

EXPLANATORY NOTE



The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), whose main task is the promotion of trade and investment among the OIC Countries, has included in its program of activities a range of actions that revolve around trade expansion; some fall under the diagnosis of the behavior of players in the intra-OIC trade (annual report on inter-Islamic trade and other studies on regional economic groupings, etc ..) while others are aimed to act on trade flows as promotional activities.

Among the foreign trade promotion measures, fairs and exhibitions occupy a prominent place and have a positive impact on the development of trade and investments and constitute platforms for economic operators to promote their products and services and an opportunity to establish partnerships between businessmen.

The OIC Member States make reference in several official documents, notably, the General Agreement on Economic Cooperation, Technical and Commercial stipulates in Article 10 that:

"Member States will endeavor to organize fairs and exhibitions with the aim to exhibit and market their products and services on the markets of other states. Similarly, they will endeavor to participate in international fairs and exhibitions organized in the Member States to help make their products and increase the chances of development of trade between them".

In this regard, the Organisation of the Trade Fair of Islamic Countries (TFOIC) falls within the framework of resolutions and recommendations adopted in the field of Economic Cooperation, by the Islamic summit conferences or the councils of foreign ministers of the organization of Islamic cooperation and the COMCEC Ministerial meetings. In this context, the standing committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) adopted a resolution requesting the OIC Member States to Organise the Trade Fair of Islamic Countries every two years in a Member State.

Aware of the importance of this promotional tool for enhancing intra-OIC trade, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade has submitted to the 17th Session of the COMCEC held in Istanbul from October 18th to 21st 2001, draft regulations of the Fair defining the framework in which the TFOIC should be held, specifying the procedures to be followed, the mechanisms to be implemented along with required information that would facilitate Member states' participation.

Having taken cognisance of these draft regulations, the COMCEC recommended to the OIC Member States to convey their observations within three months at the utmost after being notified of the Fair's draft regulations. ICDT will then convene an expert group meeting in charge of finalising these regulations.

Taking note of the observations and comments of Member States, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade convened a meeting on 26th and 27th march 2002 in Casablanca, during which the draft Internal Regulations of the OIC Islamic Trade Fair were

finalised. ICDT submitted these draft Internal regulations to the 18th Session of the COMCEC held in Istanbul from October 22nd to 25th 2002, which adopted them and requested the COMCEC Secretariat to circulate them, among the OIC Member States and asked ICDT to implement these regulations.

By virtue of the relevant resolutions aiming at strengthening the economic and commercial cooperation between the OIC Member States, and in pursuance of the resolutions of the 18th Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) on this issue, the Trade Fair of Islamic Countries (called (TFOIC) is organised every two years by the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, in collaboration with the host country and the concerned organisations of Member States shall collaborate, each one in its own field, with the ICDT for the organisation of the fair.

Objectives.

The main objectives of the fair are to:

1. Develop inter-Islamic economic and trade cooperation;
2. Make the economic potentialities of the Islamic countries known;
3. Concretely contribute to the development of trade and trade related investments, between Islamic countries;
4. Make the OIC Member States' products and services known;
5. Facilitate direct contacts between the economic operators of the OIC Member States;
6. Contribute to the development of partnership between the economic operators of the OIC Member States.
7. Develop economic integration of the OIC Member States.
8. To make every effort for the development of Fairs and business congresses, which constitute important marketing tools between the OIC Member States.

Organisers

- ICDT, which has been entrusted with the organisation of the Fair by 18th Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC).
- The Host country, represented by the relevant national authority (Ministry of Trade & Economy,...) which designated an authority in charge of organising fairs to be a the focal point and the partner of ICDT for the organisation of the event.

- It should be noted that the various editions of the fair registered a significant rate of participation. In this context, and in order to ensure a significant participation of Member States and Economic operators in the different editions of the OIC Trade Fair, and enhance the efficiency of this important tool and following of a recommendation of its Board of Directors and General Assembly;

ICDT kindly requests the 32nd Ministerial Session of the COMCEC to consider amending the Internal Regulations of the OIC Islamic Trade Fair through adding a new clause in article 2 specifying as follows:

- *“Any applicant for hosting the Islamic Trade Fair or a Specialised Exhibition shall meet the following conditions:*
- *The selected venue shall have a fairground with international standards;*
- *The co-organising company (in charge of organising fairs in the host county) shall have a robust experience in organising international exhibitions;*
- *The company shall have a sound financial basis;*
- *The selected city shall be linked with regular flights;*

The applications for hosting Islamic Trade Fair and Specialised Exhibitions are examined by a “selecting committee” chaired by ICDT”.