



**ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK**

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**REPORT ON:**  
**IDB's WTO-RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**  
**AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM**

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**33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC**  
**(Ankara, Turkey, 10-11 May 2017)**

## **IDB WTO-RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The IDB WTO-related Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program (WTO-Program) was launched in 1997 and has now been under implementation for more than fifteen years. The IDB has regularly submitted progress reports on the implementation of this program to the COMCEC meetings.

The IDB launched the WTO-Program with the prime objective of helping its member countries upgrade their human and institutional capacities to adjust to the new multilateral trading system. The aim of the Program is to provide greater awareness to the OIC member countries on WTO Agreements and their implementation and facilitate the process of their accession to the WTO. It also serves as a forum where relevant officials from member countries can exchange views and discuss various multilateral trade matters. In the recent years, the focus of the Program has been more on helping the member countries in their accession to WTO, strengthening their negotiation skills and issues related to negotiations within the framework of the Doha Work Program.

### **II. MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM**

The main elements of the IDB Group's WTO Program include: organizing seminars and workshops on WTO agreements; conducting technical courses on Trade Policy; organizing Consultative Meetings on important issues and in preparation for the WTO Ministerial Conferences; undertaking WTO-related studies; and providing advisory services through financing of experts/consultants to member countries on WTO-related matters. Briefly, the activities that have been undertaken under the IDB Group's WTO Program since its inception are as follows:

**Seminars and Workshops:** The IDB organizes seminars and workshops covering a wide range of WTO issues with the view to familiarizing the member countries with the contents and provisions of the WTO Agreements as well as the activities of WTO so that they may be in a better position to defend their interests. Since its inception till end-October 2015, 85 Seminars and 46 Workshops have been organized by the IDB under this program.

**Trade Policy Courses:** Organized in collaboration with the WTO, these courses are short versions of the WTO Trade Policy Course which is a three-month course offered by the WTO in Geneva. The Trade Policy Course covers a wide range of topics, such as, market access, customs and trade administration, agriculture, textile and clothing, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, government procurement, general agreements on trade in services, intellectual property rights, anti-dumping, subsidies and countervailing measures, dispute settlement, agreement on trade-related investment measures, trade and competition policy, trade and environment, and regionalism. Since the inception of the Program till end-October 2015, 21 Trade Policy Courses have been organized by the IDB under this program.

**Special Studies:** The IDB occasionally undertakes in-depth studies on WTO-related issues based on the requests of the member countries. So far, the IDB has undertaken studies on: Agriculture sector, Investment, Services sector, Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), and Electronic-Commerce. Each study included

a set of case studies on OIC member countries and contained valuable practical tips and negotiation strategies on the various issues concerning the OIC member countries.

**Consultative Meetings:** The IDB organizes consultative meetings for the member countries mostly in conjunction with the WTO Ministerial Conferences. These meetings provide a forum for the delegations of member countries to exchange views and, where possible, coordinate their positions on matters related to the WTO, adopt a common stance and act as a group to acquire stronger bargaining power. So far, the IDB has organized eight consultative meetings for both capital-based and Geneva-based officials.

**WTO Specific Technical Assistance to OIC Member Countries:** The IDB also provides specific technical assistance to member countries through hiring consultancy services or fielding in-house WTO experts on vital WTO issues such as, WTO accession, drafting of national laws, establishing WTO Units and providing capacity building for all general purposes.

### **III. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE PROGRAM SINCE THE 33<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC**

Based on the feedback and requests of the member countries, the current focus of the Program is on three themes: (i) Accession to the WTO (ii) Regional integration and (iii) National Activities. The major activities organized by the IDB since the 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC are the following:

1. Seminar on Regional Transport Connectivity, 16 May 2016, Jakarta, Indonesia
2. Regional Seminar on “the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Prospects of Activating the OIC Single Window”, from 30 May - 01 June 2016, Casablanca, Morocco.
3. Technical Support to Sudan on Accession to WTO, 28 May - 02 June 2016. —
4. Workshop on the assessing regional trade integration processes in Africa, 26- 28 September 2016, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
5. Workshop on “the Use the TPS-OIC mechanism to enhance intra-OIC trade through opening OIC markets to OIC products”, 24-26 October 2016, Tunis, Tunisia.
6. Workshop on Promotion of Trade and Transport Corridors to Enhance Regional Integration among IDB's African Member Countries, 20-22 February 2017, Dakar, Republic of Senegal.
7. Seminar on “Trade in Services: Potential gains and Challenges to promote Regional Economic Integration in the Middle East and North Africa region”, 22-24 March 2017, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco.
8. Seminar on “the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Prospects of Activating the OIC Single Window”, 16-18 April 2017, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
9. National workshop on Accession to WTO for Azerbaijan, 27-28 April 2017, Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan.
10. Seminar on Development Issues on the Agenda of the 11th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and its Possible Impact on the African Countries Member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), 23-25 May 2017.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

The IDB endeavors to facilitate the OIC countries in every possible way in building their human and institutional capacities to enable them to address the challenges of the multilateral trading system. The IDB has implemented its WTO program in close collaboration with the WTO and other relevant international, national and OIC institutions and highly appreciates their cooperation and support. The IDB welcomes new ideas and suggestions to further enhance the impact of this program and looks forward to working with them even more closely in the future for the effective delivery of this Program. The IDB would like to cordially invite all esteemed member countries to participate in the Consultative Meeting of OIC Trade Ministers to be organized by it on eve of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference which is to be held on 11 to 14 December 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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**STATUS OF THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES IN THE WTO**  
**(as of end-October 2015)**

| WTO Members          | Date of Accession | Observers     | No Status       |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Afghanistan       | 29 July 2016      | 1. Algeria    | 1. Palestine    |
| 2. Albania           | 8 September 2000  | 2. Azerbaijan | 2. Turkmenistan |
| 3. Bahrain           | 1 January 1995    | 3. Comoros    |                 |
| 4. Bangladesh        | 1 January 1995    | 4. Iran       |                 |
| 5. Benin             | 22 February 1996  | 5. Iraq       |                 |
| 6. Brunei Darussalam | 1 January 1995    | 6. Lebanon    |                 |
| 7. Burkina Faso      | 3 June 1995       | 7. Libya      |                 |
| 8. Cameroon          | 13 December 1995  | 8. Sudan      |                 |
| 9. Chad              | 19 October 1996   | 9. Uzbekistan |                 |
| 10. Cote d'Ivoire    | 1 January 1995    | 10. Syria     |                 |
| 11. Djibouti         | 31 May 1995       | 11. Somalia   |                 |
| 12. Egypt            | 30 June 1995      |               |                 |
| 13. Gabon            | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 14. Gambia           | 23 October 1996   |               |                 |
| 15. Guinea           | 25 October 1995   |               |                 |
| 16. Guinea-Bissau    | 31 May 1995       |               |                 |
| 17. Guyana           | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 18. Indonesia        | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 19. Jordan           | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 20. Kuwait           | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 21. Kyrgyz Republic  | 20 December 1998  |               |                 |
| 22. Malaysia         | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 23. Maldives         | 31 May 1995       |               |                 |
| 24. Mali             | 31 May 1995       |               |                 |
| 25. Mauritania       | 31 May 1995       |               |                 |
| 26. Morocco          | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 27. Mozambique       | 26 August 1995    |               |                 |
| 28. Niger            | 13 December 1996  |               |                 |
| 29. Nigeria          | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 30. Oman             | 9 November 2000   |               |                 |
| 31. Pakistan         | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 32. Qatar            | 13 January 1996   |               |                 |
| 33. Saudi Arabia     | 11 December 2005  |               |                 |
| 34. Senegal          | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 35. Sierra Leone     | 23 July 1995      |               |                 |
| 36. Suriname         | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 37. Tajikistan       | 2 March 2013      |               |                 |
| 38. Togo             | 31 May 1995       |               |                 |
| 39. Tunisia          | 29 March 1995     |               |                 |
| 40. Turkey           | 26 March 1995     |               |                 |
| 41. Uganda           | 1 January 1995    |               |                 |
| 42. UAE              | 10 April 1996     |               |                 |
| 43. Kazakhstan       | 30 November 2015  |               |                 |
| 44. Yemen            | 26 June 2014      |               |                 |