



الغرفة الإسلامية للتجارة والصناعة والزراعة

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

**Report on the Activities of the
Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture
for submission to
the 29th Session of the COMCEC**

**18-21 November 2013
Istanbul, Republic of Turkey**

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Introduction:

The Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) is an affiliated organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), marks its 34th year of establishment in 2013.

Realizing the challenging economic environment, the ICCIA focuses on those activities that can best address the needs of the private sector. It has its Work Plan, which is made in consonance with the OIC Program of Action and keeping in mind the global economic challenges.

As the ICCIA represents the private sector within the OIC countries, it advocates the interests of the private sector at the various OIC Foras. Private Sector is the vehicle of economic growth and hence the role of the ICCIA bears more importance. ICCIA is striving to assist the entrepreneurs of OIC countries in developing capacities for sustainable trade promotion and industrial development.

Within the framework of the implementation of its Work Plan and in its endeavors to serve the Private Sector, the Islamic Chamber has developed many goals and also has drawn up ethical and practical aspirations upon which the advanced nations lean to go ahead towards further progress.

The General Secretariat of ICCIA has been undertaking activities in line with its objective by holding the following activities:-

- Organization of business forums for private sector
- Workshops, Training programs on capacity building, poverty alleviation, upgrading marketing and managing skills, value-addition, gender development, economic empowerment of women, promotion & development of Small & Medium Enterprises, utilization of microfinance, developing Entrepreneurship, particularly in women and the youth.
- Playing a role for increasing the level of Intra Islamic Trade to 20% by 2015.
- Creating awareness about the various OIC agreements for enhancing economic cooperation, particularly the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (TPS-OIC).
- Implementing the relevant aspects of the OIC Program of Action
- Cooperating with OIC & other related International Organizations for the development of SMEs
- Promoting the concept of Zakat, as a means to economic development
- Clarifying the concepts of Halal.

Mentioned hereunder are the broad areas and salient aspects of the activities:

Private Sector Meetings/Businesswomen Forums:

- The ICCIA has so far, held Fifteen (15) Private Sector Meetings. The 15th Private Sector Meeting was held in Tehran – Islamic Republic of Iran on 28-30 October 2013. The Report is circulated under Agenda Item No. (11). The outcome of these meetings has been productive, in providing a common platform for the business community of the 57 member states to explore greater opportunities for trading and investment. The activities of the ICCIA, are being held with the support of the Islamic Development Bank and the UN Agencies etc. These activities are proving to be an important platform for the business community to interact and discuss on a bi-lateral and multi-lateral basis their avenues of cooperation. The share of intra-OIC trade in the Member States experienced an increase by 4% rising from 17.03% in 2010 to 17.71% in 2011. It is now hoped that this level of intra Islamic trade of about 17% would further increase, with the coming into force of the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation” (TPS-OIC).
- Given the resources, of the 57 member states of OIC, the level of economic cooperation, is not reflective of the potentials. This can be attributed to the geographical placement and the diverse and varied socio-economic level of development of the said member states. Perhaps a cross the board approach for the member states is not feasible and applicable. Therefore, member states are encouraged to work out bilateral arrangements on granting concessions for establishing businesses and expanding trade.
- As part of the OIC Programme of Action for the economic empowerment of women, the ICCIA has held seven (7) Businesswomen Forums. These Forums provided the women an opportunity to interact with their counterparts and learn from each others success stories.
- In its endeavours for the economic empowerment of women, the ICCIA has organized the 7th Forum for Businesswomen in Islamic Countries in Tehran – Islamic Republic of Iran on 28-30 October 2013, in collaboration with the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB). The Report to be circulated later.

International Zakat Organization:-

A contemporary entity derived from juristic provisions for Zakat’s, highlight its social Takaful, as well as its developmental socio-economic aspects.

The Main Activities:

- The General Secretariat of ICCIA, in collaboration with the Higher Institute for Zakat Sciences of Sudan jointly organized a training course for establishing Zakat Funds in Sierra Leone from 19-23 May 2012 in presence of the representative of the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. The course addressed the administrative and organizational structure of Zakat Institution as “Proposed Structure” and types of collections and expenditures of Zakat. This course comes as paving the path for actual operation of Zakat Institution of Sierra Leone.

- The ICCIA in collaboration with the Higher Institute for Zakat Sciences of Sudan jointly organized a training course on Zakat and its role in social development. It was held in Yaoundé – Cameroon, from 23-27 June 2012 in the presence of the representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Cameroon. The course addressed the administrative and organizational structure of Zakat Institution as “Proposed Structure” and types of collections and expenditures of Zakat. This course comes as paving the path for actual operation of Zakat Institution of Cameroon.
- Contacts are being made with the official authority in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Jordan Chamber of Commerce with regard to commencing measures for establishing Zakat Institution in Jordan.
- A number of follow up correspondents & communications had been made with some African countries, which had already concluded Zakat Agreements with IZO, it is expected that some of IZO activities i.e. regional IZO branches will commence in Mauritania, Sierra Leon and Kuwait during the year 2013.
- ICCIA has drafted a principal Zakat fund’s byelaws & regulations for the Destitute and the poor (Al Fugara / Al Masakeen), and also prepared the main byelaws and regulations of the Zakat Fund for indebted persons (Algharmeen) in cooperation with Jeddah Chamber of Commerce.
- In the framework of strategic partnership with Zakat Chamber in Sudan beside the implementation of its terms and conditions, the IZO has co-organized a successful workshop promotion of Zakat Figh syllabuses in general education, as well as universities level . The workshop held under the auspices of President of Republic of Sudan. The aim of the said workshop is promoting Zakat Figh & updating the educational curricula of schools, colleges and universities in accordance with Zakat focusing also on Zakat research, promoting institutional sound researches (Ijtihad) as well as genuine shariah researches on Zakat Account and Zakat administration as well
- As per the second regional Workshop for Zakat organizations in Africa. It will be organized in 2013, Insha’Allah. The scope of partnership will be expanded to cover OIC Member Countries from outside Africa.

Cooperation with SS-Gate:

- In order to expand its activities to cover not only the OIC region but other regions, where there is a large Muslim population, the ICCIA is cooperating with South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE). It is a virtual and physical platform where entrepreneurs in developing countries can interact and obtain needed technology, asset and finance in a secure environment. SS-GATE facilitates realization of actual business transaction through a market mechanism, offering both on-line and off-line end-to-end supporting services.
- The ICCIA receives projects from the private sector of the member countries and uploads them on the SS-Gate System for possible financing or joint venture partners.

- The SS-Gate Website on projects is ready to receive any projects from the member chambers of ICCIA. It is also ready to impart training to the Chamber personnel as to how to upload projects as per their format on the SS-Gate system.
- Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (ICCIA) being a Participating Organization of South-South Global Assets & Technologies Exchange (SS-GATE), is serving as gateway to the 57 OIC Member Countries. Through its expanding network of Country Centers (CCs), ICCIA is endeavoring to promote partnerships and joint ventures among business enterprises of the OIC Member Countries, and between them and business enterprises of other developing countries covered by the SS GATE network. Under this system, the CCs register partnership proposals of local business enterprises and, following initial screening, upload the proposals on to the SS GATE website. The staff of SS-GATE establishment in Shanghai then identify potential partners and facilitate the negotiations leading to the conclusion of mutually advantageous joint ventures or partnerships. Within the SS-GATE framework, ICCIA is promoting the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) sponsored One Million Businesswomen of the Global South On-Line (OMBOL) Initiative in OIC Member Countries thereby involving, and benefitting, women-led businesses in the partnership process
- Under the present project, ICCIA, in collaboration with UNOSSC, seeks to strengthen the work of SS-GATE CCs and through them, the OMBOL Initiative, initially in 5 selected OIC Member Countries – Egypt, Pakistan, Sudan, Turkey and Uganda – to serve as models for others to follow in the future.
- In this context, a Training Program of the Country Centre was held during the “10th China International Small and Medium Enterprises Fair (CISMEF)” in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China on 24-28 September 2013, where representatives of the Country Centers from Egypt, Pakistan, Sudan and Uganda as well as ICCIA representative participated. The said Training Program was conducted by the South-South Global Assets & Technology Exchange (SS-GATE). The expert trainers from SS-GATE imparted training on the management principles to operate the Country Centers, the project management, registration process, online and off-line project matchmaking and project negotiation process.
- The ICCIA has also submitted 21 projects received from the Country Centers of Egypt, Pakistan, Sudan and Uganda. These projects were also displayed during the 10th China International SME Fair.

Cooperation with International Organizations:

- ICCIA continues to explore new avenues of cooperation with international organizations, such as:
 - Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF);
 - United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC));
 - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group.
 - United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Investment & Technology Promotion Office (ITPO), Bahrain

- As a result of this cooperation, the above Institutions, whenever possible, extend technical support in organizing Training Programs and Workshops and by sponsoring the participants and resource persons.

SME Development among Member States and CIS Countries:

- In the area of SMEs the ICCIA has several initiatives and is in the process of realizing them.
- On the recommendation of the 28th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC held in Ankara on 9-10 May 2012, a 2-day Training Program for the Development of SMEs under the title of “Experience Sharing Program on Turkish SME Policies and Support” was organized by Small and Medium Enterprise Development Organization of the Republic of Turkey (KOSGEB) and Kazakhstan Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan on 2-4 July 2013. Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) extended support for the successful organization of the said event. The above program helped promoting, sharing of knowledge, expertise and capacity building, between Turkey and Kazakhstan in the area of SME Development.
- In view of the success of the above Training Program, the ICCIA is planning to organize the same Training Program in Uganda in 2013 on the invitation of Uganda National Chamber of Commerce & Industry (UNCCI). Negotiations are going on for finalizing the dates of the program.
- The ICCIA is also in contact with the ICD of the IDB Group, who have special funds for SME developments in the CIS countries. The ICCIA offered to find relevant parties for these Funds, for proper utilization and monitoring. In this context, the ICCIA contacted the member chambers of Morocco, Jordan and Egypt, where ICD wants to explore the possibilities. Response is awaited.

Creating awareness of the utility of the various OIC Agreements:

- The ICCIA also intends to hold Seminar(s) for the private sector to explain to them the utility and benefits of the various OIC Agreements for the promotion of intra-Islamic trade. In this context, the ICCIA will organize a workshop on the sidelines of the 16th Private Sector Meeting and the International Trade Week to be held in Sharjah on 20-21-22 March 2014. The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be co-organizing the workshop with ICCIA.

Promotion of Entrepreneurship in OIC Member States:

- Entrepreneurship is an important aspect of economic growth and the backbone of any country for its development. It is one of the most important vehicles for improvement in the economic wellbeing of individuals and societies. Studies have shown a positive relationship between entrepreneurship and aggregate economic growth. Fostering entrepreneurship in the OIC Member States is part of ICCIA’s capacity building policy that aims at by providing networking opportunities to enter and expand business.
- The ICCIA is undertaking activities that would directly or indirectly lead to develop the economies of the Member states. In line with Resolution No.78 of the 28th Session of the COMCEC, which calls on the ICCIA to increase its capacity building programmes, B2B and Public Private Partnership events, the ICCIA has been undertaking relevant activities.

- In collaboration with a Karachi based Institutions, ICCIA organizes a series of training programs on entrepreneurial development. In addition, an International Entrepreneurship Congress has been also held.
 1. This program targets young entrepreneurs and focus, on how entrepreneurship triggers, fuels and propels the engine of economic growth towards self-reliance, progress and prosperity.
 2. It also aims to uplift the spirit of change and leadership and to encourage the youth to find innovative ways to add value on locally available raw material. This would hopefully work towards self-reliance and capacity building.

- The ICCIA has held a Training Programme on Entrepreneurship Development for OIC Countries in Sharjah, UAE, from 18th to 20th March 2013, in collaboration with the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) / United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This Training Programme has provided a platform for the participants of the member states, to further enhance their knowledge, skills and taught them how to establish / expand their businesses so as to eventually contribute to poverty alleviation and capacity building. The major Recommendations of the Training Program were:-
 - To call upon the Chambers of Commerce to set-up Incubation Centers to encompass pre-incubation, incubation and post-incubation services, so as to facilitate new businesses.
 - To organize specialized forums, conferences, workshops and training program for sharing best practices and facilitating linkages between local, regional and international organizations.
 - To establish Entrepreneurship Network of OIC Countries through a BLOG. This will give them ample opportunities to stay in touch with each other and also to exchange experiences across cultures. This BLOG can be used as a platform to invite entrepreneurs for exchange of not only business ideas but also the venture capital. ICCIA has created a BLOG in its website (www.blog.icciabin.org) which is providing women entrepreneurs with ample opportunities to stay in touch with each other and also exchange experiences across cultures. This BLOG is being used as a platform to invite entrepreneurs for exchange of not only business ideas but also the venture capital.

- Taking into consideration that the lower income people need to be educated and enlightened about doing business, the General Secretariat in collaboration with a local NGO (KASHF Foundation) organized a two day workshop, for people from the grass root level. For most of the participants it was the first time that they had seen the inside of an office and had been taught about spending and saving and how best to use their resources and limited capital. The workshop laid emphasis on ethics of doing business and also focused on doing business with the available raw materials to cut cost and also those items which are required all the year round. It is hoped that in the near future the concept of targeting the grass root level could be promoted in other member countries as well.

- The ICCIA will ask its member chambers to show their interest in organizing such workshops within their Chambers, for the above mentioned strata of people.

Workshop on Capacity Building on Value Chain Analysis for Agri-Business – [Sudan - First Quarter 2014]

- As per the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) 10-Year Program of Action and the role assigned to the Islamic Chamber for alleviating poverty and capacity building in the OIC Countries, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) has been conducting several Training Programs / workshops and that could lead to increasing the level of trade among the OIC countries. Moreover, ICCIA's corporate strategy is to focus on activities that help to develop a competitive economy and promote sustainable trade and industrial development.
 - Following this mandate, the ICCIA has embarked on numerous capacity building programmes for 2013-2014:
 - One of the outcomes of the Workshop on Food Security and Agribusiness for OIC Countries held in Uganda, from 10-12 October, 2011, *was to organize workshops on Capacity Building on Value Chain Analysis for Agri-Business.*
- In this respect, ICCIA has planned to organize a *Workshop on Capacity Building on Value Chain Analysis for Agri-Business in Khartoum - Sudan in the first quarter of 2014* in collaboration with the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF) and Sudanese Businessmen and Employers Federation. The primary purpose of the Workshop is to promote exchange of experiences and discussion of best practices among primary producers and small-to-medium scale entrepreneurs engaged in first, second and third level agro-processing activities that provide value chain concept to the farmers, create off-farm employment, help stabilize local markets, improve hygienic standards for marketed products and/or facilitate market access.

OIC Chamber Academy Program:

- ICCIA in collaboration with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) and International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) initiated a program for enhancing the capabilities of Chamber of the OIC Member Countries. This networking and capacity development program was designed exclusively for the senior and top level management of the Chambers of OIC Member States with a view to support their institutional development as well as enhancing cooperation and collaboration among them. This intensive training program not only helps the participants update and improve their knowledge on core businesses of the chambers but also provides them the information on the innovative products and services developed by the successful chambers around the world. The first program was held on 20-24 June 2011 and the second Program was held on 9-12 October 2012 Ankara- Turkey. The Third will be held in 2014.

WIEF-ICCIA Web-Reach Internet Marketing Workshop:

- The World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) Foundation, a not-for-profit organization based in Kuala Lumpur, organizes the annual World Islamic Economic Forum and runs programmes of the various initiatives of the Foundation that strengthen people partnership and knowledge exchange between Muslim and non-Muslim communities across the globe. The foundation aims to tackle global problems strictly from a business perspective, and to build bridges through business between the Muslim and non-Muslim world. ICCIA jointly with WIEF will organize the Web-Reach Internet Marketing Workshop in Karachi, Pakistan in the first half of 2014. The Workshop will help businesses achieve online presence and increase their market reach via various online marketing strategies.