


Assessment of the evolution of negotiations on the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States

The importance of believing that trade contributes to economic development and that economic integration among Member States is the best means to reach this objective;

The Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System TPS/OIC is the legal framework and reference by excellence for the establishment of an effective and internationally recognized economic grouping in view of its relevance with the provisions and principles of the WTO, especially since 54 countries among the 57 members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are members or are in the process of accession to this organization.




The exemption from the Most Favoured Nation Principle MFN in addition to the lack of the generalization to other countries of the advantages and mutual concessions between Member States in the field of economic integration has prompted several States to join the economic groupings. So the countries with common interests that have not realized the importance of these groupings or whose membership process is slow, have in fact obscured on each other advantages and gains and miss opportunities for major development in several areas such as trade, investment, employment and transfer of technology.




The protocol PRETAS complementing the Agreement includes solutions and alternatives for all countries:

- Normal Track, in which Member States can participate automatically in view of the lack of any effect on their economies;
- Fast Track approach of negotiations, which leads to the establishment of a free trade area between the countries participating in it and which is compatible with the requirements of the World Trade Organization.



After participating States have reached the implementation phase thanks to the completion of the quorum required for the signature and ratification of the Agreement and since one year only is left before the end of the Ten Year Programme of Action (TYPOA), which aims at increasing intra-OIC trade to 20% by 2015, and whose rate has thank God reached 18.7% at the end of 2013, it has become appropriate to evaluate what has been reached in this successful process and review some of the issues in order to facilitate the implementation process and give a new impetus to its progression and further examine the possibilities of expanding the scope of trade among the OIC Member States.




On these grounds, it would be appropriate to adopt a new Ministerial Declaration that simplifies the path to the establishment of a new road map of negotiations rounds involving several vital issues such as the encouragement of negotiations under the Fast Track and work for the abolition of non-tariff barriers and the establishment of a mechanism for settling disputes and the inclusion of the services sector within the negotiations.



Practical measures:

After the entry into force of the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System and its related protocols upon the completion of the required quorum following the signature and ratification of the participating countries and the submission of the lists of goods in addition to the increase of the intra-OIC trade rate to 18.70 in 2013, we deem appropriate to propose the following practical measures:

- ✓ To convene a meeting of the members of the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiating Committee, which has not met since 2007 with a view to identifying the tasks and areas of cooperation of each member (the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, COMCEC Coordination Office and the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation);
- ✓ Then to call for an expanded meeting of the members of the Trade Negotiating Committee;
- ✓ To establish sub-committees specialized in some issues and technical subjects;
- ✓ To issue a Ministerial Declaration that adopts a new road map including new substantive objectives and an executive program of negotiations in order to shift from the stage of negotiations to the phase of the establishment of a free trade area in a gradual and smooth manner and within the shortest possible time.



To develop awareness-raising and training programmes and mobilize necessary funds to enable Member States to gain the necessary experience as negotiators, experts and judges in the field of international trade so that they can benefit from the provisions of the laws of the new global trading system, particularly from their flexibility in the application of their provisions so as to reduce the disadvantages and maximizing gains.