the requirements and benefits of an AEO status. However, less than half had a FAQ section and/or did not allow online applications.

In the conclusion, Mr Bayhaqi highlighted the following aspects or components of AEO programs within APEC found to have high degrees of convergence:

- Self-Assessment Mechanism;
- Physical Security Requirements;
- Compliance Requirements;
- Suspensions and Revocation; and
- Application, Verification & Authorization Procedures.

9.2. International Association of AEO Customs and Logistics

"Private Sector Perspective on AEO Programmes"

Ms. Laura PUJOL GIMÉNEZ, Director from International Association Authorised Economic Operator (AEO), Customs and Logistics, made a presentation about the Association's perspectives on AEO.

At the beginning of her presentation, Ms. PUJOL informed the participants about the International Association of AEOs, Customs and Logistics, a private sector membership organisation promoting and supporting the development of AEO programs among the private sector. The Association's membership includes international sector-representative organisations, such as the International Association of Customs Brokers (ASAPRA); regional organisations, such as the European Shippers Council (ESC) and the Federation of Freight Forwarders and Logistics Operators of Latin America and the Caribbean (ALACAT); national associations and private companies. It was mentioned that the Association's 2018 AEO International Conference took place in Baku, co-organised by the States Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Association. Ms. PUJOL thanked Azerbaijan for the outstanding work done towards an event that aimed to raise awareness about the importance

of building a secure business environment, in order to attract a critical mass of operators that turn logistics infrastructure capacities into competitive trade corridors.

Next, Ms. PUJOL presented the findings from desk research on public reports from top listed companies around the world (350 companies reviewed), and the findings from a survey among the Association's members (240 respondents) about the perceived benefits and challenges of AEO.

The key takeaways highlighted the following points:

- Large firms are increasingly integrating AEO to their risk management systems. AEO is recognized as a useful tool in the management of risks related to supply chain security and productivity levels. Lead firms in GVC are increasingly including AEO certification (or the national equivalent security standard) as a requirement to supplier firms.
- An indirect or collateral benefit from AEO certification is that the journey to become AEO helps companies (specially SMEs) increase and improve their management capacities and competences in the areas related to AEO requirements. These accredited capacities differentiates them as reliable and competitive operators in the market (a direct benefit).
- This leads to inclusiveness of the different types of operators (importantly local customs brokers & logistic services providers) in AEO country programs being seen as an important policy issue, with implications for competitiveness and participation in trade, of goods and services.
- Communication could advance the use of the AEO standard by business, generate visibility on the work being done for securing and facilitating trade; share AEO best practices and learning resources; keep interest growing; and list AEO companies (global database).

In the closing remarks, it was mentioned about the 2019 OEA International Congress to be held in Barcelona on 26-28 June 2019, expecting it to be an opportunity to meet again and continue the shared conversation and learning about the Authorised Economic Operator.



10. Closing Remarks

The Meeting ended with closing remarks of Mr. Bilal Khan PASHA, Consul General from Consulate General of Pakistan in İstanbul and Chairperson of the Meeting and Mr. Burak KARAGÖL, Director in the COMCEC Coordination Office.

In his remarks, Mr. PASHA, thanked all the Member Countries for giving him the opportunity to chair this session. He also thanked all the participants, presenters for their invaluable contributions, comments and ideas presented during the discussions.

Mr. KARAGÖL also thanked all the participants for their invaluable contributions. He underlined that the observations, comments and critiques of the participants on the research report prepared specifically for the Trade Working Group Meetings would be welcomed in order to improve its quality. He also stated feedbacks about the main output of the meeting, the draft policy recommendations which will be presented to the 34th Session of the COMCEC, are very valuable. Mr. KARAGÖL also highlighted the importance of COMCEC Project Funding and invited the Member Countries as well as the relevant OIC Institutions to submit project proposals to benefit from this important facility.

Mr. KARAGÖL informed the participants that the next (13th) Meeting of the Trade Working Group will be held on March 7th, 2018 in Ankara with the theme of *“Increasing Public Availability of Customs Information in the OIC Member States”*

Before concluding, Mr. KARAGÖL thanked again all the participants and wished them a safe trip back home.

Annex 1: Agenda of the Meeting



12th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP

(November 6th, 2018, Ankara)

“Improving Authorized Economic Operator Programs in the OIC Member Countries”

AGENDA

Opening Remarks

1. The COMCEC Trade Outlook 2018
2. Trade Facilitation in the OIC
3. AEO Programs: Conceptual Framework and Global Overview
4. AEO Programs in the OIC Region: Case Studies and Recommendations
5. Policy Options for Developing AEO Programs in the OIC Member Countries
6. Member State Presentations
7. The Perspectives of the Private Sector and the International Institutions
8. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

AEO Programs: Conceptual Framework and Global Overview

- 10.20-10.40 - *Presentation: Mr. Christopher KRISTENSSON
Senior Advisor & Accredited Expert
World Customs Organization (WCO)*
- 10.40-11.00 - *Discussion*
- 11.00-11.15 *Coffee Break*

AEO Programs in the OIC: Case Studies and Recommendations

- 11.15-11.55 - *Presentation: Prof. Dr. Nazire Nergiz DİNÇER
TED University Trade Research Center*
- 11.55-12.30 - *Discussion*
- 12.30-14.00 *Lunch*

Policy Options for Developing AEO Programs in the OIC Member Countries

There will be a moderation session under this agenda item. Participants will deliberate on the policy options/advices for developing AEO Programs in the OIC Member Countries. At the beginning of the session, the CCO will make a short presentation on the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions as well as the Room Document.

- 14.00-14.15 - *Presentation: “Responses of the Member Countries to the Policy Questions on
Developing AEO Programs in the OIC Member States”
Mr. Selçuk KOÇ
Director
COMCEC Coordination Office*
- 14.15-15.30 - *Discussion*

Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

- 15.30-15.45 - *Presentation: Mr. Deniz GÖLE
Expert
COMCEC Coordination Office*
- 15.45-16.00 - *Discussion*
- 16.00-16.15 *Coffee Break*

Member Country Presentations

- *Presentation(s)*
- *Discussion*



The Efforts of the International Institutions / Private Sector

- 17.15-17.30 - *Presentation: “Best Practices and Cooperation Efforts under APEC on AEO Programmes”*
Mr. Akhmad BAYHAQI
Senior Analyst
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat
- 17.30-17.45 - *Presentation: “Private Sector Perspective on AEO Programmes”*
Ms. Laura PUJOL GIMÉNEZ
Director
International Association of AEO Customs and Logistics
- 17.45-18.00 - *Discussion*
- 18.00-18.15 *Closing Remarks*

Annex 3: The Policy Recommendations

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 12TH MEETING OF THE TRADE WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Trade Working Group (TWG) has successfully held its 12th Meeting on November 6th, 2018 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Improving Authorized Economic Operator Programs in the OIC Member Countries.” During the Meeting, Trade Working Group, made deliberations for policy approximation among the Member Countries regarding developing authorized economic operator programs. The Room Document, prepared in accordance with the main findings of the research report conducted specifically for the 12th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the COMCEC Trade Working Group focal points by the COMCEC Coordination Office. During the Meeting, the participants agreed on the policy recommendations included in the Room Document. The existing document includes these policy recommendations highlighted during the Meeting.

Policy Advice 1: Encouraging the design of an attractive package where benefits provided by the AEO program to the private sector outnumber costs borne by firms and traders in order to attract companies to participate in the program

AEO programs aim at facilitating trade and contributing safety and security. Considering the fact that AEO is a voluntary program, attracting companies to participate in the program has vital importance. Therefore, the benefits provided by the AEO program to the private sector need to be evaluated in relation to the costs borne by firms and traders to obtain authorization. Such costs include application and procedure-related fees, and the costs of carrying out the necessary changes to become eligible for authorization. The EU case provides a good example for package design, where AEO guidelines are published and updated by the Taxation and Customs Unit. The guidelines provide a clear demonstration of benefits, procedures, legal texts and contact offices for agents wishing to obtain authorization.

In this respect, while designing a package, at least, the following benefits are suggested to be satisfied:

- Immediate release of cargo upon arrival by Customs and other government agencies.
- Deferred payment of duties and taxes
- Relief from guarantee/bond requirements

Policy Advice 2: Promoting an integrated approach in the legislative, organizational and operational dimensions with other government agencies during the design phase of AEOs in order to eliminate duplications and redundancy as well as burdensome procedures

Design of the AEO program should follow an integrated approach taking into account its multiple dimensions (legislative, organizational and operational). During the design phase, legislative and regulatory reform is often needed along with possible organizational restructuring and alignment

with other government agencies (OGAs). In many countries, overlap is often present between Customs Authorities and OGAs involved in border security and control of exports and imports. Consultation and alignment with other government agencies during the design phase is therefore crucial to avoid redundant and burdensome procedures in areas of overlap.

A centralized and automated data exchange system between different AEOs and related government agencies can be adopted, where applicable. The import/export declarations of the trader can be sent to all stakeholders in a safe and secure electronic environment for their examination, verification and authorization of transactions. Next, the government agencies can either authorize electronically or require physical inspection.

Policy Advice 3: Encouraging the adoption of and increasing the number of mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) as they enable AEO holders to enjoy trade facilitation benefits provided by the partner countries

Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) make it possible for AEO holders to enjoy the trade facilitation benefits provided by the partner countries. They also contribute the security of the supply chain due to recognition of AEO status across partner countries.

Once MRAs are signed, maintaining compliance and risk management would become more effective and would lead to new MRAs. Standardization and harmonization of supply chain security measures are integral part of any effective MRAs.

Expanding the number of MRAs would also serve to form the foundations of regional AEO program which will provide facilitation gains to companies across the OIC Member Countries.

Policy Advice 4: Enhancing the communication with the private sector with AEOs through utilizing client relations management

AEO programs are voluntary-based and heavily depend on open communication channels between the Customs Authority and the stakeholders. Insufficient consultation with the private sector can be challenging as it may cause potential misconceptions about the anticipated benefits, thereby reducing the incentives for companies from becoming an AEO.

Client Relations Management that is used by a number of OIC AEO programs increases the attractiveness and the viability of the AEO programs and improves the communication with the private sector.

Policy Advice 5: Supporting the participation of SMEs in the supply chain in order to benefit from the AEO programs to their full extent

SMEs comprise a backbone and vital part of the supply chain in the economies. However, due to the capacity and financial challenges, SMEs may not benefit from the AEO programs and have difficulties to participate in the supply chain.

Utilizing Customs brokers with AEO status can facilitate participation of SMEs' in AEO program. Hence, SMEs can enjoy almost all procedural benefits of AEO status while diminishing the cost of further investment.

Among the OIC member countries, Jordan offers an AEO-like program called the Silver List to incentivize SMEs to participate in trade practices that are compliant and safe by offering some of the trade facilitations in the Golden List program. Furthermore, successful Silver List participants are invited to apply for the Golden List program.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:

- ***COMCEC Trade Working Group:*** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner and also other issues related to trade facilitation.

- ***COMCEC Project Funding:*** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for project proposals each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above-mentioned policy areas and their sub-areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects. The projects may include seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

Annex 4: List of Participants

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 12TH MEETING OF THE TRADE WORKING GROUP (6 November 2018, Ankara)

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

- Mr. TAREK ALLOUNE
Head of Office, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. AMIRA GHAZLI
Office Manager, Legislation and Trade Regulatory Directorate

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

- Mr. KOMAIL AHMET
Diplomat, Embassy of Bahrain in Ankara

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- H.E. AMANY FAHMY
Deputy Assistant Minister for International Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. HAYTHAM ABDELGHANY
Consul, Consulate General of Egypt in Istanbul
- Mr. AMR SELIM
Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Egypt in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- H.E. KEMESENG JAMMEH
Ambassador, Embassy of the Gambia in Ankara
- Mr. SERING MODOU NIJE
Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Gambia in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Ms. AYU WULAN SAGITA
Deputy Director for UN and Non-UN Bodies, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. STELLA LEONARDO
Trade Analyst, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. HARYADI SATYA
Frist Secretary, Embassy in Indonesia

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

- Mr. SEYYED HAFEZ MOUSAVI
Counsellor, Embassy of Iran in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

- Mr. THARWAT SALMAN
Commercial Attache, Ministry of Trade, Embassy of Iraq in Ankara

THE STATE OF KUWAIT

- Mr. NABEEL ALMEZYAD
Director, Ministry of Finance
- Ms. HANADI ALENEZI
Researcher, Ministry of Finance

REPUBLIC OF LEBANON

- Ms. JOELLE ELIAS
Head of Foreign Trade Department, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. GHASSAN NASRALLAH
Acting Chief of Customs Computer Center, Lebanese Customs Administration

MALAYSIA

- Ms. ROSMIZAH MAT JUSOH
Director, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE)

REPUBLIC OF MALI

- Mr. ALIOU D. DEMBELE
Second Counsellor, Embassy of Mali in Ankara

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

- Ms. UBONG EKPO
Fist Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SULTANATE OF OMAN

- Mr. SALEH AL-SHEREIQI
Audit Officer, Royal Oman Police (Directorate General of Customs)
- Ms. WIDAD AL RAHBI
International Relations Specialist, Supreme Council for Planning

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

- Mr. BILAL KHAN PASHA
Consul General, Consulate General of Pakistan

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. JAWAD ALMUTI
Head of Trade Agreements Section, Ministry of National Economy
- Mr. FADI ALYOUNIS
Head of Statistical Unit, Palestine Customs



STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. AHMED ALMOHANNADI
Economic Consultant, Ministry of Economic and Commerce
- Mr. HASSAN ALMOHANNADI
Economic Consultant, Ministry of Economic and Commerce

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. MUTLAQ ALDOSARI
Economic Researcher, Ministry of Commerce and Investment

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

- Mr. KAIS BEN ZAIED
Chief, General Directorate of Customs
- Mr. YASSER BEN KHELIFA
Manager, Ministry of Trade

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Mr. ADEM YAZICI
Head of Department, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. MEHMET ALİ ORAN
Expert, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. GİZEM ASMA ŞENEL
Expert, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. BÜLENT EMRE YASAL
Expert, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. AYŞEGÜL DEMİR
Expert, Ministry of Trade

B. THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC TRADE FINANCE CORPORATION (ITFC)

- Mr. HARUN ÇELİK
Regional Head, ITFC

ISLAMIC CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)

- Mr. AMADOU CIRE SALL
Head of Department, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade

STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Mr. MUZAMIL EDEMA
Data Registrar, SESRIC

C. INVITED INSTITUTIONS

APEC SECRETARIAT

- Mr. AKHMAD BAYHAQI
Senior Analyst

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AEO CUSTOMS AND LOGISTICS

- Ms. LAURA PUJOL GIMÉNEZ
Director

WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANISATION (WCO)

- Mr. CHRISTOPHER KRISTENSSON
Senior Advisor

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA
AND THE PACIFIC (UNESCAP)**

- Mr. YUHUA ZHANG
Economic Affairs Officer

TED UNIVERSITY TRADE RESEARCH CENTER

- Ms. AYÇA TEKİN KORU
Professor,
- Ms. NAZİRE NERGİZ DİNÇER
Professor

D. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Director
- Mr. BURAK KARAGÖL
Director
- Ms. VILDAN BARAN
Expert
- Mr. DENİZ GÖLE
Expert
- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR
Expert
- Mr. FATİH ARSLAN
Expert