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**DRAFT REPORT
OF EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON
TRANSPORT COOPERATION IN THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES
(İzmir-Republic of Turkey, 09 June 2011)**

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 Communication of the Republic of Turkey, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) jointly organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Transport Cooperation in the OIC Member Countries, which followed the workshop on “Impact of Transport Networks on Trade and Tourism”, on June 9th, 2011 in İzmir, the Republic of Turkey.

The EGM was chaired by Mr. Erdem DİREKLER, Head of Foreign Relations Department, Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Turkey.

Representatives of the following Member States attended the EGM:

1. Republic of Azerbaijan
2. Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
3. People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
4. Republic of Djibouti
5. Republic of Chad
6. Republic of Iraq
7. Republic of Cameroon
8. State of Qatar
9. Republic of Kazakhstan
10. Arab Republic of Egypt
11. Federal Republic of Nigeria
12. Sultanate of Oman
13. Republic of Senegal
14. Republic of Tunisia
15. Republic of Turkey

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), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), African Development Bank (AFDB), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) attended the Meeting.

The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

Opening Session:

Following the recitation from the Holy Qur'an, Mr. Suat Hayri AKA, Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Turkey inaugurated the Meeting. In his opening statement Mr. AKA underlined the fact that the OIC is one of the largest international organizations in the world. He stressed that a stable economic development requires a well-functioning and smooth transport channels and this could be secured through an efficient cooperation mechanism among OIC countries.

Mr. AKA also drew the attention to the importance of north-south transport linkages in the OIC region which could not be efficiently approached so far.

Briefing on Turkey's transport projects of international importance, Mr. AKA emphasized that establishment of a close cooperation and initiatives for joint studies and plans in transport sector within the OIC is essential.

Message of H.E. Professor Ekmeleddin İHSANOĞLU, Secretary General of OIC, was read out by Mr. Hasan Oker GÜRLER, Advisor to the Secretary General of the OIC. In his message, H.E. Prof. İHSANOĞLU underlined the importance of an efficient transport system among the OIC members for economic development, growth and welfare of the peoples.

H.E. Prof. İHSANOĞLU reminded the fact that the OIC had made transportation and communications sectors as one of the ten priority areas in the OIC's "Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation". He also stated that the current cooperation level of transportation among the OIC members is far from the desired level. In order to overcome this shortcoming, he emphasized that one of the main tasks of the EGM is to identify common obstacles and challenges in the area of transport among the OIC members and to find possible ways to strengthen cooperation in transport and tourism sectors.

After the opening statements, agenda and work programme of the EGM was adopted.

The Agenda and Work Programme of the EGM is attached as Annex II.

Working Sessions

After the opening ceremony, the EGM continued its work with the working sessions. Two sessions, namely “*Identification of Common Problems, Challenges and Cooperation Opportunities*” and “*A Possible Framework for the OIC Cooperation in the Field of Transport*” were held respectively.

Session I: Identification of Common Problems, Challenges and Cooperation Opportunities

In his speech, IDB's Director of Country Operations Department (Asia) Dr. Walid ABDELWAHAB summarized the conclusions of the previous Workshop to EGM for consideration. He also gave information on the recommendations at both national and OIC cooperation level, developed during the workshop.

Subsequently, representatives from member countries had the floor, and agreeing on the recommendations of the Workshop, shared their opinions on the common challenges and cooperation opportunities within the OIC.

Most of the delegations shared the view that lack of financial resources, lack of progress in signing and implementation of important international agreements and conventions, inadequate institutional capacities and human resources, insufficient transport infrastructures, technical and infrastructural incompatibilities among the OIC member countries and problems being faced by land-locked countries are the prominent common challenges among the OIC member countries.

Representatives of the member countries have also shared their views on the possible means and modalities for overcoming these challenges. Institutional support and human capacity building programs, various funding opportunities, Public-Private–Partnerships and facilitation of international transport are the main suggestions brought forward by the delegations.

Session II: A Possible Framework for the OIC Cooperation in the Field of Transport

Draft “Transport Cooperation Framework within the OIC (İzmir Document 2011)” proposed by the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Turkey was introduced to the EGM by Dr. Şeref TABAK, member of the Turkish Delegation.

After extensive discussions, the EGM decided that the OIC General Secretariat would circulate the attached “İzmir Document 2011” to the Member States within one month and the Member States would send their final comments on “İzmir Document 2011” to the OIC General Secretariat by the 10th of September 2011 at the latest.

After having received the comments of the Member States, the OIC General Secretariat would accordingly revise and amend the draft framework titled “İzmir Document 2011” and submit it for consideration to the 27th Session of the COMCEC which is going to be held in İstanbul (Turkey) on 17-20 October 2011.

Draft “İzmir Document 2011” is attached as Annex III.

Closing Session

The report of the EGM was adopted.