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REPORT
THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC COOPERATION
(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)

1. The Thirty Third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) was held on 10-11 May 2017 in Ankara, the Republic of Turkey.

2. Representatives of the following Member States of the Committee attended the Meeting:

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| 1- Republic of Turkey | : (Chairman, Permanent), |
| 2- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia | : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member), |
| 3- State of Palestine | : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member), |
| 4- State of Qatar | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the Arab Region), |
| 5- Malaysia | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the Asian Region), |
| 6- Republic of Gabon | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the African Region), |
| 7- Islamic Republic of Pakistan | : (Rapporteur), |
| 8- State of Kuwait | : (Member of the Previous Bureau), |
| 9- Republic of Indonesia | : (Member of the Previous Bureau), |
| 10- Republic of Niger | : (Member of the Previous Bureau). |

3. In addition, Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC) attended the Meeting.

(The list of participants is attached as Annex I.)

Agenda Item 1: Opening Session

4. Following the recitation from the Holy Qur'an, H.E. Lütfi ELVAN, Minister of Development of the Republic of Turkey, inaugurated the Meeting.

5. H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of the COMCEC, sent a message to the Meeting. His message was read out by H.E. Ambassador Sadık ARSLAN, Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the President. In his message, H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN underlined that the Islamic world is witnessing developments that will shape and in a way determine the fate of its next century and stressed that we cannot sacrifice our 1,400 year civilization to the interests of some contemptuous and hubristic groups. H.E. President further expressed that there is one truth of which we all need to be aware: It is the strength of our fraternity that defines us as Muslims; in fact, all Muslims have to “be brethren and stand together, linked like bricks in a wall,” as ordered by our Prophet (PBUH).

6. President ERDOĞAN also drew the attention of the Committee to the successful organization of the 13th Islamic Summit in İstanbul on 14-15 April 2016. President ERDOĞAN also underlined the adoption of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action for the next decade, as an important outcome of the Summit.

7. President ERDOĞAN then touched upon the importance of benefiting from the instruments of the COMCEC Strategy, namely working group meetings and project funding mechanism, which provide an important platform for the member countries to share their experiences and provide solutions to the common challenges and an important financial instrument for enhancing human capital and institutional capacity.

8. In his message, H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN emphasized the importance of effective transportation system and infrastructure in enhancing commercial competitiveness and strengthening trade relations among the OIC Member Countries. In this respect, H.E. ERDOĞAN expressed his appreciation for designation of the theme of exchange of views session of the next COMCEC Session as “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”.

9. President ERDOĞAN concluded his message by wishing success to the participants of the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC.

(A copy of the text of the Message of H.E. President Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN is attached as Annex II.)

10. Following the message of H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, H.E. Lütfi ELVAN, the Minister of Development of the Republic of Turkey, addressed the meeting.

11. H.E. ELVAN stated that the target of reaching 20 percent intra-OIC trade in 2015 as set by the previous OIC Ten-Year Plan of Action was achieved and even surpassed in 2015. However, the fluctuations in oil prices also had a role in this achievement.

12. On the other hand, H.E. ELVAN stated that the share of the OIC Member Countries in the world trade showed recently a serious decline. OIC Member Countries had approximately 12 percent share in the world trade in 2012 but this has dropped to 9.5 percent in 2015. H.E. ELVAN underlined that this decrease should be considered as an important forewarning for the Member Countries.

13. H.E. ELVAN underlined that the decline in oil prices necessitates the economic reforms towards reducing the dependence on the exports of limited number of commodities in the OIC Member Countries. In this regard, the Member Countries should continue their endeavours towards producing and exporting manufactured products and high-tech products in the long run.

14. H.E. ELVAN highlighted the organization of Working Group Meetings and implementation of projects within the framework of COMCEC Strategy. He stressed that the Working Group Meetings in six cooperation areas are suitable platforms for the experts to conduct high level technical debates and to produce crucial documents like the COMCEC Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) Guideline. He emphasized the importance of these Meetings for sharing experiences and best practices and approximating policies among the Member Countries in the long term. He also appreciated the successful implementation of the 31 projects by the member countries and the OIC institutions since 2013. He added that 15 more projects are being implemented with more than 45 beneficiary member countries in 2017.

15. H.E. ELVAN emphasized the importance of well-running transport corridors as they increase mobility, interconnectivity and bring new investment opportunities. Accordingly, transport corridors enhance access to goods, services and facilitate employment. He expressed that designation of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries” as the theme of exchange of views session of the next COMCEC Ministerial Meeting is highly pertinent.

16. H.E. ELVAN concluded his remarks by wishing that the deliberations held during the 33rd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC contribute to peace, prosperity and welfare of the Islamic Ummah.

(The text of the Statement of H.E. Lütfi ELVAN is attached as Annex III.)

17. The message of H.E. Dr. Yousef Al-OTHAIMEN the Secretary General of the

OIC, was read out by Mr. Jakhongir KHASANOV from Economic Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat. In his message, H.E. Al-OTHAIMEEN expressed his deepest appreciation to H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN and the Republic of Turkey for their consistent support for the OIC in general and for the activities of the COMCEC in particular. Furthermore, he emphasized the need for supporting the on-going efforts towards consolidating cooperation framework on South-South cooperation for least developed countries of the OIC. He also stressed the importance of the activities of OIC organs and institutions towards implementing OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

18. H.E. Al-OTHAIMEEN elaborated on the OIC initiatives on harmonizing policies on infrastructure development and the development of joint integrative projects. He highlighted the development of OIC Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration Policy, which is aimed at harmonizing national efforts of OIC Member States for the development of regional goods in the domain of agriculture and rural development, expansion of intra-OIC trade, access to OIC markets and development of transport networks among OIC member states.

(A copy of the text of the message of H.E. Dr. Yousef A. AL-OTHAIMEEN is attached as Annex IV.)

19. The Meeting was addressed by the Head of Delegation of the State of Palestine. He expressed their thanks and appreciation to the President of the Republic of Turkey for his enlightening message to the Meeting. He also thanked the Government of the Republic of Turkey for generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. He also commended the COMCEC Coordination Office for the endeavours for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation especially through COMCEC Working Groups and Project Funding Mechanism.

Sideline Event

20. The 30th Meeting of the Sessional Committee was held on May 9th, 2017.

(Report of the 30th Meeting of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex V.)

Working Sessions

21. The working sessions of the Meeting were chaired by H.E. Ambassador Salih Mutlu ŞEN, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey to the OIC.

22. The agenda of the Meeting was adopted by the Committee.

(A copy of the Agenda is attached as Annex VI.)

Agenda Item 2: The COMCEC Strategy and its Implementation

23. The Committee **welcomed** the Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy submitted by the COMCEC Coordination Office highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy, and **commended** the Member States and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. The Committee also **requested** the Member States and OIC Institutions to continue lending their full support to the implementation of the Strategy.

24. The Committee **welcomed** the successful convening of the COMCEC Working Groups in the cooperation areas in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC and **also welcomed** the research studies conducted by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for enriching the discussions in each COMCEC Working Group Meeting.

25. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the Working Groups towards approximating policies among the Member States in their fields of competence and **welcomed** the policy recommendations made by the Working Groups in their meetings held in February-April 2017.

26. The Committee **invited** all the Member Countries to exert efforts, to the extent possible, to implement the policy recommendations and **urged** relevant OIC Institutions to support the Member States in this regard.

27. The Committee **welcomed** the finalization of the nine projects funded under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2016 and **also welcomed** the launching of fifteen new projects to be implemented in 2017.

28. The Committee **invited** the Member Countries to utilize the COMCEC Project Funding to implement the policy recommendations developed in the COMCEC Working Groups and adopted by the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions.

29. The Committee **called on** the COMCEC National Focal Points and working group focal points to work more closely with the COMCEC Coordination Office for effective coordination and communication.

30. The Committee **invited** the Member Countries to ensure the participation of the COMCEC National Focal Points and COMCEC Working Group Focal Points, to the COMCEC Follow-up Committee Meetings and the COMCEC Sessions.

31. The Committee **encouraged** the Member States, which have registered to the

COMCEC Working Groups to actively participate in the upcoming Meetings of the relevant Working Groups and benefit from the COMCEC Project Funding for realizing their cooperation projects.

32. Noting with appreciation that the number of Member Countries having registered to at least one working group has reached 50, the Committee **requested** the Member States, which have not done so, to register to the COMCEC Working Groups and actively participate in the upcoming Meetings of the Working Groups.

33. The Committee **welcomed** that the COMCEC Coordination Office will organize the Fifth Annual Meeting of the COMCEC Working Group Focal Points between 23 and 25 May 2017 in Ankara, Turkey and **called upon** the Working Group focal points and national focal points to actively participate in the meeting. The Committee **also highlighted** that this Meeting can be effectively utilized for enhancing coordination among the Member Countries, especially for development of joint projects.

34. The Committee **called upon** the Member States concerned to respond to the “Evaluation Forms” circulated each year by the COMCEC Coordination Office with a view to following up the implementation of the Policy Recommendations of the COMCEC Working Groups.

35. The Committee **also called upon** the working group focal points to be actively involved in knowledge production efforts of the COMCEC through, among others, assisting in collection and verification of country specific data and providing feedbacks to research studies.

36. The Committee **underlined** that the COMCEC Project Funding can be utilized more effectively by the member countries having advanced capacities in various cooperation areas for sharing their experience with the other member countries.

37. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group, ICCIA, and SMIIC for their efforts towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.

Agenda Item 3: Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action (TYPOA)

38. The Committee **took note of** the report presented by the OIC General Secretariat on the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

39. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the 31st and 32nd Sessions of COMCEC, the Committee **underlined** the importance of the active follow up of the economic and commercial section of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action by the COMCEC and **requested** the OIC General Secretariat to regularly submit comprehensive progress reports on the implementation of the Programme to the COMCEC Sessions and to the Follow-up Meetings.

40. The Committee **took note of** the preparations by the OIC General Secretariat and further requested the OIC General Secretariat to formally circulate the Implementation Plan of OIC-2025: Programme of Action to the Member Countries and OIC institutions/organs including the COMCEC Coordination Office with a view to seek their inputs for further development; and **called upon** the OIC General Secretariat to submit the relevant sections of the aforementioned plan to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC for consideration and its further development.

41. The Committee **called upon** the OIC General Secretariat to invite the relevant OIC Institutions and Organs, including the COMCEC Coordination Office to the Annual Coordination Meetings of the OIC Institutions for ensuring the effective coordination and synergy in the economic activities to be undertaken under the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

42. Recalling the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to sign and ratify the agreements in the economic domain for furthering economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member States.

Agenda Item 4: Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade

43. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the Ninth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group on March 9th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Single Window Systems in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

- Strengthening Single Window efforts in OIC Member States by developing integrated Single Window strategies that reflect national and regional requirements and actively engage the stakeholders in this process,
- Improving the effectiveness of Single Window projects by identifying and implementing necessary changes in the laws and regulatory framework and operational practices,
- Prioritizing flexibility, scalability, safety and interoperability of IT architecture of Single Windows Systems,

- Promoting cross-border interconnectivity and interoperability of the national Single Window Systems in the OIC Region towards establishing Regional Single Window Systems.

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex VII.)

44. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Trade Working Group to actively participate in its 10th Meeting to be organized on November 2nd, 2017 with the theme of “Special Economic Zones in the OIC Member States: Learning from Experiences”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Trade Working Group.

45. The Committee also **welcomed** the activities organized by the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group (ITFC), ICCIA, and SMIIC in the area of trade aligned with the COMCEC Strategy since the 32nd Session of the COMCEC.

46. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Uganda in partnership with Turkey and Egypt for the successful implementation of the project titled “Improving delivery of trade facilitation services” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

47. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Palestine, Suriname and ICDT for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Facilitating Trade Relations between Palestine and Islamic Countries” will be implemented by Palestine in partnership with Saudi Arabia and Algeria,
- The Project titled “Strengthening SME Support Services in Suriname and Guyana to Enhance Participation in Global Value Chains” will be implemented by Suriname in partnership with Guyana and Turkey,
- The Project titled “Facilitating Trade: Identifying NTBs among the OIC Member States” will be implemented by ICDT in partnership with Kingdom of Morocco, Senegal and Arab Republic of Egypt.

48. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to United Arab Emirates for hosting and ICDT and IDB for organizing the workshop on “Trade Facilitation and Single

Window in OIC Member States” on 16 - 18 April 2017 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

49. The Committee **requested** the Member States concerned to actively participate in the activities to be organized by the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group (ITFC), ICCIA, and SMIIC in the field of trade and **called upon** these institutions to send invitations to the Member States sufficiently in advance of their meetings so as to ensure their participation.

i) TPS-OIC

50. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have not yet signed or ratified TPS-OIC Agreements, namely the Framework Agreement, PRETAS and Rules of Origin, to do so at their earliest convenience.

51. The Committee **invited** the GCC Secretariat, on behalf of its six member states, and Morocco to convey their updated concession lists at their earliest convenience to the TNC Secretariat with a view to operationalize the TPS-OIC.

52. The Committee **requested** the participating Member States, who have done not so yet, to notify the TNC Secretariat of their relevant internal measures to be undertaken for implementation of the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin at their earliest convenience.

53. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Republic of Indonesia to host “Training Seminar for the benefit of the Member States of the Asian Countries on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (TPS-OIC)” to be organized by the ICDT on 13-14 September 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

54. The Committee **requested** the ICDT, COMCEC Coordination Office, and other relevant OIC Institutions to continue organizing awareness raising and capacity building activities with regard to TPS-OIC.

ii) Islamic Trade Fairs

55. The Committee **expressed** its thanks and appreciation to the following Member States for hosting Islamic Trade Fairs and Exhibitions in cooperation with ICDT:

- The Republic of Senegal for hosting and ICDT and CICES for organizing the “2nd Higher Education Expo” in Dakar on 9th -12th May 2016,
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting and ICDT for organizing the “10th Exhibition of Agribusiness Industries of the OIC Member States” in Jeddah on

23- 26 April 2017.

56. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the following Member States to host Islamic Trade Fairs and Exhibitions in cooperation with ICDT between 2017 and 2019 and **requested** the Member States to encourage active participation of their private sectors and relevant institutions in these events:

- The Arab Republic of Egypt to host the “3rd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States” in Cairo on 18-21 October 2017,
- Republic of Senegal to host “1st OIC Green Economy Expo” on 26-29 October 2017 and “1st OIC Fisheries and Marine Expo”, in 2017 in Dakar,
- The Republic of Cote d’Ivoire to host the “3rd African Halal Business Forum” on 30 October – 1 November 2017 in Abidjan,
- The Republic of Turkey to host the “5th OIC Halal Expo” in Istanbul on 23-26 November 2017 in cooperation with SMIIC,
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the “International Exhibition of light Industries and Handicrafts “ on 26 November – 2nd December 2017 in Madinah Al Munawarah, in the framework of its commemoration as the Capital of Islamic Tourism in 2017.
- The State of Kuwait to host a “Special OIC Trade Fair” in Kuwait-City 6-10 February 2018,
- The Republic of Côte d’Ivoire to host the “2nd OIC Building and Real Estate Exhibition” in 2017 and “4th Health Expo” in 2018 in Abidjan.
- Republic of Iraq or Republic of Guinea to host the 16th OIC Trade Fair in 2019.

57. The Committee **reiterated** its request to the Member States to encourage their private sector to actively participate in the Islamic Trade Fairs.

58. The Committee also **reiterated** its request to 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.

iii) WTO Related Technical Assistance

59. The Committee **called on** IDB and ICDT to continue providing technical assistance to the Member States on WTO-related issues and to enhance their efforts in sensitizing the Member States to the impact of WTO trade negotiations on their economies and **requested** IDB and ICDT to synergize and coordinate their efforts to strengthen the human and institutional capacities of the OIC Member States, so as to facilitate their full integration into the multilateral trading system on an equitable and fair basis.

60. The Committee **called upon** the WTO members of the OIC to assist non-WTO

Members of the OIC in their accession process to WTO.

61. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting and ICDT for organizing the Workshop on “Mechanisms for Settlement of Trade and Investment Disputes for OIC Member States” in Casablanca, Morocco on 20 and 21 February 2017.

62. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting and ICDT, IDB and SESRIC for jointly organizing the Workshop on “Trade in Services in OIC Member States” in Casablanca, Morocco, on 22- 23 March 2017.

iv) Trade Financing Activities

63. The Committee **appreciated** trade finance and trade promotion and development activities of the IDB Group (ITFC and ICIEC) and the mobilization of funds from the international market and development partners for funding the trade and insurance operations in the Member States, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent.

64. The Committee **took note with appreciation** that ITFC’s cumulative approvals and disbursement in trade financing reached US\$35.4 billion and US\$26.8 billion respectively, and its total approvals and disbursement in 2016 reached US\$4.5 billion and US\$4.8 billion respectively.

65. The Committee **also took note with appreciation** IDB Group’s (ITFC and ICIEC) increased regional presence through Dakar Regional Office and Country Gateway Offices in Dhaka, Istanbul, Jakarta and Dubai which brought ITFC and ICIEC closer to clients and enabled it to serve member countries' needs.

66. The Committee **commended** the efforts of ITFC in financing SMEs in promoting Islamic Finance and supporting Least Development Member Countries and **took note** of its efforts to diversify its portfolio and extend more financing for agriculture sector that has direct and prominent impact on improving productivity, job creation, increasing export revenues and alleviating poverty.

67. The Committee **called upon** the Member States to complete their membership requirements for the institutions of the IDB Group (ITFC and ICIEC) so that the IDB Group implements its mandate successfully.

68. The Committee **took note of** the trade promotion and capacity development initiatives being implemented by ITFC under its various flagship programs including Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States (AFTIAS), Special Programme for Central Asia (SPCA) Arab Africa Trade Bridge Program (AATB), Trade Knowledge Program and Trade Development Forum to raise awareness of the private sectors on the activities of the ITFC.

69. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ITFC in implementing integrated Trade Programmes for commodity development through blending its trade finance facilities with its trade related technical assistance interventions and **requested** ITFC to develop similar programs for other strategic commodities.

70. The Committee **took note of** ITFC's efforts for the diversification of Islamic Financial Instruments, supporting training programs on Islamic finance and promoting Islamic Finance solutions at international fora.

v) Trade Related Activities of SMIIC

71. The Committee **welcomed** the activities of Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) in the area of standardization, metrology and accreditation and their impact on trade facilitation and capacity building.

72. The Committee **invited** the Member States to become a member of SMIIC and actively participate in its technical committees (TCs), Metrology and Accreditation Councils.

73. The Committee **welcomed** the increasing visibility of the SMIIC and **expressed its appreciation** to the SMIIC for organizing capacity building activities in its field of competence.

74. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to SMIIC for supporting the organization of the World Halal Summit (WHS) in Istanbul on 15-17 December 2016 under the auspices of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.

Agenda Item 5: Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation

75. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ICCIA in organizing Forums, Training Program, B2B Meetings, Seminars and Workshops in order to galvanize the role of the Private Sector to expand their network and increase their trading and investment opportunities.

76. The Committee **encouraged** their Chambers of Commerce to be actively involved in the ICCIA's activities particularly related to development of business through MASFAQ.

77. The Committee **took note** of the organization of the Workshop on Key Infrastructure Development for Rural Growth for OIC Countries, in Istanbul, Turkey on 24-25 April 2017

78. The Committee **took note** of the following activities to be organized by the ICCIA and **called upon** the private sector of the Member States to actively participate in the following activities:

- The 17th Private Sector Meeting of the OIC Countries to be held in 2017, in Madinah Al Munawarah,
- 10th Businesswomen Forum in Islamic Countries to be held in Sudan / Egypt in 2017,
- Training Program on Entrepreneurship Development through IT for the OIC Member Countries to be held in 2017,
- Trade Exchange Forum/Exhibition (Sector-wise) to be held in 2017,
- The 18th Private Sector Meeting for the OIC Member States, State of Kuwait to be held in 2018,
- Launching of the Innovation & Excellence Award (ITQAN) in 2017. Training Program on “Technology Entrepreneurship Advocacy and Management of Business Incubation & Technology Parks” to be held in 2018,
- Specialized Workshop/Training Program on (Development of SMEs / Skill Development / Food Security/ Textile & Garments/ Renewable Energy) to be held in 2017-2018,
- Chambers of Commerce Forum to be held in 2017.

79. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the steps undertaken by the ICCIA and the Union of Turkish Chambers (TOBB), Konya Chamber of Commerce and Konya Commodity Exchange to formulate the measures needed to introduce the best practices implemented in the City of Konya to other member chambers for the exchange of commodities and development of industrial zones.

80. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 43rd Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting of the OIC and the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **took note** of the briefing by the ICCIA and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) on the setting up of the OIC Arbitration Center in İstanbul and **requested** them to submit a comprehensive report on this issue to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

Agenda Item 6: Improving Transport and Communications

81. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group held on March 16th, 2017 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Increasing Broadband Internet Penetration in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

Policy Recommendations for all OIC Member Countries

- Preparing national broadband strategies with the involvement of the all relevant stakeholders
- Enhancing digital literacy by embedding programs in the formal education system and encouraging non-formal initiatives targeting specific segments of the population

Policy Recommendations for the OIC Member Countries with Different Stage of Broadband Development

- **OIC Member Countries at advanced stage of broadband development**
 - Achieving high-speed Internet coverage in rural and isolated areas through regulatory holidays and direct subsidies with the purpose of improving the broadband investment business case
 - Enactment of financial incentives to operators for deploying 4G
- **OIC Member Countries at an intermediate stage of broadband development**
 - Reducing cost of broadband services through targeted public policy initiatives
 - Lowering the cultural and linguistic barriers through development of local platforms, content, and applications.
- **OIC Member Countries at initial stage of broadband development**
 - Offering a low-priced broadband service for consumers by state-owned and government subsidized telecommunications operators
 - Offering a low-priced or free broadband service targeted for disadvantaged segments of the population

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex VIII.)

82. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to be held on October 18-19, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors in OIC Member States: Concepts and Cases”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group.

83. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Turkey in partnership with four other Member Countries for the successful implementation of the project titled “Assessment and Enhancement of Air Cargo Interconnectivity among the OIC Member States: the Air Cargo Co-modality Approach (ACCMA) to Facilitate Intra-OIC Trade” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

84. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Cote d’Ivoire for the project titled “Improving the Capacity on Road Safety in Cote d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali”, which will be implemented in partnership with Burkina Faso and Mali in 2017 under the fourth project call.

85. Recalling that the theme of the Exchange of Views Session of the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session has been determined as “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries” by the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **invited** the Transport Ministers of the Member Countries to participate in the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session along with the Ministers in charge of COMCEC Affairs.

86. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Republic of Sudan to host the Second Islamic Conference of Transport Ministers in the second half of 2017 and **called upon** the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Organs and Institutions including the COMCEC Secretariat to actively participate in this important event.

87. The Committee **appreciated** the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat to sensitize the OIC Member States concerned to the need to include the respective national segments along the OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway corridor in their national development plans and **requested** the Member states concerned to submit their well-designed feasibility studies to the IDB Group and other international development banks for securing adequate technical support and financing for this project.

Agenda Item 7: Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector

88. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group on February 16th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT): Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** COMCEC MFT Guideline as a reference document produced by the Working Group.

(COMCEC MFT Guideline document is attached as Annex IX.)

89. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group to be held on September 21st, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Risk and Crisis Management in Tourism Sector: Recovery From Crisis in the OIC Member Countries”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group.

90. The Committee **took note** of the report of the 5th Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum held on May 4th, 2017 in İstanbul, Turkey with the theme of “Crisis Communication and Management in Tourism: Recent Challenges and Solutions in OIC Countries.” The Committee **noted** that the recommendations of the Forum can be considered by the forthcoming meeting of the Tourism Working Group.

91. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Malaysia in partnership with ten other Member Countries for the successful implementation of the project titled “Short course on strategies in enhancing tourism workforce in community-based tourism within OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

92. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of the Gambia in partnership with Senegal and Mali for the successful implementation of the project titled “Enhancing the capacity of craft producers in OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

93. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Mozambique, Sudan, Gambia and SESRIC for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Enhancing Capacity of Muslim Friendly Tourism Workforce” will be implemented by Mozambique in partnership with Mali and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Enhancing The Capacity of Craft Producers and Customers in the OIC Member Countries” will be implemented by Sudan in partnership with Chad and Djibouti,
- The Project titled “Developing a Training and Certification Program for the Muslim Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Industry” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Nigeria and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Training Program on the Development and Promotion of Muslim Friendly Tourism in the OIC Member Countries” will be implemented by SESRIC in partnership with 18 member countries.

94. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of People’s Republic of Bangladesh to host the 10th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers on 12-14 November 2017 in Dhaka and **called upon** the Member States and all the relevant OIC organs and institutions including the COMCEC Secretariat to actively participate in this important event.

95. The Committee **welcomed** the holding of the 10th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition on 6-9 February, 2017 in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

96. The Committee **appreciated** that the Arab Republic of Egypt would host and ICDT and ICCIA would organize the Forum on “Public and Private Sector Investment in the Area of Islamic Tourism” on 18th October 2017 in Cairo, on the side lines of the “3rd OIC Tourism Fair in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat and SESRIC. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 43rd Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Committee **welcomed** that this Forum would function in cooperation and collaboration with the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum.

97. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host and ICDT to organise a workshop on “Dates Palm and Oasis Economy” on 26 -27 November 2017 in Madinah Al Munawarah, in collaboration with SESRIC, ISESCO and Al Madinah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on the side lines of the International Exhibition of light Industries and Handicrafts, in the framework of commemorating Madinah Al Munawarah as OIC City of Tourism 2017.

Agenda Item 8: Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security

98. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group on March 3rd, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Reducing Food Waste in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations;

- Developing a specific legislative framework and road map for reducing food waste in a holistic context including supply chain
- Promotion of food banks and food distribution networks
- Conducting cohesive initiatives and campaigns to increase awareness on food waste in supply chain and consumption

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex X.)

99. The Committee **called upon** the Member States which have registered to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to be held on September 28th, 2017 with the theme of “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Creation and Development of Market Institutions.” The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group.

100. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Iran, Palestine and Turkey for the successful implementation of the following projects respectively under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Rural household empowerment on management of production, supply and market access”; which was implemented by Iran in partnership with Azerbaijan and Turkey,
- The Project titled “Improving small ruminates productivity by using different technologies as silage, feed block and hydroponic” which was implemented by Palestine in partnership with Jordan and Tunisia,
- The Project titled “Establishment of database, network connection and webpages of smallholders/ family farmers’ agricultural cooperatives between the OIC Member States” which was implemented by Turkey in partnership with twenty four other Member Countries.

101. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Gambia, Indonesia and Uganda for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Reduction of Post-Harvest losses in Cereals for Improve Rural Livelihood” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Indonesia and Nigeria,
- The Project titled “Improving income of small and medium scale farmers in the OIC Member States Through Reducing Losses of Livestock Production” will be implemented by Indonesia in partnership with Brunei Darussalam, Arab Republic of Egypt, Malaysia and Sudan,
- The Project titled “Strengthening Capacity for Setting, Checking and Compliance of Quality Standards for Agricultural Products” will be implemented by Uganda in partnership with Turkey, Cote d’Ivoire, Sudan and Gambia.

Agenda Item 9: Alleviating Poverty

102. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group held on April 6th, 2017 with the theme of “Malnutrition in the OIC Member Countries: A Trap for Poverty”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

- Developing and implementing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, especially towards women of reproductive age from vulnerable groups
- Improving infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices including breastfeeding in line with WHO guidelines
- Ensuring universal access to healthcare, safe water and sanitation, and launching educational campaigns on infectious diseases to eliminate undernutrition
- Providing access to safe and nutritious food for all, including in situation of acute food insecurity

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex XI.)

103. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group to be held on October 5th, 2017 with the theme of “Education of Disadvantaged Children in OIC: The Key to Escape from Poverty”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group.

104. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Indonesia in partnership with Malaysia and Turkey for the successful implementation of the project titled “Developing local initiatives for poverty alleviation through community based sustainable livelihood in OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

105. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Albania, Gambia, Indonesia and Suriname for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Creation of a Road Map for an Integrated Social Service for Housing” will be implemented by Albania in partnership with Turkey and Azerbaijan,

- The Project titled “Training on Entrepreneurship and Management of Small Business for Women in The Gambia, Senegal and Sierra Leone” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Sierra Leone and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Strengthening Community-Based Sustainable Livelihood for Activating Poor by Opening Marketing Channel through E-Commerce” will be implemented by Indonesia in partnership with Turkey and Malaysia,
- The Project titled “Professionalization of Childcare in Selected OIC Countries” will be implemented by Suriname in partnership with Nigeria and Guyana.

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

106. The Committee **reiterated its request** to the Member Countries which have pledged to the ISFD to fulfill their commitments and those who have not yet pledged to the ISFD to do so in order to enable the Fund to undertake more development projects in the member countries. The Committee **also requested** the Member Countries to consider making additional commitments on a voluntary basis.

107. The Committee **requested** the ISFD to increase its efforts for resource mobilization and advocacy from different resources including the private sector in the Member States.

108. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for mobilization of resources from different financing institutions for more effective implementation of the ISFD and SPDA.

109. Recalling the relevant resolutions of the 31st and 32nd Sessions of the COMCEC, the Committee **reiterated its request** to the IDB to finalize the allocation of the funding to the SESRIC’s capacity building project for the successful finalization of the OIC Cotton Programme.

ii) OIC-VET Program

110. The Committee **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 and **called upon** SESRIC to mobilize more financial resources towards the programme.

111. Taking note of the report presented by SESRIC on OIC-VET Programme and appreciating SESRIC’s contribution to the establishment of a Vocational Training

Center at the Islamic University in Uganda, the Committee **requested** SESRIC and other OIC Institutions to exert efforts in the establishment of a similar capacity within the projected Islamic University in Kabul.

112. The Committee **called upon** the Member States to participate in and support the various capacity building programmes of SESRIC under the OIC-VET Programme.

iii) Implementation of the SDGs

113. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office to compile the OIC Institutions' activities, which are conducted on the implementation of the SDGs in the Member Countries and submit a report to the 33rd COMCEC Session accordingly.

114. The Committee **took note of** the “Tendency Survey on SDG Priorities of OIC Member Countries” conducted by SESRIC for identifying the priority SDG areas for the Member Countries and **requested** SESRIC to submit a report on the results of the survey to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

Agenda Item 10: Deepening Financial Cooperation

115. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 8th Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group held on March 30th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving Public Debt Management in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations;

- Strengthening/Setting up an independent Public Debt Management Unit with well-defined functions and a dedicated debt management strategy,
- Developing/improving domestic debt market,
- Broadening and diversifying the creditor base,
- Lengthening the average maturity of the public debt,
- Applying macroeconomic risk management methods.

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex XII.)

116. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group, to actively participate in its Ninth Meeting to be held on October 26th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Diversification of Islamic Financial Instruments”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group.

117. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the Gambia in partnership with Nigeria and Sierra Leone for the successful implementation of the project titled “Towards an improved institutional framework for Islamic finance” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

i) OIC Member States’ Stock Exchanges Forum

118. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts carried out by the OIC Member States’ Stock Exchange Forum and its Task Forces and also invited the Member States to actively participate in the activities organized under this Forum.

119. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Borsa Istanbul as the Secretariat of the OIC Stock Exchanges Forum, to host the 11th Meeting of the Forum in 2017 in İstanbul and **requested** all the Member States to actively participate in this Event.

120. The Committee **also requested** the Member States and IDB to support the promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index and its potential sub-indices.

121. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **took note of** the efforts made towards establishing a highly adaptable web-based gold trading and clearing platform with the ultimate aim of a gold exchange/platform among the volunteering Member Countries and **requested** the Forum/Forum’s Secretariat to finalize the necessary studies for the suggested platform/exchange and submit a comprehensive report to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

122. The Committee **called upon** the interested member states to actively participate in the Forum’s Task Force to support the suggested platform/exchange through accelerating the process of integration of exchanges and harmonization of regulatory frameworks.

ii) Cooperation among Capital Markets’ Regulatory Bodies

123. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts carried out by the Task Forces of COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum and **invited** the Member States to support the efforts of the Forum through participating in its meetings, contributing to the accomplishment of the mandates of the Task Forces and appointing contact persons to follow up its work.

124. The Committee **also welcomed** the offer of the Capital Markets Board of the Republic of Turkey, as the Forum Secretariat, to host the Sixth Meeting of the

COMCEC CMR Forum in 2017 in İstanbul and requested all the Member States to actively participate in this Meeting.

125. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee further **took note of** the efforts made towards the Forum's proposal to establish COMCEC Real Estate electronic platform among the interested OIC Member States participating in the Forum and **requested** the Forum/the Forum's Secretariat to complete the comprehensive study for identifying the necessary stages towards establishing the suggested platform, with the support of the relevant national authorities and securities exchanges from volunteering Member States and submit a report to the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session.

126. The Committee **called upon** the interested member states to identify their authorized bodies and actively participate in the studies to expedite and complete the necessary technical work for establishing the COMCEC Real Estate electronic platform.

iii) Cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities

127. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, to host the 15th Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member States on 21-22 September 2017 in Bodrum/Turkey and **requested** all the Member States to actively participate in this event.

128. The Committee **welcomed** the training and capacity building programs organized by the SESRIC on the issues related to Central Banks and **requested** the SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the relevant institutions of the Member States.

Agenda Item 11: Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”

129. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to be held on October 18-19, 2017 in Ankara, in cooperation with the relevant OIC Institutions, to consider and elaborate on the theme of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”, formulate concrete policy recommendations and report them to the 33rd COMCEC Session.

130. The Committee **encouraged** the Member States to prepare their country reports on the mentioned theme and convey them electronically to the CCO by October 15th, 2017 at the latest.

i) Possible Themes for the Exchange of Views Session of the 34th COMCEC Session

131. The Committee **took note** of the following possible themes of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 34th Session of the COMCEC:

Theme 1: Improving Customs Risk Management Systems in the OIC Member States

Theme 2: Improving Agrifood Market Performance and Access in the OIC Member Countries

Theme 3: The Role of Sukuk in Islamic Capital Markets

Theme 4: Tourism Destination Development and Institutionalization Strategies in the OIC Member Countries

Theme 5: Implementation of the SDGs: Education Quality in the OIC Member States

Theme 6: Financing Transport Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries

132. The Committee **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office to circulate a questionnaire among the Member States to explore their views on the above-mentioned themes and any other views and report the outcome to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

**Agenda Item 12: Draft Agenda of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC
(İstanbul, 20-23 November 2017)**

133. The Committee **prepared** and **decided** to submit the Draft Agenda to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

(A copy of the Draft Agenda of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex XIII.)

Closing Session

134. At its Closing Session chaired by H.E. Ambassador Salih Mutlu ŞEN, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey to the OIC, the Committee adopted its Report together with its Annexes.

135. On behalf of all delegations, H.E. Sami bin Abdulaziz AZZEBIN Head of Delegation of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed his thanks to H.E. Recep Tayyip

ERDOĞAN, President of Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the COMCEC for his high guidance for the cooperation efforts under the auspices of COMCEC and the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality extended to the Follow-up Committee Members. He concluded his statement by underlining the importance of recommendations adopted in the Meeting and thanked all the participating delegations for their efforts.

136. Mr. Jakhongir KHASANOV from Economic Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat, delivered the closing remarks on behalf of H.E. Dr. Yousef AL-OTHAIMEEN, the OIC Secretary General. Mr. KHASANOV expressed the importance of follow-up and implementation of COMCEC resolutions for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among the Member Countries. He concluded the statement by thanking the Member Countries and OIC organs and institutions for their efforts towards realization of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

137. In his closing statement, H.E. Salih Mutlu ŞEN, after expressing his happiness for the successful conclusion of the Meeting, mentioned that the world is getting smaller day by day and economic and commercial relations between nations have been stronger than ever due to the enormous strides in technology and transportation and communication infrastructures. In this context, he stated that as the Islamic countries we should never lag behind.

138. H.E. ŞEN called upon all relevant Member Countries to complete the required steps for operationalization of the TPS-OIC. He emphasized the importance of the implementation of the policy recommendations of the Working Groups by the Member Countries and underlined the importance of the participation of Focal Points in the country delegations attending the Follow-up Committee Meetings as well as the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions.

139. H.E. ŞEN concluded his statement by expressing his thanks and appreciations to all delegations from member countries, Rapporteur, representatives of the OIC institutions, COMCEC Coordination Office, interpreters, translators and other staff taking part in organization of the Meeting for their efforts which helped rendering the meeting a success.

(A copy of the text of the Closing Statement by H.E. Salih Mutlu ŞEN is attached as Annex IV.)

