



**Standing Committee
for Economic and Commercial Cooperation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC)**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 6th MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP

**“ESTABLISHING WELL FUNCTIONING NATIONAL TRADE
FACILITATION BODIES (NTFBs) IN THE OIC MEMBER STATES”**

**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE
October 2015**



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ON

**“ESTABLISHING WELL FUNCTIONING NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION BODIES
(NTFBs) IN THE OIC MEMBER STATES”**

(September 17th, 2015, Ankara, Turkey)

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

October 2015

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Introduction:

- The Sixth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group was held on September 17th, 2015 in Ankara, TURKEY with the theme of “Establishing Well Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs) in the OIC Member States”.
- The Meeting was attended by the representatives of 16 Member States, which have notified their focal points for the Trade Working Group namely, Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Chad, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tunisia and Turkey. (Please see Annex 1 for list of participants). Representatives of COMCEC Coordination Office, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB/ITFC), UNCTAD and International Road Union (IRU) have also attended the Meeting. At the outset, the representatives of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) briefed meeting on the Trade Outlook 2015 which reviews recent patterns and trends in the global trade, trade between the OIC and the world, and intra-OIC trade.
- The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges in the Meeting. Moreover extensive deliberations were made on the National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs) in the OIC Member States with a view to develop policy advises for both establishing well-functioning bodies and improving effectiveness of the present structures.
- The Meeting has considered the Studies namely “Establishing Well Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs) in the OIC Member States” commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) and the "COMCEC Trade Outlook 2015" prepared by the CCO.
- The presentations and deliberations made during the meeting highlighted the importance of having well functioning NTFBs for facilitating trade in their respective countries. In this regard, the Working Group elaborated on a draft Room Document which includes “Policy Advices” in the related session of the Meeting.

1. Opening Remarks:

- The Meeting has started with the recitation form Holy Quran. During the opening, Mr. Metin EKER, Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office welcomed all participants to the Sixth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group and gave a brief account on the COMCEC, its Strategy and COMCEC Trade Working Group. He emphasized that the COMCEC Strategy aims at making COMCEC a knowledge based

forum which will produce and disseminate knowledge and provide a platform for the Member States to share their experiences in the cooperation areas.

- Mr. EKER stated trade facilitation is one of the four main pillars of trade cooperation component of the COMCEC Strategy. He told that in the 3rd Meeting, the Working Group has dealt with the issue of customs modernization and for the next few meetings including the 6th Meeting, more focus will be given to the trade facilitation.
- Mr. EKER expressed that trade facilitation involves many stakeholders; coordination among these stakeholders bears utmost importance for its effective implementation. He added that establishing and maintaining a framework for this purpose is essential. Mr. EKER also mentioned that based on the importance of the issue, establishing national trade facilitation bodies (NTFBs) to coordinate trade facilitation domestically has been advocated by various international organizations such as UNECE, UNCTAD and more recently WTO.
- Mr. EKER provided some insights on NTFBs in the OIC Member States based upon the the analytical study prepared for the Meeting. He also shared some main findings in the Study with regards to the common challenges, obstacles and proposed recommendations for improvement.
- Mr. A.H.M. AHSAN, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce of Bangladesh was elected as the chairman of the Meeting. Mr. AHSAN firstly thanked all delegates and the CCO for electing him as chairman. He then shortly summarized the programme of the Meeting and highlighted the trade facilitation concept for the OIC Member States. Afterwards, he called upon the CCO to make the first presentation of the Meeting.

2. COMCEC Trade Outlook

- Ms. Vildan BARAN, expert in the COMCEC Coordination Office has presented some of the key findings of the COMCEC Trade Outlook 2015. In her presentation, Ms. BARAN focused on the recent trends and main characteristics of the trade between OIC Member States and the world and recent trends in intra-OIC trade.
- Concerning the trade between OIC Member states and the world, Ms. BARAN stated that total OIC trade remained at around the same levels of USD 4.2 trillion in the last three years. Ms. BARAN stated that total OIC exports decreased slightly by 3.3 per cent in the second consecutive year in 2014 whereas total OIC imports continued to increase modestly in the last three years. Ms. BARAN pointed out main factors accounted for the weakness of exports in 2014 including the sluggish pace of world demand growth, oil price collapse and fall in other commodity prices and ongoing

political instability in the Middle East. Ms. BARAN also shared some figures about total OIC trade, share of OIC trade in global trade and the breakdown of total OIC exports and imports by countries and sectors.

- Ms. BARAN also stated that country and product concentration in total OIC exports is high which makes them vulnerable to external shocks that might result from decreasing demand in these countries and/or falling commodity prices. She said that in the commodity composition of total OIC exports, the share of mineral fuels, oils and related products was 60 percent in 2014.
- Ms. BARAN also elaborated on the intra-OIC trade. She shared some figures about intra-OIC trade and commodity composition of intra-OIC exports. She expressed that the share of intra-OIC trade peaked at 18.8 percent in 2014 and 20 per cent intra-OIC trade target was surpassed by 28 member states by 2014.

3. Rationale for Establishing National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs)

- Ms. Edna RAMIREZ, Director of GoBizGlobal, made a presentation titled “Rationale for Establishing National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs)”. Her presentation focused on providing answers for the following questions: Why establishment of well-functioning NTFBs is needed, what is the impact of NTFB on trade facilitation and what are the best NTFBs practices worldwide.
- Ms. RAMIREZ firstly explained that since there is a significant increase in global trade and international trade becomes more complex by each year, there is an urgent need for coordination within the countries. She added that the concept of trade facilitation historically goes back to the Recommendation No. 4 of the UN Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, adopted in 1974. She added that since then UNCTAD and WTO also included the matter to their work.
- Ms. RAMIREZ stated that, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement adopted in Bali on December 2013 requested all concerning WTO parties to “establish and/or maintain a national committee on trade facilitation or designate an existing mechanism to facilitate both domestic coordination and implementation of the provisions of the Agreement”.
- Ms. RAMIREZ told that NTFBs can vary from country to country and could take several forms such as procedures committees, national trade and transport facilitation committees, and WTO negotiations on trade facilitation support groups. She also

added that NTFBs could also vary in terms of membership, institutional structure, responsibilities, functions and sources of funding.

- Ms. RAMIREZ explained the importance of NTFBs for the OIC Member States by providing rankings of World Bank Doing Business Statistics (WB DB). She stated that based on WB DB Trading Across Borders sub indexes, out of 54 OIC Member Countries covered in the rankings, 16 of them fall within first half of all rankings while 66% of OIC Member are ranked in the lower half of total of 189 countries.
- Ms. RAMIREZ categorized reasons for establishing NTFBs under three titles: Practical Legal and Negotiating reasons. Practical reasons cover forming bridges between public-private parties, fostering trade facilitation, improving border transactions etc. Legal reasons include WTO and regional commitments resulting from trade agreements while negotiating reasons may be related to creating alliances in negotiating positions, requesting for joint technical assistance, promoting regional TF initiatives.
- Ms. RAMIREZ also listed some benefits for establishing NTFBs such as reducing costs in international trade transactions, investment attraction, improving competitiveness levels, international and regional credibility.
- In later parts of her presentation, Ms. RAMIREZ shared some information on NTFBs worldwide. Based on UNCTAD's findings for 80 NTFBs globally, she stated that of all NTFBs; 10% are National Transport and Trade Committees, 22% are National Trade Facilitation Committees, 24% are Procedure (PRO) committees and 44% are WTO Negotiation trade facilitation support groups.
- In final part of her presentation, Ms. RAMIREZ presented successful global case studies namely; Sweden (Swepro), Japan (Jastpro), South Korea and Singapore. She reviewed each case one by one and provided some general success factors drawn from the top cases such as: High level of institutional development, responsiveness to needs, strong Public-Private partnerships and coordinated work by permanent secretariat.

4. National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs) in the OIC Member States

- Ms. RAMIREZ made a second presentation in the Meeting which focused on the present level of NTFBs in the OIC Member Countries.

- Ms. RAMIREZ expressed that OIC Member Countries could be categorized within four main groups: Members lacking NTFBs, members with NTFBs, members with NTFBs that do not function properly and members with NTFBs that function properly.
- Ms. RAMIREZ began her presentation by telling it is quite challenging to find existence of NTFBs in some OIC Member States. She said that no data is available for 18 member countries thus it could be inferred that these countries do not have a mechanism. Based on her findings, Ms. RAMIREZ expressed that some of the obstacles for establishing an NTFB could be resulted from lack of the following characteristics; political priority, designation of a leading agency, clear objectives, defined structure, clarity to define main stakeholders and funds for a motivating start up. She proposed a step based approach in overcoming the said challenges by the realization of the following: coordinating agency, legal framework, work plan, objectives, terms of reference and funds.
- Ms. RAMIREZ told that 39 OIC Member States have established an NTFB or a similar mechanism and thus vast majority of the members meet the WTO TFA's relevant requirement. She said that among the regional groupings, Asian Group has the highest percentage of members with the NTFBs, followed by the Arab and African Groups.
- Ms. RAMIREZ provided 6 case studies in which she made field trips to collect data. Among the 6 countries, three of them (Lebanon, Uganda and Indonesia) have NTFBs or similar coordination mechanisms not functioning properly while remaining countries (Jordan, Malaysia and Morocco) have NTFBs that have properly functioning mechanisms.
- She told that some of the common successful characteristics of the examined case countries are; large number of participating stakeholders, mutual respect among the parties, successful and regular convenings of meetings, encouraging attitude for trade facilitation policies.
- Based on her findings Ms. RAMIREZ proposed a three phase recommendation. First phase related to tasks during the establishment of an NTFB. Some of the necessary actions to be taken in this phase includes following: High level will of public and private stakeholders, designating a coordination agency, establishing a legal framework, forming of workplans, objectives, terms of reference, funds, institutionalized meetings and forming a permanent secretariat.
- Second phase of recommendations include actions towards ensuring well functioning of NTFBs. Some of the necessary actions to be taken in the second phase includes following: determined leadership, fair representation of public and private parties, further participation of other representatives such as academia and NGOs, trust

between stakeholders, ability to find consensus, effective communication system, regular frequency in meetings and a transnational strategy for stakeholders.

- Final phase of recommendations is related to the sustainability of a functioning NTFB. The recommendation set includes; surveillance and compliance mechanism, implementation of agreements, development of a webpage, development of reports with achievements and goals and evaluation of possibility of alternative dispute settlement for specific items.

5. Policy Options for Establishing Well Functioning NTFBs in the OIC Member Countries

- The Meeting began with a policy debate for the possible policy actions to be taken to approximate member state policies in the field of NTFBs in the afternoon session.
- Delegate of PAKISTAN, Ms. Fareena MAZHAR moderated the session. Discussions were made on topics included in the Room Document which was circulated to delegates prior to the Meeting (Annex 3). As a usual practice, the Room Document is revised based on Member Countries' views and suggestions in the Session and the revised Room Document is sent to delegates in following weeks via e-mail for their approval. Approved policy recommendations in the Room Document will be then submitted to 31th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC for adoption.
- Ms. MAZHAR firstly gave the floor to Mr. Ahmet OKUR, Expert in the COMCEC Coordination Office for his presentation. Mr.OKUR made a presentation about a questionnaire circulated to the Member Countries in previous weeks in order to collect data for drafting the Room Document. The questionnaire includes questions to examine level of establishment of NTFBs in the Member Countries, common obstacles and need for technical assistance. Mr. OKUR briefed participants about the answers of the 11 responding Member Countries to the questionnaire and then shared the following draft Policy Advices.
 - ***Policy Advice I: Establishing effective communication systems within the framework of the work of the NTFBs***
 - ***Policy Advice II: Involving the private sector in the activities of the NTFBs***
 - ***Policy Advice III: Extending technical assistance to the member states for establishing/maintaining NTFBs***

- Following after the presentation, Ms. MAZHAR opened the floor to the discussions. Delegates and international organizations' representatives shared their views on each policy advice. Participants agreed upon the policy advice and made some minor revisions to improve the advice. First request was about the re-ordering of the advice. Secondly, some participants suggested to use the phase based recommendation approach followed in the conclusion section in the Report for the policy advice.

6. Member Country Presentations

- Representative of TURKEY and BANGLADESH made powerpoint presentations regarding their country's experience and perspectives on NTFBs in the related session.
- Representative of TURKEY, Ms. Ayşegül DEMİR, Expert in the Ministry of Economy of TURKEY shared her institution's perspective for NTFBs. Ms. DEMİR firstly shared some information on the complexity of the international trade with the participants. She stated that tariffs are not the only issue to be considered for international trade, but commercial, transport, regulatory and financial procedures become crucial for the international trade transaction processes. Ms. DEMİR then presented some basic definitions of trade facilitation that were explained in the work of international organizations. She continued with WTO principles that could be linked with trade facilitation measures to be taken by the Member Countries. Accordingly, she briefed participants on WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA) and the negotiations taking place since 2004. Afterwards, she stated that Turkey's ratification of the Agreement is still on progress and the Agreement is expected to be approved by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Ms. DEMİR also informed participants on the current mechanism namely "National Working Group on Trade Facilitation" which was originally established in 2004 to coordinate and determine the Turkey's negotiating position in WTO TF negotiations. On the other hand, she expressed that in parallel with the ratification process of the WTO TFA, Turkey will begin to work on the establishment of a new NTFB. She concluded her presentation by giving information on relevant Turkish authorities namely Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Customs and Trade and Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey.
- Representative of BANGLADESH, Mr. Mohammed UDDIN, First Secretary of the Customs Export and Bond in the National Board of Revenue (NBR) of BANGLADESH, made a presentation titled "Trade Facilitation, WTO Agreement and Implementation Status in Bangladesh". He firstly shared some basic socio-economic figures of Bangladesh. He then shared some initiatives in Bangladesh with regard to trade facilitation. Mr. UDDIN told that Bangladesh has been pursuing a liberalized trading

regime in which all rules, regulations and statutory orders related to trade facilitation are published and made available in relevant websites. He stated that an advance electronic system called “ASYCUDA World” has been put in all Customs stations in Bangladesh. Moreover, container scanners and container management system (CTM) has been installed in customs facilities. He added that a post-audit system is also under development, which would verify the accuracy of green channel and yellow channel clearances, while the introduction of Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) and the Single Window (SW) system is under active consideration at the NBR. Mr. UDDIN expressed that due to the mentioned initiatives number of pre-clearance signatures has gone down from 25 to 5, while export clearance time for 95% of consignments has been reduced from 72 hours in 1999 to 3 hours in 2015. In later part of his presentation, Mr. UDDIN shared some information on National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) of Bangladesh. He told that NBR has formed a 19 members committee under the chairmanship of Customs comprising officials/representatives of relevant ministries/departments/trade bodies. Mr. UDDIN also mentioned some challenges on the implementation of TFA such as low level of readiness of some stakeholders regarding modernization and implementation of TFA measures. He concluded his presentation by Bangladesh has some international partners for the development of trade facilitation namely World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Finance Corporation and USAID.

- Representatives of some Member Countries including Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Qatar and Senegal also shared their country’s perspectives on NTFBs. One common observation from the remarks of the representatives is that there is a need for technical cooperation between Member Countries and relevant international organizations with regard to capacity building.

7. International Institutions’ Perspective

- Representatives of the UNCTAD, International Road Transport Union (IRU) and International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) made presentations for sharing their institutions’ perspectives on trade facilitation.
- Mr. Poul Damgaard HANSEN, Economic Affairs Office in UNCTAD, shared UNCTAD’s perspective on the establishment of well functioning NTFBs. He firstly explained UNCTAD’s mandate and work in the area of trade facilitation which could be categorized under three main areas namely; Analysis and Research, Consensus Building and Capacity Building. He explained that UNCTAD provided technical assistance to more than 35 countries through donations from European Union, Germany, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom in cooperation with the International

Trade Center and UNECE. He then shared information on some of UNCTAD's research activities for trade facilitation with the participants. Regarding WTO TF measures, Mr. HANSEN expressed that implementation of TF measures is much lower in least developed countries (LDCs). He added that some of the top implemented measures by the countries are temporary admission, inward outward procurement, uniform documentation whereas least implemented measures include information on internet, single window, enquiry points, advance rulings and authorized operators. In final part of his presentation, Mr. HANSEN focused on NTFBs and UNCTAD's activities supporting member country NTFBs. He concluded his presentation by briefly giving information on three technical assistance programs of UNCTAD in cooperation with Germany, UK and Sweden.

- Mr. Kadri Yusuf ÖZEN, General Delegate in IRU, presented his institution's work in the area of trade facilitation. He firstly introduced IRU and its activities globally. Afterwards, he gave an example on the importance of international trade by telling that even a simple trade transaction of a coffee shop may require combined efforts of 29 companies in 18 countries. Therefore, Mr. ÖZEN stated that road transport has become a vital production tool rather than a logistic mean. He also shared some major obstacles for effective road transportation especially the burdensome procedures in customs. He stated that under the "NELTI" monitoring system, over 200.000 border crossings were examined since 2008. He told findings show that 57% of transport time is lost at border crossings while 38% of transport costs due to unofficial levies. Mr. ÖZEN emphasized that TIR convention is an effective tool for facilitation of border crossings. He concluded his presentation by arguing that essence of the trade facilitation lies in the trust between the countries.

- Mr. Ayhan KARACA, Manager in International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), made a presentation on "IDB Group Activities in Facilitating Trade and Promoting Regional Economic Cooperation Among the OIC MCs". ITFC's presentation included examples from IDB Group's Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA) and information on Enhanced Regional Economic Cooperation Program of the IDB Group. In the first part of ITFC's presentation, Mr. KARACA presented brief info about the Group's operations in supporting trade-led economic growth in MCs. As per the presentation, total project financing for development of trade related infrastructure reached to US\$ 25 billion since IDB's established, whereas total trade financing is over US\$ 60 billion, half of which was extended for intra-OIC trade. He added that the IDB Group provided export & investment credit insurance through ICIEC in the amount of US\$ 22 billion. Mr. KARACA stated that these operations aim at assisting MCs develop trade supply side capacities and overcome supply side constraints.

- In the second part of his presentation, Mr. KARACA shared examples of IDB Group's TRTA projects which include Technical Assistance Grants extended to regional

economic cooperation organizations, workshops, seminars, capacity building activities organized on ad-hoc basis. He stated that single activities are limited to awareness raising, experience sharing, but not supplementing each other towards pre-set objective. He also said that absence of dedicated national and regional/OIC level working groups to coordinate trade facilitation efforts and absence of long-term planning limits the impacts of soft interventions in the area of trade facilitation. He also informed the participants about the new approach, IDB Group has been undertaking recently to design comprehensive/integrated regional economic cooperation program, which has three components; i) Country-Led TTF programs, Regional Policy Dialogue Initiatives, Physical Investment Projects for Regional Trade Transport Facilitation. Mr. KARACA concluded his presentation by presenting ITFC's recommendations for MCs and the OIC Institutions on the way forward for establishing well functioning Trade Facilitation Bodies which include legalizing coordination and cooperation framework, ensuring allocation of financial resources, giving priority at the initial stage to knowledge development, establishing a dedicated Task Team under COMCEC TWG with a mandate to prepare an OIC TF Program, pooling the financial resources under a fund to support national/regional TTF Initiatives and supporting the implementation of WTO TFA by Member Countries.

8. Utilizing the COMCEC PCM

- Mr. Ali ORUÇ, Expert at the COMCEC Coordination Office made a presentation on the COMCEC Project Funding introduced by the COMCEC Strategy.
- Firstly, Mr. ORUÇ informed the participants about where the COMCEC Project Funding stands in the COMCEC Strategy. Mr. ORUÇ underlined the basic qualifications of the COMCEC Project Funding as “simple and clearly defined procedures and financial framework”, and mentioned that CCO provided continuous support to the member countries during the all stages of the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism. He stressed that all funds provided in the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism are grant based. Therefore, project owners don't need to make any repayment for the funds received.
- After briefly explaining the Project Cycle Management (PCM) concept, Mr. ORUÇ highlighted the potential project owners. It was emphasized that relevant ministries and other public institutions of the Member Countries and the OIC Institutions operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation could submit projects. He also underlined that member countries have to be registered to respective working group in order to submit their project proposals.

- He continued his presentation with the clarification of “Project Selection Criteria” namely, compliance with Strategy’s Principles, targeting strategic objectives of the Strategy, focusing on output areas and pursuing multilateral cooperation among the OIC Member Countries. He mentioned that CCO had revised project selection criteria for third call for project proposals and regular participation of member countries and OIC institutions to relevant working group meeting had been added as a new criterion. Mr. ORUÇ also emphasized that project proposals submitted by the member countries should be compliant with the sectoral themes for the third call stated in the Program Implementation Guidelines.
- Mr. ORUÇ also remarked the importance of the multilateralism for project appraisal and stated that project proposals should focus on common problems of at least two member countries and also should offer joint solutions for these problems.
- During the presentation, three key actors and their responsibilities under the COMCEC Project Funding were identified; Project Owner (Project Submission and Implementation); the CCO (Program Management) and the Intermediary Bank (Project Monitoring and Financing). Moreover, steps and roles of these key actors throughout the project application process were defined.
- Monitoring of projects was another issue explained in the presentation. Mr. ORUÇ presented that the Bank would be mainly responsible for financial and technical monitoring of projects while the CCO would oversee the overall implementation of the PCM.
- Mr. ORUÇ expressed that from the illustration of the indicative grant limits and co-finance rates for the COMCEC projects, it was seen that Member Countries could submit a project with a budget up to USD 250.000 with the condition that they have to cover at least ten percent of project total budget (cash or in kind). This amount would be USD 100.000 for the OIC Institutions and at least twenty five percent should be covered by the project owner.
- Mr. ORUÇ also gave information on 2015 Projects. After the second call for project proposals made in September 2014, He stated that member countries and OIC institutions had shown great interest to the second call and 62 project proposals were submitted by 20 member countries and 3 OIC institutions. He also stated that 2 successful projects in trade cooperation area were being implemented under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2014. One of them was submitted by Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of The Gambia and the other project was submitted by Ministry of Business and Trade of Qatar. He mentioned that both projects were being implemented successfully by the Project Owners and activities of the projects would be finished until end of the year.
- Mr. ORUÇ shared brief information with participants regarding several changes made in the mechanism for the third call. He concluded important changes on the project

submission process and selection criteria. He also underlined that CCO had set up a new online project submission system and member countries could submit their project proposals easily by using this user-friendly system. He continued his presentation with demonstration of project proposal submission by using new online project submission system.

- Lastly, Mr. ORUÇ reminded participants that third call for project proposals was started as of early September, 2015 and project proposals would be submitted to the CCO until September 31th, 2015. He also invited all esteemed countries and OIC institutions to submit their project proposals.

9. Closing Remarks

- The Meeting ended with closing remarks of Mr. Metin EKER, Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office.
- Mr. Metin EKER thanked all the representatives for their attendance and precious contributions. Mr. EKER expressed that they had a fruitful day of discussion with very valuable participation of the member countries as well as the institutions. He also underlined that the policy debate session was highly beneficial since it was agreed upon several policy options which would not only improve current situation in the OIC Countries but also would serve to policy approximation among the brotherly Member Countries.
- Mr. EKER informed the august house that the next meeting, 7th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group will be held on February 25th, 2016 in Ankara with the theme of “Strengthening the Compliance of OIC Member States to the International Standards”. He stated that a research report will also be prepared on this theme and will be shared with the focal points and other participants well ahead the meeting.

Annex I: List of Participants of the Sixth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group

A. INVITED STATES

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

- Mr. FERUZ KHAN MASJIDI
Director, Ministry of Commerce and Industries

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

- Mr. M. TAREK ALLOUNE
Chef de bureau

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

- Mr. MOHAMMED UDDIN
First Secretary (Customs Export and Bond),
National Board of Revenue
- Mr. A.H.M. AHSAN
Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Commerce

THE REPUBLIC OF CHAD

- Mr. ADANAO SALEH MOUSSA
Economic Counsellor, Chad Embassy in Ankara

THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. MOHAMED EL SAYED
Commercial Consul,
General Consulate of Egypt Commercial Office in Istanbul

THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Ms. TUTI WINARTI
Section Head for UN and Non UN Bodies,
Ministry of Trade, Republic
- Ms. SARI HANDINI MURTI
Trade Analyst, Ministry of Trade

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



- Mr. VALILLULLAH ZARGARI
Second Counsellor, Embassy of Iran in Ankara

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

- Mr. RAAD SITTAM
Commercial Attache
- Mr. AYAD M. N. HUSSEIN

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

- Mr. YOUSEF ABDELGHANI
Minister Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Jordan in Ankara

THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

- Mr. TAOUFIK MAAZOUZI
TradeCounsellor, Embassy of Morocco in Ankara

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

- Ms. FAREENA MAZHAR
JointSecretary, Ministry of Commerce

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. AZMI ABU GHAZALEH
Economic Counsellor, Embassy of Palestine in Ankara

THE STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. BADI BIN ALI AL BADI
Business PromotionAdviser

THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Ms. ABDULLAH ABDULWAHAB ALNAFISAH
Director General of Foreign Trade,
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Mr. ANWAR BIN HASUSAH
Commercial Attache, Istanbul

THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

- Mr. ASTOU SY

Commissioner in Economics Survey,
Ministry of Trade

THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

- Mr. ANIS HAJRI
Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Ms. AYLİN BEBEKOĞLU
Head of Department, Ministry of Economy
- Ms. AYŞEGÜL DEMİR
Foreign Trade Expert, Ministry of Economy
- Ms. BURCU ÖZERGÜL ÇOLAK
European Union Expert,
Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Mr. MEHMET ALİ ORAN
European Union Expert, Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Mr. AHMET ALTUG LEBLEBICIER
Expert, Ministry of Economy
- Ms. EDA BURCU BULUT
EU Expert, Ministry of Transport,
Maritime Affairs and Communications
- Mr. FATİH ERTAN
Expert, Ministry of Transport,
Maritime Affairs and Communications
- Ms. NEJLA ALBAYRAK
UND Ankara Representative,
International Transporters' Association, Turkey
- Mr. AYKUD UCALLI
Food Engineer, Ministry of Food,
Agriculture and Livestock (MFAOL)
- Mr. HAKKI GÜRKAN
Assistant European Union Expert,
Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Ms. NAGEHAN ÖZKAN TURUNÇ

European Union Assistant Expert,
Ministry of Customs and Trade

- Mr. MEHMET ALİ ELİK
Trainee, Ministry of Customs and Trade

B. INVITED INSTITUTIONS

THE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT UNION (IRU)

- Mr. KADRİ YUSUF ÖZEN
General Delegate

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC TRADE FINANCE CORPORATION (ITFC)

- Mr. AYHAN KARACA
Manager

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)

- Mr. POUL DAMGAARD HANSEN
Economic Affairs Officer

GOBIZGLOBAL

- Ms. EDNA RAMIREZ
Director

D. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. M. METİN EKER
Director General of COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department
- Mr. MUSTAFA TEKİN
Head of Department
- Mr. FATİH KAYA
Head of Department
- Mr. AHMET OKUR
Expert
- Mr. KAĞAN AKDOĞAN
Expert

- Ms. VİLDAN BARAN
Expert
- Mr. ENİS YILDIRIM
Expert
- Ms. ÖZGÜL YÜKSEL
Coordinator
- Ms. HANDE ÖZDEMİR
Coordination of Registration Office
- Ms. HAVVA KÖSEOĞLU
Coordination of Registration Office
- Mr. OZAN LİF
Coordination of Documentation Center
- Mr. KEMAL ARSLAN
Coordination of Meeting Rooms
- Mr. ALİ VURAL
Coordination of Meeting Rooms
- Mr. ERCAN İBİK
Coordinator of Transportation
- Ms. LEYLA AŞK
Social Program
- Mr. MEHMET AKİF ALANBAY
Protocol Relations



Annex II: Programme of the Sixth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group



**PROGRAMME
OF THE
6TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP**
(September 17th 2015, Crown Plaza Hotel Ankara-Turkey)

*“Establishing Well Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs)
in the OIC Member States”*

08.30-09.00 Registration

09.00-09.15 Opening Remarks

09.15-09.45 COMCEC Trade Outlook

- Presentation: *Ms. Vildan BARAN*
Expert
COMCEC Coordination Office

- Views and Comments

09.45-11.00 Rationale for Establishing National Trade Facilitation Bodies (NTFBs)

- Presentation: *Dr. Edna RAMIREZ*
Director
GoBizGlobal

Questions for Discussions

- Why establishment of well-functioning NTFBs is needed?
- What is the impact of NTFBs on trade facilitation?

- What are the best NTFBs practices worldwide, and common success factors?

11.00-11.15 Coffee Break

11.15-12.30 National Trade Facilitation Bodies(NTFBs) in the OIC Member States

- Presentation: *Dr. Edna RAMIREZ*
Director
GoBizGlobal

Questions for Discussions

- What is the present status of the NTFBs in the OIC Member States?
- What measures can be taken to establish well-functioning NTFBs and what could be done to improve effectiveness of existing institutions in the OIC Member Countries?

12.30-14.00 Lunch

14:00-16:00 Policy Options for Establishing Well Functioning NTFBs in the OIC Member Countries

Policy Debate

There will be a policy discussion under this agenda item. The discussions will be based on the Analytical Study and responds to the Policy Questions circulated by the CCO. The Session will begin with a presentation summarizing the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions. Following the presentation, each participant is expected to explain his/her country's experience on NTFBs.

16.00-16.15 Coffee Break

16.15-17.15 Member Country Presentations

- Views and Comments

17.15-18.15 International Institutions' and NGO's Perspective

- Presentation: *Mr. Poul Damgaard HANSEN*
Economic Affairs Officer
UNCTAD



- Presentation: *Mr. Kadri ÖZEN*
General Delegate
IRU

- Presentation: *Mr. Ayhan İbrahim KARACA*
Manager
International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)

Questions for Discussions

- What are the activities of the Institutions' in the area of trade facilitation?
- How Member Countries can benefit from international cooperation in the area of trade facilitation?

18.15-18.30 Utilizing the COMCEC PCM

- Presentation: *Mr. Ali ORUÇ*
Expert
COMCEC Coordination Office

- Views and Comments

18.30-18.40 Closing Remarks

Annex III: Room Document Circulated Prior to the Meeting for the Policy Roundtable Session

ROOM DOCUMENT FOR THE POLICY ROUNDTABLE SESSION OF THE 6TH COMCEC TRADE WG MEETING

A policy debate session will be held during the 6th Meeting of the Trade Working Group regarding the possible policy actions to be taken to approximate member state policies in the field of National Trade Facilitation Bodies. The items to be discussed in this session were identified by taking into consideration the analytic study titled “Establishing Well-Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies in the OIC Member States”, as well as the responses of Member States to the policy questions sent by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for this meeting.

Policy Advice I: Establishing effective communication systems within the framework of the work of the NTFBs

Rationale:

Transparency and accountability are two important factors that ensure the legitimacy of an organization. An effective communication system would first and provide transparency with regard to the work of the NTFB. Furthermore, effective communication is also essential to keep all stakeholders informed of inter alia the NTFB's meetings; its work and progress made; new documents introduced by the NTFB; upcoming events; and best practices. Thus, effective communication systems impact the degree of participation and commitment as well as the perceived legitimacy and transparency of the NTFB's work. This can be achieved through several means, many NTFBs rely on their website; however newsletters, mailing lists, and provision of seminars may also be employed.

Policy Advice II: Involving the private sector in the activities of the NTFBs

Rationale:

A well-functioning NTFB should involve and manage a range of stakeholder needs and interests. In particular, addressing trade-facilitation related needs and problems of the private sector and ensuring the continued involvement of the private sector in all appropriate fields of activity bear utmost important for its relevance and sustainability. The public sector must maintain conditions that are conducive to continued private sector involvement and engagement. NTFBs must be able to flexibly respond to the changing needs of the private sector to ensure their commitment and to retain their relevance. The responses of the member states to the policy questions reveal that many of them have already launched instruments to enable the private sector to convey their needs to the relevant public sector authorities. Yet

member states may still work on ways and means to further enhance private sector participation at every level.

Policy Advice III: Extending technical assistance to the member states for establishing/maintaining NTFBs

Rationale:

National Trade Facilitation Bodies involve several stakeholders with various, and sometimes conflicting interests and expectations. Bringing together all these stakeholders around a set of goals and managing their interests require significant human and institutional capacity. Both the analytical study and responses of the member states to the policy questions reveal that many member states require technical assistance to cope with these challenges vis-à-vis the NTFBs. On the other hand, some member states are at a relatively advanced stage and have considerable experience in terms of operating such coordination bodies. Additionally, several international organizations provide trade facilitation-related technical assistance to their members. In this framework, it is essential to make use of available technical assistance opportunities and identify new ones to meet this important need of the member states.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:

COMCEC Trade Working Group: In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

COMCEC Project Funding: Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

Capacity Building Activities: With the COMCEC Coordination Office's resources and Member Countries' own resources, some capacity building and technical assistance programs on the aforementioned policy areas can be organized in the Member Countries. These programs and activities may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing of analytical studies, and other similar activities.