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Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture
La Chambre Islamique de Commerce, d'Industrie et d'Agriculture

**Assessment Report by the ICCIA on its ongoing Activities and future
programmes for a greater outreach to serve the Private Sector**

for submission to the 32nd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC

**17-18 May 2016
Ankara, Republic of Turkey**

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Introduction:

The 31st Session of the COMCEC adopted the following recommendation:-

61. **Requests** the ICCIA to undertake an overall assessment of its organization, functions and activities with a view to enhance its outreach so as to better serve to private sector according to its original mandate and objectives and submit a report to the 32nd Follow up Committee Meeting and 32nd Session of the COMCEC on the matter.

The 7th Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Turkey in 1976 recognized the need to have further economic cooperation through the Chambers of Commerce of Islamic Countries. It further agreed that a Meeting of the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce be held to discuss strengthening commercial and industrial cooperation among the Member States. Thereafter, the first and second Conference of Chambers of Commerce were held in 1977 in Istanbul, Turkey and 1978 in Karachi, Pakistan. Subsequent to these meetings, the Islamic Chamber was established in Karachi, Pakistan.

The mandate given was to promote economic cooperation by undertaking activities, which would lead to enhancement of trade, investment, facilitation of trade and other activities that could enable Islamic Chamber to achieve its objectives.

To bring about greater economic cooperation, the role of private sector is of utmost importance and is the vehicle for development of trade and industry. Since its inception, the ICCIA has embarked on a well integrated programme of activities that would facilitate the private sector to interact with their counterparts and at the same time provide them with a common platform to share their experiences, knowledge and best practices. These activities have considerably bridged the gap of information among the member countries and have contributed in enhancing the level of intra-Islamic trade to almost 20% as per the decision of the Extra-Ordinary Summit held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 2005.

ICCIA has been implementing its programmes by holding Business Forums, commodity exchange forums, business leadership development, Workshops, Training Programmes, Seminars and Conferences on capacity building, poverty alleviation, upgrading marketing and managing skills, value-addition, gender development, promotion & development of Small & Medium Enterprises, utilization of microfinance, developing Entrepreneurship.

In view of the importance of IT in today's world, the ICCIA is focusing on the use of technology to promote business. Towards this end, it has designed two websites, which cater to the needs of the private sector.

By virtue of these programmes and activities, the outreach of the ICCIA has expanded, not only to the private sector directly, but has had an impact on competitiveness, standardization and market access.

The functions undertaken by the ICCIA have contributed largely to bring the private sector of the member countries together, by creating awareness about the potentials existing in the member countries and find new partners and destinations. The private sector today, is more conversant with the available resources, business opportunities, rules for doing business, in other member countries, compared to in the past.

Based on the original mandate, on which the ICCIA was established, the Islamic Chamber continues to focus on promoting economic cooperation through the private sector. However, like all other plans of action, the Islamic Chamber also regularly reviews its activities and work plan and to keep abreast with the rapidly changing world economic scenario, it updates and upgrades its activities to bring them at par, with the need of the day. The Islamic Chamber is maintaining its programmes and activities to serve the private sector, but due to challenges and opportunities, the mechanism and nature of its programmes, needs to be diversified.

The Private Sector of the 57 OIC Countries, varies from country to country, as per their economic potentials, knowledge, and business acumen. Therefore, the Islamic Chamber, organizes customized Training Programmes, which would help them upgrade their business, adopt best practices and make their business more competitive, as per International Standards and add more value.

The ICCIA has also been collaborating with some of the UN Agencies, with similar objectives. In this context, several initiatives have been taken with the UNDP Unit for South-South Cooperation. These have been result oriented, as they brought about a more focused cooperation between the private sector of the South and at the same time triangular cooperation involving the South-South Countries with the North.

In its endeavours, to further expand its scope of work, the ICCIA is also keeping the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as its guidelines in its programmes and activities. Of particular reference are those related to food security, economic empowerment of women and promotion of inclusive growth.

The ICCIA is also playing a role for increasing the overall level of Intra Islamic Trade and Programmes are being held with the view of creating awareness, among the private sector regarding the OIC agreements, which are aimed to increase the level of intra-Islamic trade.
