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ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA

31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC

(Ankara, 13-14 May 2015)

COMCEC Coordination Office

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**DRAFT AGENDA OF THE 31st MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC**

(Ankara, 13-14 May 2015)

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation
3. The Implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Program of Action
4. Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade
5. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
6. Improving Transport and Communications
7. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
8. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
9. Eradicating Poverty
10. Deepening Financial Cooperation
11. Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Post-2015 Development Agenda and Development Challenges of the Islamic Ummah: Improving Basic Service Delivery”
12. Draft Agenda of the 31st Session of the COMCEC
13. Any Other Business
14. Adoption of the Report

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to give background information and the current status on the cooperation areas, programs and projects of the COMCEC for its 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee, to be held on 13-14 May 2015 in Ankara, Turkey.

The document provides background information and the required actions on the Draft Agenda Items from 2 to 12. As the remaining Agenda Items are self-explanatory; they are not included in the Document.

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

ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA ITEMS

AGENDA ITEM 2

Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation

The COMCEC Strategy adopted by the 4th Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held on 14-15 August 2012 in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, Saudi Arabia has become operational in 2013.

The Strategy has a well-defined implementation mechanism. The first instrument for its operationalization is the Working Group mechanism. The Strategy ensures active and direct involvement of the Member Country experts in the cooperation areas through the regular Working Group meetings. The Working Groups aim at producing and disseminating knowledge, and sharing experience and good practices. They also provide a suitable ground for creating a common understanding and approximating policies among the Member Countries to respond to their common development problems.

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

Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the Working Groups have held 5 rounds of meetings so far (4 meetings for Financial Cooperation Working Group) and deliberated on the important issues and themes in each cooperation area. The details of each working group are given under the relevant agenda item.

Under the PCM mechanism, the first project call was made in September 2nd, 2013 and the successful projects entitled to receive the grant have been implemented in 2014. The second project call under the PCM was made on September 1st, 2014. Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions have shown great interest to the project call. The final list of the projects was announced on the COMCEC website and 17 projects have been entitled to receive the grant to be provided by the COMCEC Coordination Office. The relevant documents are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)

The implementation of the COMCEC Strategy has led to a dramatic increase in the number of yearly activities organized, and publications made by the COMCEC. To illustrate, 15 meetings were organized in 2014 and 33 publications were produced by the COMCEC in 2014.

As the successful implementation of the Strategy requires effective coordination and communication between the member states and the CCO, focal points have been identified in each member state for each cooperation area. The CCO also holds annual focal point meetings to ensure that the both mechanisms of the Strategy work smoothly and efficiently. In this respect, the 3rd Annual Meeting of the COMCEC Working Group Focal Points will be held in June 2015, in Ankara, Turkey.

Moreover, cooperation efforts of the OIC Institutions operating in the economic domain have particular importance for the realization of the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy. In this respect, in line with the relevant resolution of the COMCEC, the OIC Institutions have been organizing activities aligned with the objectives and expected outputs of the COMCEC Strategy.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC took note of the Progress Report submitted by the COMCEC Coordination Office highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy. In

this regard, 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the progress achieved in the implementation of the projects that were funded under the first call of the COMCEC Project Funding and commended the efforts of the Working Groups towards approximating policies among the Member States in their field of competence. The Session also welcomed the policy recommendations made by the Working Groups in their meetings held in September and October 2014. The Session further welcomed the activities organized by the relevant OIC Institutions (SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group, ICCIA, OISA and SMIIC) in 2014 in line with the COMCEC Strategy.

Required Action(s): COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the COMCEC Strategy and its implementation.

AGENDA ITEM 3

The Implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Program of Action

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

Implementation of the TYPOA was also discussed during the 30th Session of the COMCEC. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 41st Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Session requested the OIC General Secretariat to submit a comprehensive evaluation report to the 31st Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC on the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the 10 Year-Programme of Action during the last 10 years, with specific emphasis on the achievements and challenges, as well as recommendations for the successor programme. The Session also requested the OIC General Secretariat to submit a progress report on the preparations of the successor Programme of Action to the 31st Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC. Furthermore, the Session invited the OIC General Secretariat, in preparing the new 10-Year Programme of Action, to involve all member states and OIC Organs, to give due regard to the COMCEC Strategy in formulating the economic and commercial component to avoid duplication. The Session also underlined the importance of the active follow-up of the economic and commercial section of the new 10-Year Programme of Action by the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The OIC General Secretariat is expected to brief the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the progress in the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action as well as the preparations for the successor Programme of Action.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade

Trade is one of the important cooperation areas of the COMCEC Strategy. Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the Trade Working Group has held five meetings till now.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the Third and Fourth Meetings of the COMCEC Trade Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the 4th Meeting of the Trade Working Group.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 30th Session of the COMCEC, the 5th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group was held on March 26th, 2015 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Improving the Role of Eximbanks /Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) in the OIC Member States.” The Meeting has considered the Study namely “Improving the Role of Eximbanks in the OIC Member States” prepared specifically for this Meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. The relevant publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org).

The 6th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group will be held on September 17th, 2015 with the theme of “Establishing Well-Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies in the Member States.”

Furthermore, 30th Session of the COMCEC requested the ICDT, in collaboration with IDB to organize a seminar and conduct a study on the new generation of free trade agreements (FTAs) and the feasibility of signing these agreements among the regional economic groupings consisting of the OIC Member States, including their impact on intra-OIC trade, and submit a report to the 31st Session of COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 5th Meeting of the Trade Working Group.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the main challenges faced by the OIC Member Country ECAs?
- ii) What measures can be taken to improve effectiveness of existing ECAs in the OIC Member Countries?
- iii) What are the cooperation opportunities among the OIC Member Country ECAs?

There are also several important programs and projects on the agenda of the COMCEC to enhance cooperation among the OIC Member States in the field of trade. Some of the ongoing programs and activities are; TPS-OIC, Islamic Trade Fairs, Road Map for Enhancing Trade, WTO Related Technical Assistance, Trade Financing Activities and Trade Related Activities of SMIIC.

- TPS-OIC

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

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

The COMCEC in its 30th Session took note with appreciation the positive developments regarding the TPS-OIC, particularly the ratification of the Rules of Origin by Bahrain, and submission of the concessions list by Morocco. The Session also welcomed the announcement of Kuwait on its ratification of the PRETAS and the Rules of Origin and thus the finalization of the requirements for the operationalization of the TPS-OIC System.

Furthermore, in line with the relevant resolution of the 30th Session of the COMCEC, COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) in collaboration with the Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB) organized the Training Seminar on the implementation of the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin for the Member States, which have completed the ratification of the TPS-OIC Agreements and submission of the concession lists, on 26-27 January 2015 in Ankara.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC expressed its appreciation to the ICDT and the ICCIA for organizing sensitizing events towards increasing awareness on the benefits of TPS-OIC among the government officials and the private sector in the Member States.

Required Action(s): On behalf of the TNC Secretariat, the COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Follow-up Committee on the progress regarding the operationalization of the TPS-OIC.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) How do you evaluate potential of the TPS-OIC? What would the effects of the TPS-OIC on intra-OIC trade levels when operationalized?
- ii) What is the level of awareness on TPS-OIC System in the OIC Member Countries?
- iii) Which measures can be taken to expedite successful implementation of the TPS-OIC?

- Islamic Trade Fairs

Islamic trade fairs are held every two years in one of the OIC Member Countries by the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) in order to promote intra-OIC trade. The ICDT has organized fourteen Islamic Trade Fairs to date. The 14th Islamic Trade Fair was held from October 28th to November 1st, 2013 in Tehran.

In addition to the Islamic Trade Fairs, sector specific exhibitions are also organized by the ICDT in the Member States. Since the 30th Session of the COMCEC, the 3rd OIC Halal Expo and Congress was held on 8-10 December 2014 in the United Arab Emirates.

In addition, following sector specific exhibitions will be organized in this year:

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the “8th Exhibition of Agribusiness Industries of the OIC Member States” on 17- 20 May 2015;
- The State of the United Arab Emirates (Emirate of Sharjah) will host the “2nd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States” on 19-21 October 2015;
- The Republic of Tunisia will organize the 1st Exhibition of Organic and Local Products of the OIC Member States on 29 October -1st November 2015;
- The State of the United Arab Emirates (Emirate of Sharjah) will host the 4th OIC Halal Expo and Congress on 9 - 11 December 2015.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC requested ICDT to continue holding sector specific fairs in cooperation with the Member States and submit regular progress reports on the fairs to the COMCEC Sessions.

Required Action(s): The ICDT is expected to report the recent developments on the Islamic Trade Fairs to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) How do you evaluate the performance of the Islamic Trade Fairs? How can the trade fairs be improved?

- Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade

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

Till now, the Consultative Group has held seven meetings. The final meeting of the Consultative Group was held on 2-3 March 2015 in Marrakesh, Morocco. In its 7th Meeting, the Group reviewed the implementation of the Executive Programme for enhancing intra-OIC Trade (2009-2014).

The 30th Session of the COMCEC thanked the ICDT and other members of the Consultative Group for their efforts towards enhancing intra-OIC trade, and requested the Group to successfully conclude the implementation of the Executive Programme in 2015. The Session also requested the ICDT, in collaboration with other relevant OIC Institutions, to prepare a comprehensive evaluation report on the implementation of the Road-Map and submit it to the 31st Follow-up Committee Meeting and the 31st Session of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The ICDT as the coordinator of the Executive Program of the Road Map is expected to submit a comprehensive evaluation on the implementation status of the Road Map to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the main achievements and challenges within the framework of the Road Map for enhancing intra-OIC trade?

- WTO Related Technical Assistance

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

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the accession of Yemen to the WTO, and encouraged the non-WTO Member OIC Countries, to join this organization and requested the WTO Member OIC Countries to support the Member States which are in the accession process to the WTO. The Session also called on IDB and ICDT to continue providing technical assistance to the Member States on WTO-related issues and report their activities to the COMCEC Sessions.

Required Action(s): The IDB and ICDT are expected to report their activities in this field to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

Questions for Discussion:

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

- Trade Financing Activities

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

The 30th Session of the COMCEC appreciated trade finance and trade promotion activities of IDB Group (ITFC) which have achieved trade finance approvals amounting to USD 5.1 billion in 2014. Moreover, the Session welcomed the regional and thematic trade development programs of the ITFC, namely the Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States (AFTIAS), Aid for Trade Initiative for the SPECA Region, OIC Trade Development Forum, and Arab-Africa Trade Bridge Program, and invited the concerned Member States to actively participate and support the implementation of these initiatives.

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

Required Action(s): The IDB Group is expected to report its activities on trade financing and export credit risk insurance to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the trade financing mechanisms implemented in your country?
- ii) Does your country have specific policies/programs for better utilization of trade financing services of the ITFC by the business community?

- Trade Related Activities of SMIIC

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

In line with its mandate, SMIIC has intensified its cooperation efforts and activities. Recently, eight Technical Committees ranging from Halal Food issues to Service Site issues have been established under SMIIC. There has been a growing interest by the Member States to SMIIC. The number of SMIIC's members has increased to 31 as of March 2015.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the joining of Malaysia as member, and Bosnia and Herzegovina as observer to SMIIC, and requested the Member States which have not done so far, to join SMIIC to benefit from its services.

Required Action(s): The General Secretariat of SMIIC will inform the Follow-up Committee of the recent developments regarding the SMIIC's trade related activities.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) SMIIC has successfully completed its institutionalization and set-up eight

technical committees for fulfillment of its mandate. What measures can be taken to enhance the visibility of SMIC and its services in the Member States?

AGENDA ITEM 5

Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation

- Private Sector Meetings

Strong involvement of the private sector to the COMCEC and other relevant OIC meetings and activities is indispensable for achieving successful outcomes. To that end, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) organizes Private Sector Meetings and regularly reports their outcomes to the COMCEC Sessions. One of the main objectives of the private sector meetings is to provide a platform for the private sector representatives of the Member States to explore new opportunities and create new linkages among themselves. Up to now, 16 private sector meetings have been held. The 16th Private Sector Meeting for Promotion of Trade and Joint Venture Investment among the Islamic Countries was held on 19-20 March 2014 in Sharjah, UAE.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC took note of the recommendations of the 16th Private Sector Meeting for OIC Member States held in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates on 19-20 March 2014, as well as the Sharjah Declaration. The Session welcomed the efforts of the ICCIA, in bridging the information gap, between the private sectors of the Member States by creating Business Development Centers (Al-Masfaq), holding Business Forums, Training programs and Seminars, and called upon the ICCIA to continue with these activities.

Required Action(s): The ICCIA is expected to submit a report on the recent developments regarding private sector meetings.

Questions for Discussion:

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

AGENDA ITEM 6

Improving Transport and Communications

The development of transport and communications among the Member States is given utmost importance by the COMCEC. Transport and communications is one of the cooperation areas identified in the COMCEC Strategy. Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the Transport and Communications Working Group was established and convened five times until now.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the 3rd and 4th Meetings of the Transport and Communications Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the latter.

Since the 30th Session of the COMCEC, Transport and Communications Working Group has held its 5th Meeting on February 12th, 2015 with the theme of "Evaluating the Ownership, Governance Structures, and Performances of Ports in the OIC Member States." The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in increasing port

efficiency in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Study titled “Evaluating the Ownership, Governance Structures and Performances of the Ports in the OIC Member States” prepared specifically for this meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. Proceedings of the Meeting as well as all the publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org).

The 6th Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group will be held on October 22nd, 2015 with the theme of “Review of the Urban Transport in OIC Megacities”.

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the outcomes of the 5th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group Meeting and the recent developments regarding the cooperation in this field.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What kind of implementation barriers exist (political, legal, operational and regional) in your country in increasing port efficiency?
- ii) What kind of actions can be done to increase the port performance in your country?

AGENDA ITEM 7

Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector

Tourism is defined by the COMCEC Strategy as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC. As part of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the Tourism Working Group was established and has convened five times till now.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the 3rd and 4th Meetings of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the 4th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group.

Since the 30th Session of the COMCEC, 5th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group was organized on February 5th, 2015 with the theme of “Travel Facilitation for Enhancing Mobility in the OIC Member States.” The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in travel facilitation in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Study titled “Travel Facilitation for Enhancing Mobility in the OIC Member Countries” prepared specifically for this Meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. Proceedings as well as all the publications and presentations related to the Meeting are available on the COMCEC web-site. (www.comcec.org).

The 6th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group will be held on September 3rd, 2015 with theme of “Effective Marketing Strategies: Innovative ICT Solutions.”

Regarding the ongoing cooperation activities in this cooperation area;

- The 8th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) was held on 3-5 December 2013 in Banjul, Gambia. The meeting approved the mechanisms and criteria for the Selection of OIC City of Tourism as well as for the Award of OIC Seal of Excellence for Handicrafts. The meeting also agreed on the members of the Coordination Committee for the implementation of the Framework on Tourism. Furthermore, the Meeting

welcomed the offer by the Government of the Republic of Niger to host the 9th Session of ICTM in 2015.

- The 3rd Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum was held on 29-30 January 2015 with the theme of “International Branding of Tourism Destinations in the OIC Member Countries.” The Forum underlined the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement as a critical success factor for tourism branding particularly through utilizing Public Private Partnerships and highlighted the importance of experience sharing, technical cooperation and capacity building programs among the Member Countries on tourism destination branding. On the sideline of the Forum, the private sector representatives of the Member Countries had the opportunity to conduct B2B Meetings with their counterparts.
- The 2nd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States will be held in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates on 19-21 October 2015.
- The 5th OIC Health Tourism Conference will be held in 2015 in Mashhad, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Follow-up Committee on the outcomes of the 5th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group as well as the recent developments regarding the ongoing activities under the COMCEC tourism cooperation.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the policies and instruments utilized in your country for facilitating travel?
- ii) What are the challenges faced by your country regarding travel facilitation?
- iii) What are the possible cooperation opportunities to facilitate travel among the Member Countries?

AGENDA ITEM 8

Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security

Cooperation in the area of agriculture occupies an important place in the agenda of the COMCEC. The COMCEC Strategy has also defined the agriculture as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC. The COMCEC Agriculture Working Group has held five meetings so far.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the 4th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 30th Session of the COMCEC, the 5th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group was held on March 5th, 2015 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving Institutional Capacity: Strengthening Farmer Organizations in the OIC Member Countries.” The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in strengthening farmer organizations in their respective countries. The Meeting has considered the Study entitled “Improving Institutional Capacity: Strengthening Farmer Organizations in the OIC Member Countries” prepared specifically for this Meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. Relevant publications and presentations related to the Meeting are available on the COMCEC web-site. (www.comcec.org).

The 6th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group will be held on October 8th, 2015 with the theme of “Promoting Agricultural Value Chains in the OIC Member States.”

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the 31st Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the outcomes of the 5th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group and on the recent developments in this cooperation area.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the policies/programmes implemented in your country for strengthening farmer organizations?
- ii) What are the challenges faced by your country in this respect?

AGENDA ITEM 9

Eradicating Poverty

Poverty Alleviation is occupying an important place in the COMCEC agenda and is defined by the COMCEC Strategy as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC. The Poverty Alleviation Working Group, envisaged by the COMCEC Strategy, held five Meetings till now.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Meetings of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the latter.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 30th Session of the COMCEC, the 5th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group was held on February 26th, 2015 in Ankara with the theme of “Activation Policies for the Poor in the OIC Member States.” The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, best practices, challenges and policy implementations in increasing the efficiency of the activation programmes and policies in the COMCEC Member Countries. The Meeting has considered the Study namely “Activation Policies for the Poor in the OIC Member States” prepared specifically for this Meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. Proceedings as well as all the publications and presentations related to the Meeting are available on the COMCEC web-site. (www.comcec.org).

The 6th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group will be held on September 10th, 2015 with the theme of “Improvement of Basic Services Delivery in the OIC Member States”.

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 5th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group.

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

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

ISFD is a Special Fund within the IDB, which was officially launched in 2007 with the aim of reducing poverty in the Member Countries through focusing on human development, agriculture

and rural development, basic infrastructure and micro enterprises. The principle target capital of the Fund is USD10 billion.

The SPDA is another Special Program within the IDB, which was initiated in 2008 with a view to spurring economic growth, reinvigorating agricultural production and creating employment opportunities in the African Member Countries. The funding for the SPDA was set as USD 12 billion for a five-year period.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC took note of the initiative of IDB Group for development of a Strategy for the period 2015-2017 for the effective implementation of the projects and the effectiveness of the ISFD. The said Session welcomed the efforts of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for mobilization of resources from different financing institutions for the implementation of the Special Programme for the Development of Africa (SPDA). Lastly, the Session also welcomed the outcome of the IDB Workshop on “Economic and Social Impact of Epidemics and OIC Response: The Case of Ebola” and called on Member States, the OIC General Secretariat, and the IDB to extend necessary support to the countries affected by the outbreak of the Ebola Virus.

Required Action(s): The IDB Group is expected to submit a report on the implementation of the ISFD and SPDA to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

OIC Cotton Program

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

Under the Cotton Action Plan, the Project Committee and Steering Committee were formed. Until now, six Steering Committee and five Project Committee meetings have been held.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC took note of the report of the 5th Project Committee Meeting held on November 16th, 2014 in Jeddah and requested SESRIC to combine 14 projects into one capacity building project and submit it to the IDB for funding. In line with this request SESRIC prepared the project proposal for the “Capacity Building Project on Development of Cotton Sector in OIC Member Countries” and submitted it to IDB for consideration.

Moreover, the SESRIC organizes training and capacity building programs in the field of cotton. In this regard, the 30th Session of the COMCEC took note with appreciation of the efforts of SESRIC for organizing training courses on various cotton-related aspects in the Member States within the framework of the OIC Cotton Training Programme (OIC-CTP).

Required Action(s): The IDB Group, as the Chairman of the Project Committee, is expected to report the current status of the implementation of the Cotton Action Plan to the 31st Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC.

- OIC-VET Program

Vocational Education and Training Program for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET) was initiated by the SESRIC in 2009 with a view to improving the quality of vocational education and training in the Member Countries. SESRIC reports the developments regarding the implementation of the OIC-VET to the COMCEC Follow-up Committee Meetings and the COMCEC Sessions.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC took note of the report of the 5th Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee of the OIC-VET Programme and appreciated the continuous efforts of SESRIC towards initiating and implementing various capacity building programmes and training courses in different fields and areas of interest to the Member States with a view to enhancing the capacities and quality of human resources in these countries.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to submit a report to the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the implementation of the OIC-VET Program.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What is the current employment situation of the poor and people at risk of poverty in your country?
- ii) What are the challenges related to the employment situation of the poor in your country?
- iii) Is there a link between activation policies/programmes and poverty reduction in your country?

AGENDA ITEM 10

Deepening Financial Cooperation

COMCEC has intensified its efforts for enhancing financial cooperation among the member states. The COMCEC Strategy has identified financial cooperation as one of the cooperation areas of the COMCEC. Within the framework of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, Financial Cooperation Working Group was established and convened four times till now.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the convening of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group and took note of the policy recommendations of the 3rd meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group.

Upon the relevant resolution of the 30th Session of the COMCEC, the 4th Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group was held on March 19th, 2015 with the theme of "Improving Supervisory Mechanisms in the Banking Sector of the OIC Member Countries." The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements, challenges and policy implementations for improving the banking Supervisory Mechanisms in their respective countries. The Meeting considered the Study titled "Improving Banking Supervisory Mechanisms in the OIC Member Countries" prepared specifically for this Meeting. The Meeting has come up with a set of policy recommendations. The relevant publications and presentations are available on the COMCEC web-site (www.comcec.org).

The 5th Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group will be held on October 15th, 2015 with theme of "Retail Payment Systems in the OIC Member States."

Required Action(s): The COMCEC Coordination Office will brief the Committee on the outcomes of the 4th Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group.

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

- OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum

The cooperation among Stock Exchanges has been initiated by the COMCEC in 2005. Accordingly, the OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum was established. The Forum focuses on the harmonization of the rules and regulations governing market operations, as well as opening communication channels for the stock exchanges of the OIC Member Countries and relevant institutions. The Forum established its own web-site (www.oicexchanges.org) to enhance communication among Forum Members. The 8th Meeting of the Forum was held on November 11th, 2014 in İstanbul. The details regarding the Forum activities are available on the Forum web-site. (www.oicexchanges.org) The 9th Meeting of the Forum will be held on November 19th, 2015 in İstanbul.

The Forum has achieved remarkable progress in deepening cooperation among the Stock Exchanges of the Member States. It has successfully finalized the S&P OIC/COMCEC 50 Shariah Index. The Index was designed to measure the performance of 50 leading companies from the 19 Member States. The 30th Session of the COMCEC requested the Member States and IDB to further their support for the promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC 50 Shariah Index in the Member States with a view to making it an effective investment instrument.

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the Forum, Borsa İstanbul is expected to inform the Committee of the recent developments regarding the activities of the Forum.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) The S&P OIC/COMCEC Index has successfully been launched in 2012. How can the visibility of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index be enhanced in the member states as well as worldwide?
- ii) What are the main challenges and obstacles for an effective risk management mechanism in Islamic Finance industry?
- iii) How can risk management mechanisms in OIC member countries be improved?
- iv) What barriers are easier to overcome in improving enabling conditions for the Member Countries to enhance capital flows?

- COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum

In line with the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC, the COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum was established in 2011 to increase coordination and cooperation in regulatory and legal infrastructure with a view to achieving more harmonized policies and regulations among the Member Countries. In this framework, the Forum held three meetings till now. The 3rd Meeting of the Forum was held on November 11th, 2014 in İstanbul. The details regarding the Forum activities are available on the Forum web-site (www.comceccmr.org). The 4th Meeting of the Forum will be held on November 19th, 2015 in İstanbul.

The 30th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the efforts carried out by the Task Forces of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum on Islamic capital market solutions, database, financial literacy as well as capacity building and invited the Member States to support the efforts of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum through participating its meetings, contributing to the cooperation efforts of the Task Forces.

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the Forum, Capital Markets Board of Turkey is expected to brief the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the recent developments regarding the activities of the Forum.

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the challenges in your country for enhancing capital market development and diversifying products in compliance with international standards?
 - ii) Does your country have a particular law, regulation and directive on Islamic Financial Instruments?
 - iii) How can awareness on Islamic Financial Industry in OIC Member countries be enhanced?
- Meetings of the OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities

In line with the relevant resolution of the COMCEC, the cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member Countries has been revitalized. Since 2009, the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the member states have regularly convened with a view to sharing experiences and enhancing institutional and human capacity in this field. Accordingly, three working groups were established in the following areas: Payment Systems, Macro-Prudential Regulations, and Liquidity Management in Islamic Finance.

The 14th Meeting of OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities was held on 5-6 November 2014 in Indonesia with the theme “Financial Stability through Macro-prudential Policy and Financial Market Deepening among OIC Countries”. The 15th Meeting of OIC Central Banks and Monetary Authorities will be held in Suriname in 2015.

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

Questions for Discussion:

- i) What are the policies/programs implemented in your country for ensuring the financial sector stability?
- ii) What are your country experiences in enhancing the institutional and human capacity of the Central Banks/Monetary Authorities?

AGENDA ITEM 11

Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Post-2015 Development Agenda and Development Challenges of the Islamic Ummah: Improving Basic Service Delivery”

Exchange of views sessions are held regularly at the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions. The 30th Session of the COMCEC decided the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views of the next COMCEC Session as “Post-2015 Development Agenda and Development Challenges of the Islamic Ummah: Improving Basic Service Delivery” and requested the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, in cooperation with the relevant OIC Institutions, to come up with concrete policy recommendations on this topic and report it to the 31st COMCEC Session.

Moreover, the 30th Session of the COMCEC requested the IDB and COMCEC Coordination Office to conduct a joint study reflecting the perspective of the OIC on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Post-2015 Development Agenda and submit it to the 31st Session of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): COMCEC Coordination Office is expected to inform the 31st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC regarding the preparations for the exchange of views session as well as the aforementioned joint study.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Draft Agenda of the 31st Session of the COMCEC

The draft agenda of the 31st Session of the COMCEC will be considered by the Follow-up Committee under this agenda item.

