



# **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMCEC STRATEGY**

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### **1. Introduction:**

The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) has been functioning as the responsible body under the OIC for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member States for the last 30 years.

In order to make the COMCEC a more fruitful platform to meet the growing needs of the OIC Member States, the 4<sup>th</sup> Extra-ordinary Islamic Summit Conference held on 14-15 August 2012 in Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted the COMCEC Strategy.

The COMCEC Strategy brought a new dynamism in the efforts for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member States. The Strategy does not only put forward clear vision for the Islamic Ummah, but also defines implementation instruments for reaching its objectives. According to its new Strategy, COMCEC will serve as a forum among the Member States for exchanging experiences and good practices, disseminating knowledge and harmonizing policies. Member States showed a great interest and support to the implementation instruments of the Strategy namely the COMCEC Working Groups and the COMCEC Project Cycle Management in the first year of the Strategy's implementation.

COMCEC Working Groups have been established in the six cooperation areas defined by the COMCEC Strategy, namely trade, transport and communications, tourism, agriculture, finance and poverty alleviation. Since the 29th Session of the COMCEC, the Working Groups have continued convening during the December 2013-April 2014 period. The Meetings were attended by the technical experts from the Member States, which have registered to the Working Groups and representatives from the relevant international and OIC institutions. Moreover, representatives from the private sector and non-governmental organizations have also attended the meetings and shared their views on various issues. The COMCEC Coordination Office continued to conduct analytical studies for each meeting. During their meetings, the Working Groups focused on specific themes defined in the respective fields of the Strategy. In this context, the Meetings identified the common obstacles, highlighted the success stories and discussed the policy options for the Member States to address their needs in the important areas. The COMCEC Coordination Office prepared Proceedings summarizing the discussions and the presentations made during the meetings. The COMCEC Working Groups will continue to convene regularly twice in Ankara, Turkey on specific themes.

The COMCEC PCM, the second implementation instrument of the COMCEC Strategy also attracted great interest from the Member States and OIC Institutions. The COMCEC Coordination Office has evaluated the project proposals carefully in line with the criteria which were published on the COMCEC website in September 2013. In March 2014, the COMCEC Coordination Office announced the final list of the selected projects. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, Operational Agreements were signed with the owners of the 14 projects in Ankara, Turkey. Accordingly the implementation phase for the successful projects has commenced. The Second Project Call will be made in September 2014.

This report summarizes the progress achieved since the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy

## **2. Resolutions of the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC on the Implementation of the Strategy**

The 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC was held on 18-21 November 2013 in İstanbul, Republic of Turkey. The Session was informed by the COMCEC Coordination Office on the progress achieved towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. After the fruitful deliberations, the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC adopted the following resolutions for ensuring the effective implementation of the COMCEC Strategy:

The Session welcomed operationalization of the Strategy and requested the Member States and the OIC Institutions to extend their support to the implementation of the Strategy.

The Session also welcomed the progress achieved towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy in particular, the convening of the COMCEC Working Groups and the launch of the first project call within the framework of the COMCEC PCM.

In line with the provisions of the COMCEC Strategy, the Session requested the COMCEC Coordination Office to report the progress on the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy regularly to the COMCEC Sessions and to the Follow-up Committee Meetings. In this regard, the Session took note of the report of the COMCEC Coordination Office namely “COMCEC Annual Progress Report 2013” which provides detailed information on the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy as well as the activities organized in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

Lastly, the Session welcomed the activities to be organized by the relevant OIC Institutions (SESRIC, ICDT, IDB, ICCIA, OISA and SMIIC) in 2014 in line with the Strategy.

With regards to the working groups the Session welcomed the convening of the First and Second Round of the Working Group Meeting and requested the Member States which have registered to the working groups to actively participate in the upcoming meetings. The Session also requested the Member States, which have not done so to notify their focal points for the working groups at the earliest convenience.

## **3. Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy**

### **3.1. Meetings of the COMCEC Working Groups**

#### **3.1.1. COMCEC Trade Working Group**

Trade is an important catalyst of economic growth. Being aware of its importance, COMCEC has initiated many programs and projects for enhancing commercial cooperation among the Member States. Trade is also defined as one of the cooperation areas by the COMCEC Strategy.

The strategic objective of the COMCEC Strategy in the area of trade is expansion of trade among the member countries. In this regard, the Strategy identified four output areas, namely

trade liberalization, trade facilitation, trade financing and trade promotion to reach its strategic objective.

COMCEC Trade Working Group has been established as part of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. The First Meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Promoting the SMEs Exports in the OIC Member States: The Role of Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs)”. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Member States to share their achievements and obstacles in promoting SMEs exports and benefit from the experience of the other Member States and relevant international institutions. The second meeting of the Trade Working Group was held on October 31<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving SMEs Access to Trade Finance in the OIC Member States”. Experts from the Member States as well as international organizations deliberated on the current status of the SMEs in terms of accessing trade finance in the OIC Member States, the instruments used in trade finance, the role of public financial institutions and share of Islamic trade finance tools in the OIC member countries.

During the recent decade, the international community increased its emphasis on trade facilitation. In this context, the WTO Negotiations for Trade Facilitation Agreement was concluded by the decision of WTO Ministerial Conference held on 4-6 December 2013 in Bali, Indonesia. In line with these developments, COMCEC aligned its agenda with the international community and with the needs of the Member States. During the given period, the Third Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group was held on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Facilitating Intra-OIC Trade: Improving the Efficiency of Customs Procedures in the OIC Member States”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 21 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Trade Working Group, namely Bangladesh, Cameroon, Comoros, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB/ITFC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), World Customs Organization (WCO) and GAINDE 2000 have also attended the Meeting.

The Meeting considered the analytical study entitled “Facilitating Intra-OIC Trade: Improving the Efficiency of the Customs Procedures in the OIC Member States” and the COMCEC Trade Outlook 2014 prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The deliberations held during the Meeting underlined that, underdeveloped customs formalities in some of the Member States constitute an important impediment not only for development of intra-OIC trade but also for economic well-being of these countries. In this context, the presentations made during the meeting invited the Member States to accede to the relevant international conventions in the area of trade facilitation and to implement modern customs formalities for facilitation of their trade. COMCEC Coordination Office also prepared the Proceedings of the Meeting. All the documents and the presentations can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The Fourth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 focusing on “Trade Liberalisation Efforts and Preferential Trade Agreements in the OIC Member States with Special Emphasis on the TPS-OIC”.

### **3.1.2. COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group**

Development of the transport and communications sectors is essential for economic and social development. In this context, many countries have adopted sound policies and increased their investments towards improving transport infrastructure, institutional and human capacities. However some of the developing countries and the LDCs, including some of the OIC Member States are still facing difficulties in improving the conditions in the transport and communication sectors.

The COMCEC Strategy gives special emphasis on cooperation in transport and communications sector. Therefore, this sector is defined one of the six cooperation areas. The COMCEC Transport Working Group has held two meetings in 2013 focusing on an important issue in its each meeting. The first meeting held on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara focused on "Transport Infrastructure Financing Modalities: Public Private Partnerships in the OIC Member States" and the second meeting was held on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of "Developing Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) Among The OIC Member Countries". The outcomes of these meetings were presented during the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

The Third Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group was held on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of "Developing Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) Among the OIC Member Countries: Current Implementations and Policy Recommendations".

The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 15 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Transport and Communications Working Group, namely Afghanistan, Djibouti, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Uganda. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB), Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), International Union For Road-Rail Combined Transport (UIRR), Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers in Turkey (UTIKAD) and KombiConsult GmbH have also attended the Meeting.

The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements, challenges and policy implementations in Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) in their respective countries within the perspective of regulatory framework, operational practices, implementation challenges and institutional and geographical capacity. The discussions were also enriched by the presentations of some delegates of Member States and representatives of the private sector. The representatives also exchanged their views, achievements and experience on the incentive mechanisms in the field of MFT in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies entitled "Developing Multimodal Freight Transport (MFT) Among the OIC Member Countries: Status of the Implementation of MFT among the OIC Member Countries" and "COMCEC Transport Outlook 2014" prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

Proceedings of the Meeting and other studies as well as the presentations made during the Meeting can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The 4th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group will be held on September 11th, 2014 in Ankara, with the theme of “Developing Air Linkages to Sustain Tourism among the Member States”.

### **3.1.3. COMCEC Tourism Working Group**

The COMCEC Strategy defined the strategic objective of cooperation in the area of tourism as “Developing a sustainable and competitive tourism sector in the COMCEC Region”. To reach this objective, the COMCEC Strategy identified five output areas, namely Regulatory Framework, Capacity Building and Training Programs, Private Sector Involvement, Community-Based Tourism Programs and Marketing Strategies.

Within the framework of the operationalization of the COMCEC Strategy, the Tourism Working Group has been established. The Working Group has convened three times up to date. The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group was held on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “A New Trend in Sustainable Tourism Development: Community Based Tourism in the COMCEC Region.” The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Tourism Working Group was held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 in Ankara with the theme of “Tourism Product Development and Marketing Strategies in the COMCEC Region.” The Proceedings of the abovementioned Meetings, which reflect the outcomes of the Meeting, were published on the COMCEC Website. The analytical studies prepared specifically for these Meetings and the presentations made during the Sessions are also available on the COMCEC website. ([www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org)).

The 3rd Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group was held on March 4th, 2014 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Enabling Tourism Investment Climate in the COMCEC Region”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 14 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Tourism Working Group namely, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Libya, Malaysia, Mozambique, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tunisia and Turkey. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector and some other guests have also attended the Meeting.

The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding tourism investments in their respective countries. Moreover, the Studies entitled “Enabling Tourism Investment Climate: Challenges and Prospects for Tourism Investments in the COMCEC Region” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Tourism Outlook 2014” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office were also considered during the Meeting.

The presentations and deliberations made during the meeting highlighted that governments play a crucial role for creating an enabling investment climate for tourism investors. It was stressed that creating an enabling tourism investment climate requires utilization of the full range of tools and strategies including, among others, provision of clear, updated information and prompt responses to investors’ inquiries, updated investment promotion websites, effective coordination among relevant stakeholders, providing infrastructure (including road networks, electricity, etc.), allocation of land for specific tourism projects, effective incentive packages, easy procedures and financial support for the local tourism SMEs as well as foreign entrepreneurs and the utilization of alternative investment financing options such as crowdfunding.

Proceedings of the Meeting and other studies as well as the presentations made during the Meeting can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The Fourth Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group will be held on September 4th, 2014 in Ankara with the theme of “Enhancing the Capacity of Tourism Workforce in the COMCEC Region for Improved Tourism Service Quality”.

#### **3.1.4. COMCEC Agriculture Working Group**

Agriculture sector plays a significant role in many developing countries including most of the OIC Member States. In many Member States, the level of dependence on agriculture for economic development is very high. In this regard, COMCEC gives utmost importance to the development of agriculture sector in the Member States. The COMCEC Strategy defined the agriculture sector as one of the six cooperation areas. The strategic objective of cooperation in this sector is increasing the productivity of agriculture sector and sustaining the food security in the COMCEC Region.

As part of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, COMCEC Agriculture Working Group has been established. The First Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on June 6th, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of "Increasing Agricultural Productivity in the COMCEC Region: Improving Irrigation Capacity". The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 13 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Agriculture Working Group, namely Afghanistan, Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Turkey. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and some other guests have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in water management in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies "Increasing Agricultural Productivity in the COMCEC Region: Improving Irrigation Capacity" commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office to an academician and the "COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2013" prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

The COMCEC Agriculture Working Group has held its Second and Third Meetings since the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

The 2nd Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on December 19th, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Encouraging Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the COMCEC Region for Increasing Agricultural Productivity”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 10 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Agriculture Working Group namely, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey and Uganda. Representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, representatives from the private sector and some other guests have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding agricultural foreign direct investments in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies “Increasing Agricultural Productivity: Encouraging Foreign Direct Investments in the COMCEC Region” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

The 3rd Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was held on April 3rd, 2014 with the theme of “Improving the Statistical Capacity of the Agriculture Sector in the COMCEC Region”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 12 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Agriculture Working Group, namely Egypt, Gambia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Senegal, Turkey and Uganda. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC and African Development Bank have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding agricultural statistical capacity in their respective countries. Moreover, the Studies entitled “Improving Agricultural Statistics in the COMCEC Region” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Agriculture Outlook 2014” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office were also considered during the Meeting.

Proceedings of the aforementioned meetings as well as the studies and presentations can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The Fourth Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group will be held on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014 with the theme of "Facilitating Smallholder Farmers' Market Access in the COMCEC Region".

### **3.1.5. COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group**

Poverty alleviation efforts have been occupying an important place on the COMCEC agenda. The COMCEC Strategy defines Poverty Alleviation as one of its cooperation areas as well. According to the COMCEC Strategy, the objective of cooperation in this important area is eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in the member countries. With this view, the Strategy identified four output areas, namely Aid Effectiveness, Productive Capacity of the Poor, Effective Utilization of Financial Resources and Monitoring Poverty.

In line with the Strategy, COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group has been established. The COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group convened three times up to May 2014. The First Meeting was held on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Enhancing Productive Capacity of the Poor in the COMCEC Member Countries: Improving Human Capital”.

Since the 29th Session of the COMCEC, the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group has held its Second and Third Meetings.

The Second Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group was held on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “*Targeting Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Systems in the COMCEC Region*”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 14 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Poverty Alleviation Working Group, namely Azerbaijan, Benin, Cameroon, Egypt, Gambia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office, IDB, SESRIC, World Bank Ankara Office and Municipality of Altındağ have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding targeting mechanisms of the social safety net systems in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies “Targeting Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Systems in the

COMCEC Region” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Poverty Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

The Third Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group was held on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Ankara with the theme of "Monitoring Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Programmes in the COMCEC Region". The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 19 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Poverty Alleviation Working Group, namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Gambia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Suriname, Tunisia, Turkey and Uganda. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, Islamic Development Bank, SESRIC, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) DenizFeneri Association and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding monitoring mechanisms of the Social Safety Net (SSN) Programmes in their respective countries. Moreover, the Studies titled “Monitoring Mechanisms of the Social Safety Net Programmes in the COMCEC Region.” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Outlook 2014” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office were also considered during the Meeting.

Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, analytical study as well as the presentations made during the Meeting can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The Fourth Meeting of the Working Group will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Ankara with the theme of “Institutional Structure of the Social Safety Net Systems in the COMCEC Region”.

### **3.1.6. COMCEC Finance Working Group**

In recent years, COMCEC has intensified its efforts for enhancing cooperation among the member states in the area of finance. The COMCEC Strategy has identified finance as one of its cooperation areas with the strategic objective of deepening financial cooperation among the Member Countries. The Strategy also identified four output areas to reach the objectives, namely Regulatory and Supervisory Cooperation, Capital Flows, Visibility of Financial Markets and Training R&d Activities and Statistics.

COMCEC Finance Working Group has been established as part of the COMCEC Strategy. During the December 2013-April 2014 period, the COMCEC Finance Working Group has held its First and Second Meetings.

The 1st Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group was held on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Enhancing Capital Flows in the COMCEC Region”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 14 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Financial Cooperation Working Group namely, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Oman, Senegal, Sudan, The Gambia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda and Yemen. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, Secretariat of the OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum, Secretariat of the COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum, representatives from international institutions and some other guests have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in enhancing

capital flows in the COMCEC Region in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Studies “Barriers and Opportunities for Enhancing Capital Flows in the COMCEC Member Countries” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office and the “COMCEC Finance Outlook 2013” prepared by the COMCEC Coordination Office.

The 2nd Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group was held on March 27th, 2014 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Enhancing Financial Inclusion in the COMCEC Member States”. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 17 Member States, which had notified their focal points for the Financial Cooperation Working Group, namely Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, The Gambia, Iran, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda. Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, Secretariat of the OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum, Secretariat of the COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum, Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB), World Bank, World Bank Global Islamic Finance Development Center and Participation Banks Association of Turkey have also attended the Meeting. The Representatives of the Member States have deliberated on the institutional framework for financial inclusion in the COMCEC Countries, barriers on enhancing financial inclusion and measures for reducing financially excluded population in the COMCEC Countries and the policy recommendations for enhancing financial inclusion in the Region.

Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the COMCEC Finance Working Group, the analytical study as well as the presentations made during the Meeting can be reached at [www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org).

The Third Meeting of the COMCEC Finance Working Group will be held on October 16th, 2014 in Ankara with the theme of “Conducting A Risk Management Analysis on Islamic Financial Instruments in the COMCEC Member States”.

### **3.2. The COMCEC PCM: First Project Call within the Framework of the COMCEC PCM**

The COMCEC Project Funding is one of the two implementation instruments of the COMCEC Strategy, which aims at providing funding to the COMCEC Projects in the form of grants. The Strategy introduces a well-defined Project Cycle Management with a clearly identified financial mechanism. The COMCEC Projects to be submitted by the member states and the OIC institutions under the PCM will serve to the realization of the objectives of the Strategy and to the mobilization of human and institutional resources of the Member States.

The COMCEC Coordination Office has made the First Project Call on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 and invited the Public Institutions of the Member Countries which had registered to the Working Groups and OIC Institutions operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation to submit their preliminary project proposals to the CCO electronically, using the COMCEC website, and in a hard copy through their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Member States and OIC Institutions showed great interest to the COMCEC PCM.

After the completion of the evaluation of the submitted project proposals the COMCEC Coordination Office announced the final list of projects selected for financing on March 9th, 2014. Table below shows the Final List of Projects to be financed by the COMCEC Coordination Office through the COMCEC PCM.

**Table: Final List of Projects to be Financed Through the COMCEC PCM**

No	Country	Cooperation Area	Project Title
1	AFGHANISTAN	Trade	Capacity Building in Trade Institutions of the Central Asian Countries of COMCEC
2	AZERBAIJAN	Tourism	Cities of Common Cultural Heritage
3	CAMEROON	Finance	Workshop On The Challenges Of Electronic Payment Systems In West and Central African States
4	EGYPT	Trade	OIC/COMCEC Arab-African Industrial Enterprise Network (AAIEN)
5	ICDT	Trade	Patent Commercialization and Dissemination Training towards OIC/COMCEC Member States
6	INDONESIA	Trade	SMEs in the Borderless Era, Shaping Opportunity to the Global Value Chain
7	IRAN	Transport	Improving Cooperation in MENA Region Air Travel Market
8	JORDAN	Agriculture	The Development of the Business Environment and Facilitate Trade of Agricultural Commodities
9	PAKISTAN	Agriculture	Pakistan Bioremediation Model for wastewater treatment and capacity building program among OIC countries
10	PALESTINE	Trade	Training on Improving Export Capacity of Selected OIC/COMCEC Countries (Palestine, Jordan and Turkey)
11	SESRIC	Poverty Alleviation	Enhancing National Capacities in Poverty Statistics of COMCEC Member Countries
12	SESRIC	Tourism	Improving Statistical Capacities of Tourism Sector in COMCEC Mediterranean and Gulf Region
13	UGANDA	Agriculture	Strengthening Irrigation Schemes to Build Capacity of Smallholder farmers in Agriculture Water Management
14	UGANDA	Transport	Searching for PPP Opportunities in Aviation Sector of Uganda, Sudan and Mozambique

For the successful Projects a signing ceremony was held in Ankara, Turkey on April 2nd, 2014. During the ceremony, operational and financial agreements were signed between the Development Bank of Turkey and the project owners. Accordingly, the implementation phase of the successful projects have started.

Second Project Call will be made in September 2014.

### **3.3. Activities Carried Out By the OIC Institutions Serving the Objectives of the Strategy**

Cooperation exertions of the OIC Institutions operating in the economic domain would have particular importance for the realization of the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy. The Sessional Committee Meeting held prior to the 29th Session of the COMCEC agreed on the list of activities to be organized in 2014 within the framework of the COMCEC Strategy. The Session welcomed the list of activities. In accordance with the resolution, the OIC Institutions

have been organizing the activities. Up to date 48 activities have been organized by various institutions in different cooperation areas. The activities were organized in the form of meetings, seminars, training programmes, workshops and fairs etc.

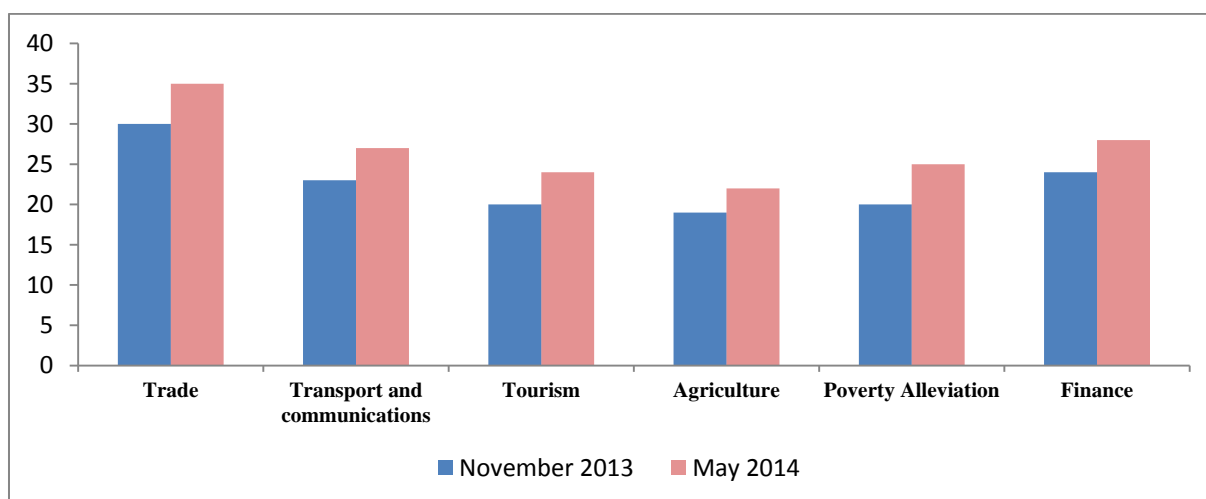
The COMCEC Coordination Office and the OIC Institutions will continue organizing activities with a view to contributing to realize the objectives of the Strategy during the remaining part of 2014.

The list of activities organized by the various institutions since the 29th Session of the COMCEC are attached as Annex.

### **3.4. Notification of the Focal Points to the COMCEC Working Groups**

Participation in the COMCEC Working Groups is voluntary. The Member States wishing to participate in the COMCEC Working Groups need to notify their focal points for each working groups. The total number of Member States which registered at least one of the working groups reached 41. During November 2013-May 2014 period, the number of registered Member Countries increased in all the Working Groups. The Graph below illustrates the number of countries registered for the working groups.

**Graph: Number of Countries Registered to the COMCEC Working Groups**



COMCEC Coordination Office will organize the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the COMCEC Working Groups Focal Points Meeting on 4-5 June 2014 in Ankara, Turkey. The Meeting will provide opportunity to the Focal Points to share their views on the first year of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.

## **4. Conclusion**

The COMCEC Strategy brought a new dynamism to economic and commercial cooperation efforts under the auspices of the COMCEC. The COMCEC Working Groups, being one of the implementation instruments of the Strategy provided the opportunity for the Member States to discuss important issues at the technical level in the cooperation areas. During the past meetings of the Working Groups, the discussions focused on identifying the common obstacles, sharing the success stories and exchanging views on possible policy options for addressing the problems in the respective fields.

Since the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC, 9 Working Group Meetings have been held in Ankara, Turkey. The Meetings which have been participated by the representatives from the Member States, OIC Institutions, relevant international institutions, NGOs and the private sector, focused on important issues in six cooperation areas. The Meetings considered thematic research reports and sectoral outlooks prepared for the meetings and experiences of the Member States and International institutions.

The deliberations made during the COMCEC Working Group Meetings highlighted that, many Member States face similar obstacles in almost all the areas discussed. Some of these obstacles are as follows:

- Underdeveloped regulatory framework,
- Limited data and statistics,
- Inadequate institutional and human capacity,
- Inefficient coordination among the stakeholders within the country,
- Limited financial resources and,
- Inadequate level of international cooperation.

In order to address these issues, the meetings underlined the importance of capacity building and technical cooperation programmes. In this regard, the COMCEC PCM was introduced to the participants which would contribute to the efforts of the Member States in addressing these obstacles. Moreover, during the Working Group Meetings, some of the Member States announced their readiness to share their experiences with the others.

The COMCEC Working Groups will continue to convene twice a year during the upcoming period. In this context, the fourth round of the Working Group meetings will convene in September-October 2014 period in Ankara.

The Second Project Call within the COMCEC PCM will be made in September 2014. The Member States are expected to seize the opportunity to get grants to their multilateral projects through the COMCEC PCM which aims at contributing to the mobilization of the human and institutional capacity of the Member Countries.

It is worth noting that, active participation of all the Member States is critical and it will increase the efficiency of the Working Group Meetings. In this regard, the COMCEC Coordination Office will present the work carried out by the Working Groups to the COMCEC Sessions and Follow up Committee Meetings to encourage the Member States, which have not yet registered to the Working Groups.

As it did during the past meetings, the COMCEC Coordination Office will continue to send invitations for the Meetings in a timely manner to the Member States which have already registered to the Working Groups to ensure their active participation. To make the meetings efficient and serving to the needs of the Member States, COMCEC Coordination Office will also continue to conduct research reports for the Working Groups and ensure participation of experts from the relevant international institutions, OIC Institutions, NGOs and the private sector in the Working Group Meetings.

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**ANNEX-LIST OF ACTIVITIES**  
**ORGANIZED BY THE OIC INSTITUTIONS ALIGNED WITH THE COMCEC STRATEGY**

*(October 2013- April 2014)*

No	Host Institution	Theme of the Activity	Type of the Activity	Relevant Cooperation Area	Partners	Date	Venue
1.	SESRIC	International Integrated Water Management Symposium	Workshop	Agriculture	Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs of Turkey, Environment Ministries OIC Member Countries	December 2013	Turkey
2.	SESRIC	4 <sup>th</sup> Session of the OIC-StatCom	Meeting	All Cooperation Areas	IDB	21-23 April 2014	Ankara, Turkey
3.	SESRIC	6th Meeting of the Delegates of the National Statistical Offices of the OIC Member Countries	Meeting	All Cooperation Areas	-	6 March 2014	New York, USA
4.	SESRIC	Training Program on “Statistical Database Design and Visualization Tools Development”	Workshop	All Cooperation Areas	-	11-12 December 2013	Ankara-Turkey
5.	SESRIC	Expert Group Meeting on Islamic Banking and Finance Statistics	EGM	Financial Cooperation	IDB	25-26 March 2014	Ankara-Turkey

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6.	SESRIC	Meeting of OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities	Conference	Financial Cooperation	Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA)	27-28 November 2013	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
7.	SESRIC	Railway Safety Management Training	Capacity Building	Transport	Turkish State Railways	5-8 November 2013	Turkey
8.	SMIIC	Metrology Committee Meeting	Technical Meeting	Trade	SMIIC and SMIIC Metrology Committee	23-24 September 2013	Dubai, UAE
9.	SMIIC	International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF)	Forum	Trade	SMIIC, SMIIC Accreditation Committee and TÜRKAK	25-26 October 2013	İstanbul, Turkey.
10.	SMIIC	SMIIC/TC1 Halal Food Issues Meeting	Technical Meeting	Trade	SMIIC Technical Committee	16-17 November 2013	Dubai, UAE
11.	SMIIC	Accreditation Committee Meeting	Technical Meeting	Trade	SMIIC and SMIIC Accreditation Committee	15-17 November 2013	Dubai, UAE

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12.	SMIIC	2. International Halal and Healthy Food Congress	Congress	Trade	NecmettinErbakan University, Konya Municipality, Halal and Healthy Food Platform and SMIIC	07-10 November 2013	Konya, Republic of Turkey
13.	SMIIC	SMIIC/TC2 Halal Cosmetic Issues Meeting	Technical Meeting	Trade	SMIIC Technical Committee	07 November 2013	Konya, Turkey
14.	SMIIC	SMIIC/TC5 Tourism	Technical Meeting	Tourism	SMIIC Technical Committee	09 November 2013	Konya, Turkey
15.	OISA	Strengthen relationship between OISA and Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST-MT)	Cooperation	Transport	Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST-MT)	27 November 2013	Dubai
16.	OISA	Increase Financial Cooperation in Maritime Sector	Financing	Transport	Islamic Development Bank (IDB)	16 March 2014	Jeddah
17.	ICCIA	15th Private Sector Meeting for Promotion of trade and joint venture investment among the OIC	Private Sector Meeting	Private Sector Cooperation	MC's, IDB	28-30 October 2013	Tehran, Iran

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18.	ICCIA	Seminar on Creating awareness of the utilities and privileges of various OIC Agreements (TPS-OIC)	Seminar	Trade	MC's, ICDT	20 March 2014	Sharjah, U.A.E.
19.	ICCIA	Workshop on Business Planning and Marketing	Workshop	Trade	ICCIA	8 April 2014	ICCIA's HQ, Karachi, Pakistan
20.	ICCIA	7th Forum for Businesswomen in Islamic Countries	Forum	Poverty Alleviation	MC's, IDB	28-30 October 2013	Tehran, Iran
21.	ICCIA	16 <sup>th</sup> Private Sector Meeting for Promotion of trade and joint venture investment among the OIC	Private Sector Meeting	Private Sector Cooperation	MC's, IDB	19-20 March 2014	Sharjah-U.A.E
22.	ICCIA	Seminar on Introduction of Islamic Banking and Finance	Workshop	Financial Cooperation	MC's, UNCCI, IDB	28-29 April 2014	Kampala, Uganda
23.	ICDT	Development of R & D, technological innovation and Intellectual property for the Member States	Seminar	Trade	The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and The Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property (OMPIC)	24-25 October 2013	Casablanca, Morocco

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24.	ICDT	14th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States (TFOIC 2013)	Fair	Trade	Ministry of Trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran, IIEC-Iran	28 October- 1 November 2013	Tehran, Iran
25.	ICDT	1st International Exhibition on Muslim Business	Fair	Trade	Ministry of Economy and Finance of Senegal	14-16 November 2013	Dakar, Senegal
26.	ICDT	2nd OIC Halal Food Exhibition	Fair	Trade	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sharjah, Expo Centre of Sharjah	16-18 December 2013	Sharjah, UAE
27.	ICDT	Training for Primo exporters	Training Seminar	Trade	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and New Technologies of Morocco, ASMEX	22-23 December 2013	Casablanca, Morocco
28.	ICDT	12th Meeting of the Economic Counsellors to the Embassies of the OIC Member States accredited to the Kingdom of Morocco	Seminar	Trade	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and New Technologies of Morocco	9 January 2014	Rabat, Morocco
29.	ICDT	Seminar on the outcomes of the WTO Ministerial Conference	Seminar	Trade	IDB Group	25-27 March 2014	Casablanca, Morocco

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30.	ICDT	Training Seminar on E-marketing for Women entrepreneurs	Training Seminar	Trade	WIEF	18-22 February 2014	Casablanca, Morocco
31.	ICDT	6th Meeting of the OIC Consultative Group for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade	Seminar	Trade	ITFC and Ministry of Commerce, Industry and New Technologies of Morocco	3-4 February 2014	Marrakesh, Morocco
32.	ICDT	1st OIC TPOs for English Speaking Countries	Seminar	Trade	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sharjah	17-18 March 2014	Sharjah, UAE
33.	ICDT	7th OIC Agribusiness Expo	Fair	Trade	Al Harithy Company	13-16 April 2014	Jeddah, KSA
34.	IDB Group	9 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Zakat	Advisory Conference	Financial Cooperation	Zakat Institutions/Bank Al Zakat Jordan	26 Nov 2013	Jordan
35.	IDB Group	IDB Ministerial Consultative Meeting of OIC Member Countries, on the Eve of the 9 <sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference	Consultative Meeting	Trade	MCs	02 December 2013	Bali, Indonesia
36.	IDB Group	Deepening Regional Cooperation and Integration for Sustainable Development	Expert Group Meeting	All Cooperation Areas	Relevant MCs, Regional and OIC institutions	Mar/Apr 2014	IDB Group Headquarters, Jeddah

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37.	IDB Group	Public-Private Partnership for Financing Infrastructure Projects	Training Program	Financial Cooperation	Relevant MCs and OIC Institutions	Mar 2014	Jordan
38.	IDB Group	Regulation and Supervision of Islamic Banks	Training Program	Financial Cooperation	Relevant MC, OIC and financial Institutions	Mar 2014	Maldives
39.	CCO	1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Finance Working Group	Meeting	Financial Cooperation	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	December 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2013	Ankara
40.	CCO	2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group	Meeting	Agriculture	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	December 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2013	Ankara
41.	CCO	2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group	Meeting	Poverty Alleviation	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	December 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2013	Ankara
42.	CCO	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Trade Working Group	Meeting	Trade	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	February 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Ankara
43.	CCO	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Tourism Working Group	Meeting	Tourism	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	March 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Ankara

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44.	CCO	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Transport Working Group	Meeting	Transport	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	March 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Ankara
45.	CCO	2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Finance Working Group	Meeting	Financial Cooperation	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	March 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Ankara
46.	CCO	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group	Meeting	Agriculture	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	April 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2014	Ankara
47.	CCO	3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group	Meeting	Poverty Alleviation	MCs, OIC and other international institutions, private sector representatives	April 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Ankara
48.	CCO	30 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC	Meeting		Relevant MCs and OIC Institutions	7-8 May 2014	Ankara