

Original: English

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE WORKSHOP ON
“IMPACT OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS ON TRADE AND TOURISM”
(İzmir-Republic of Turkey, 07-08 June 2011)**

1. In accordance with the resolution of the 26th Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the OIC (COMCEC), Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Turkey, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) jointly organized a workshop on 7-8 June 2011 in İzmir, Republic of Turkey as a preparatory event for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session on the theme “Impact of Transportation Networks on Trade and Tourism” during the 27th Session of the COMCEC, to be held on 17-20 October 2011.

2. Representatives of the following Member States attended the Workshop:

- 1.The Republic of Azerbaijan
- 2.Kingdom of Bahrain
- 3.Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
- 4.United Arab Emirates
- 5.People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
- 6.The Republic of Djibouti
- 7.The Republic of Chad
- 8.The Republic of Iraq
- 9.The Republic of Cameroon
10. State of Qatar
11. The Republic of Kazakhstan
12. The Republic of Mali
13. The Arab Republic of Egypt
14. The Federal Republic of Nigeria
15. The Sultanate of Oman
16. The Republic of Uzbekistan
17. The Republic of Senegal
18. The Tunisian Republic
19. The Republic of Turkey
20. Turkmenistan
21. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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), Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) and the Organization of the Islamic Ship-Owners Association (OISA) attended the Meeting.

4. Representatives of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (UNESCWA), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), League of Arab States and International Road Transport Union (IRU), and Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB) have also attended the workshop.

Opening Session:

5. Following the recitation from the Holy Qur'an, opening statements were made by Mr. Murat DELİÇAY from the COMCEC Coordination Office, Mr. Gholamhossein DARZĪ, Director at Economic Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat, Mr. Erdem DİREKLER, Head of Foreign Relations Department of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Dr. Waleed A. Al-WOHAIB, CEO of the ITFC, and Dr. Savaş ALPAY, Director General of the SESRIC.

6. In their opening statements, the speakers emphasized the importance of the workshop to identify the main common obstacles and challenges faced by the OIC Member Countries in the field of transport and the impact of transportation networks on trade facilitation and tourism. They expressed the need for developing a framework for cooperation in this important field.

7. The workshop adopted the agenda and work programme.

Working Sessions

8. The workshop included four sessions where international and regional institutions made presentations on various aspects related to transportation, trade facilitation and tourism. The outcome of the preliminary study, financed by the IDB, entitled "Transport Corridors in OIC Member Countries" was presented, discussed and elaborated on as the main input during the Meeting. The study examined trade flows

among the member countries and with the rest of the world and identified physical and non-physical barriers to trade with the perspective to draw policy recommendations aiming to increase intra-OIC trade through better land transport links.

Session I: Trade and Transport Corridors in the OIC Member Countries

9. The IDB Consultant made a presentation on “Trade analysis: Physical barriers, non-physical barriers, and transportation costs” which highlighted among others: importance of the transport corridors in economic development and trade integration; overview of trade in OIC member countries; trade flows in transport corridors; physical and non-physical barriers, freight costs and freight tariffs, road pricing and congestion.

Session II: International Transport Corridors and Best Practices

10. The representatives of UNECE, UNESCAP, UNECA IRU, AfDB, ADB, and TOBB made their presentations on various issues related to the theme of the session such as international transport corridors; comparative advantage, transit time and reliability of international corridors; best practices; and cooperation opportunities. Emphasis was made on the need for accelerating the implementation of the international conventions and agreements in the area of transport, harmonizing the national plans and international initiatives, difficulties and long procedures in realizing international and regional infrastructure projects because of inadequate financial resources.

Session III: Trade and Transport Facilitation Policies

11. The representatives of UNECE, UNESCAP, and UNESCWA made their presentations on Trade and Transport Facilitation Policies. The presentations described the broader concepts and components of trade and transport facilitation, along with the main recommendations, measures, tools developed by international organizations.

12. The presentations highlighted the benefits and importance of implementing trade and transport facilitation measures to enhance national competitiveness and to promote regional economic integration as well as achieving efficient collaboration at national, regional and international level for the development of collaborative trade and transport facilitation programs.

Session IV: Prioritization of Transport Corridors and Policy Recommendations for Enhancing Cooperation

13. The ICDT representative made a presentation entitled “Transport and Trade Facilitation: Current Status and Prospects” and highlighted the importance of transport in OIC Member Countries, impediments to transport development, regional strategies in transport and recommendations to facilitate transport sector in OIC Member States.

14. The Consultant made a presentation on Prioritization of Transport Corridors and Policy Recommendations for Enhancing Cooperation. The presentation provided initial prioritization of transport corridors, rational for the priority corridors and policy recommendations for enhancing cooperation in transport field among the OIC countries.

15. A presentation was also made by the representative of the SESRIC on International Tourism in the OIC Member Countries which gave analysis on the performance and economic role of international tourism activities in the Member Countries. The presentation also highlighted the challenges facing the Member Countries in developing sustainable tourism sector and issues of cooperation in this field. It also proposed some policy recommendations at both the national and OIC cooperation levels.

The Outcome of the Workshop

a- Major Constraints and Challenges

16. Based on the general discussions and deliberations made during the working sessions, the participants identified the following major common obstacles and challenges in the field of transportation in particular in connection to trade and tourism:

- Inadequate implementation of trade and transport facilitation measures and lack of information and knowledge-sharing among Member States in this area,
- Inadequate infrastructure and maintenance services,
- Insufficient financing and investment, especially in land-locked member countries,
- Complex and prolonged customs and border-crossing procedures,
- Inadequate human and institutional capacity of relevant authorities,

- Lack of a sound, harmonized, and adequate legal and regulatory frameworks, both at national and OIC regional level.
- Lack of progress in signing and especially implementation of relevant international treaties and conventions, including the OIC Statutes and Agreements,
- Lack of use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the area of transport, trade facilitation and tourism.

b- Recommendations:

17. In the light of the above-identified challenges, the participants made the following recommendations at both national and OIC cooperation level.

1) National Level

- To sign, ratify, and implement relevant OIC and international agreements and conventions in the field of trade and transport;
- To integrate transport development plans into their national strategies taking into consideration regional initiatives;
- To allocate more financial resources to the projects, programs and studies in transport sector, in collaboration with financial institutions;
- To establish National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committees (NTTFC) involving private and public sectors institutions, to act as focal points for all trade and transport facilitation activities;
- To increase coordination among the ministries of transport and tourism to identify the major transport related obstacles to tourism in the Member States;
- To develop mechanisms for knowledge-sharing on best practices
- To use ICT for trade and transport facilitation and tourism in cooperation with relevant regional and international organizations;
- To review visa procedures and requirements with a view to facilitate trade and tourism flows among the Member Countries;

2) OIC Cooperation Level

- To develop a framework of cooperation in the field of transport, including the Trade and Transport Facilitation activities;
- To establish a Working Group (WG) under the auspices of COMCEC to ensure the follow-up and implementation of cooperation according to the developed framework of cooperation;
- To increase institutional and human capacity of the Member States in transport related areas through organizing capacity building programs;
- To hold high level coordination meetings particularly among the transport related authorities of the Member States, including the organization of Ministerial Conference on Transport on a regular basis;
- To create a database of statistical information from the OIC Member States in the field of transport;
- To enhance partnership with relevant regional and international organizations in the field of transport to avoid duplication and enhance effectiveness;
- To launch an OIC-level TTF Program under the auspices of COMCEC to assist member States to accede to relevant TTF agreements and to develop and adopt their national standards and regulations to international trade and transport regulations and standards.
- To request the Working Group to follow up the implementation of specific TTF initiatives in cooperation with relevant OIC organs, regional and international organizations with the support of IDB Group.
- To prepare a master plan for the transport corridors in the OIC Member States including identification of the obstacles on the existing transport corridors in the OIC sub-regions.
- To enhance collaboration among the stakeholders, including the representatives of the private sector in the field of transport in order to boost trade and tourism.

