

Revised Version



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  
28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of COMCEC**

**8-11 October 2012  
(Istanbul – Republic of Turkey)**

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**Introduction:**

The global economic scenario is constantly presenting challenges to the comity of Nations. In certain cases, some of the resilient economies have crumbled against these challenges and are gradually pulling themselves on the track again. However, the pulling back on track, has been and in certain cases, continues, to be difficult, for most of the member states of OIC. Political will is strongly linked with all progress.

The Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), as an affiliated Institution of the OIC continues with its demarches since the last 33 years of its establishment, to serve the private sector This march has been marked with success and at the same time the lack of participation from the public/private sector of some of the member states, has left some projects and initiatives incomplete. Despite this, the Islamic Chamber continues with its tasks.

As a mechanism to implement the OIC 10 year Programme of Action, the ICCIA has developed its 10 Year Work Plan. Within the framework of the implementation of Its Ten-Year Work Plan, to serve the Private Sector, the Islamic Chamber has undertaken several activities and programmes to address the needs and serve the private sector. These include the holding of business forums, workshops, training programme. In addition the Islamic Chamber is also working in the area of doing Halal Business and concept of Zakat as a means for socio economic development of the community.

The ICCIA is also taking an active role in the implementation of the executive framework on intra Islamic trade to reach the target of 20% by 2015. In addition, it is also activating it's strategy on the development of the SMEs.

**Private Sector Meetings/Businesswomen Forums:**

The ICCIA has so far, held 14<sup>th</sup> Private Sector Meetings. 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 share of intra-OIC trade in the Member States experienced an increase by 2.28% rising from 16.65% in 2009 to 17.03% in 2010. It is now hoped that this level of intra Islamic trade of about 17% would further increase, with the coming into force 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 Five (5) Businesswomen Forums. These Forums provided the women the opportunity to interact with their counterparts and learn from each others success stories.

Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture is organizing the 6<sup>th</sup> Forum for Businesswomen in Islamic Countries in Kingdom of Bahrain on 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012, under the kind patronage of HRH Princess Sabika Bint Ebrahim Al Khalifa, wife of His Majesty the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women. The Forum will be organized in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB), Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund / United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Investment & Technology Promotion Office (ITPO), Bahrain and Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The theme of the Forum will be “Development of Entrepreneurship among Women and Youth”.

### **Food Security and Development of Agri-business**

- In the area of Food Security and Agri-Business the ICCIA held its Workshop in Uganda in October 2011. As part of the Recommendations the ICCIA has been in touch with relevant stake holders for preparing OIC level database at the country level of agri-producers, processors, buyers, middlemen, extension service providers, agri-service providers, etc. as well as targeting agriculture and agro-processing potentiality according to ecological zones. But due to lack of finances, the progress is slow.
- In addition, the ICCIA is also approaching various entities for the holding of a Workshop on Value Chain Analysis. In this context, the IDB has stated that they will inform when the Workshop can be incorporated in their Budget.
- The AgriBusiness Development Forum (ABDF) which was one of the outcomes of the Workshop has been established. The broad objective of the ABDF is to provide a cohesive platform for all agri players in Pakistan, at the micro, meso and macro levels. The ABDF will provide a voice to policy level concerns, as well as incubation for innovative pilot projects at the grassroots level, utilizing a hybrid value chain approach. The first and second series of the Forum of have already been held in Lahore and Karachi, Pakistan. It is hoped that similar Forums be developed in other member countries as well. In this context the cooperation of Academia and Multinationals in Agro processing are sought. Once again, the ICCIA has been approaching the Multinationals and the Academia in some of the member states, but due to financial constraints, these Forums are not being held in the member states.

### **Zakat and Halal:**

In the area of Zakat and Auqaf, considerable work has been done by the ICCIA, by preparing a principal Zakat Funds byelaws and regulations for the needy. Several workshops and research papers made, explaining the concepts of Zakat as a mechanism for eradicating poverty.

In promoting economic cooperation among the OIC countries, the ICCIA is also focusing on a very important aspect of “doing business”, namely “Halal business”. In this context, the Islamic Chamber is cooperating with Muslim Chambers of Commerce, in non Islamic countries, to create awareness on the various concepts of halal, through booklets prepared by the ICCIA. It is expected that through this cooperation halal trade would increase between the non OIC

countries and the other OIC member countries. The ICCIA has also extended its cooperation and is ready to work with other entities within the OIC in the field of Halal. In this context it has:

- Participated and co-sponsored the 1st International Conference & Exhibition on Halal Food Control, which was organized by the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 12-15 February 2012 along with special exhibition of ICCIA.
- An MOU on Halal was signed with the Council of Saudi Chambers.
- Initial Draft of an MOU to be signed with the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Another Draft MOU to be signed with Brazilian Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- Negotiations are going on with the World Muslim League about cooperation in the field of Halal.
- Participated in the 1st Gulf Halal industry & its services conference, which was held on 24-26 Jan. 2011 at Kuwait. The agenda of the said conference were centered on Shariah, Scientific, Economics & Halal trade dimensions. Agreements were concluded with a number of experienced halal institutions.
- A meeting was held on 18 April 2011 in Jeddah with Arab Chinese Association & Cultural Exchange Council & Ningxia International trade certificate center for Halal food. The main agenda of the said meeting was to foster and reactivate Halal trade exchange between China and OIC member countries. An elementary understanding was reached to conclude a comprehensive agreement in this regard
- Collaboration agreement in Halal matters was prepared in order to be signed with Arab Chinese Council for trade integration and cultural exchange, along with the activities of the Halal forum organized by the said council which was held on 21-23 Sep 2011, but unfortunately ICCI was unable to attend the said forum due to entry visa problem.
- A comprehensive collaboration agreement was signed in the domain of Halal issues, with Federation of Pakistan Chambers and Pakistan Authority for Development of Halal Products.
- A meeting was held with Arab-Brazil chamber of commerce representative, with the aim of collaboration in the field of Halal trade. The meeting minutes was signed by both parties. The most important areas of deliberation were:
  - Exchange of data that concern the relevant activities which will be organize by both parties.
  - An understanding was reached to foster and increase the volume of trade exchange between Brazil and Islamic countries as well as encouraging the Brazilian investments in the Islamic countries.
  - An understanding was reached on formulation of collaboration protocol in the domain of halal products to use ICCIA's Logo in accordance with detailed procedures which will be discussed mutually later on.
- A considerable part of the data of Halal promotion booklets were completed, the collection of the complete data of the said books will be finalized and published during the coming three months Insha'Allah.

- The Zakat Organisation of ICCIA in collaboration with the local Institutions has organized two Training Programs in Sierra Leon and Cameroon in May and June 2012. The Program gave in depth knowledge of disbursement of Zakat and highlighted the important role of Zakat in social development particularly alleviating poverty in the Member States. The programme also clarified the organizational and administrative structure of the Zakat Fund as initial step towards establishment and operation of the Zakat Foundations of Sierra Leone and Cameroon.

### **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.
- As part of its cooperation, the ICCIA is also assisting the SS-GATES in finding partners in the Gulf Countries for China State-owned Overseas Assets, as there are a lot of Chinese invested or contracted projects there. The Chinese State-owned Overseas Assets such as ships, machines, trucks, buildings need to be disposed by public information disclosure and public transaction.

### **Cooperation with International Organizations:**

ICCIA continues to explore new avenues of cooperation with international organizations, such as:

- Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF);
- Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Program (SUSSC-UNDP);
- 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.**

Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture was mandated by the General Secretariat of the OIC to develop the SMEs and hold Task Force Meetings. ICCIA held six sessions of the Task Force Meetings and in its Final Meeting proposed the Strategic Plan for the Promotion and Development of SMEs Sector in OIC Member States. However, very little of the Strategic Plan has been implemented due to lack of a mechanism and a well defined implementing strategy. Under the subject of Enhancing the Competitiveness of the SMEs in OIC Countries the current 28<sup>th</sup> Session of COMCEC is also having an exchange of views session. This session was preceded by a Workshop. ICCIA submitted the Strategic Plan to the Workshop, after some updates, so as to make it more doable given the current situation, wherein funding is a constraint. The Workshop focused on the state of SMEs, their needs, their issues and how they can be addressed. The Strategic Plan of the ICCIA was also reviewed by the Workshop and approved. The Workshop called upon the Member States to consider and accelerate the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Promotion and Development of SMEs Sector in OIC Member Countries within an extended time frame, which has been prepared by the OIC Task Force on SMEs. The Plan has also been considered as one of the important component of how to enhance competitiveness and could serve as a overall guideline for SMEs development in Member States.

In addition the ICCIA in collaboration with KOSGEB, trying to undertake training programmes in the CIS countries. However, some of the member chambers in these countries have responded, expressing their financial constraints, due to which they are unable to cooperate.

As part of its initiatives, the Islamic Chamber is working for the development and promotion of SMEs in its member countries. Within this context, Islamic Chamber, has also initiated contacts with the Islamic Corporation for the Development of Private Sector (ICD) of the Islamic Development Bank Group, to work collectively for the development of SMEs in the member Countries. Towards this end, ICCIA is assisting the Bank in finding the agencies and organizations, that are ready to act as a strategic partner with the ICD. The partnership should be such, that the said Entity has ties with the national government and at the same time autonomous and willing to invest with the ICD. The ICD is currently working very successfully in Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. The ICD plans to enter the Egyptian, Jordanian & Moroccan markets over the next year. The ICCIA, has approached the concerned Chambers in providing ICD, with the names of such agencies and associations, who could meet the above criteria and could partner with the ICD in this context.

### **OIC Plan of Action for Cooperation with Central Asian:**

As part of the Work Plan for the CIS countries, the ICCIA, has been in touch with its member chambers. In this connection, in implementation of the ICCIA Strategic Plan on SMEs and in compliance of the recommendation of the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Follow up Committee of COMCEC, ICCIA is planning to organize a 2-day Training Program for the Development of SME Sector of the CIS Countries, in collaboration with the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Development Organisation (KOSGEB) of Turkey.

However despite all efforts, including sponsoring their travel to attend Workshops and Forums, the follow up or participation on their own is not very encouraging.

In order for the Work Plan for the CIS countries to be effectively implemented, serious engagement and commitment from the relevant stake holders in the said countries is necessary.

The Islamic Chamber's scope of work from the time of its inception is to strengthen the role of the private sector. As a matter of fact the ICCIA 10 year Work Plan is a mechanism to implement the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action. With reference to the Draft Plan of Action for Cooperation between OIC and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), has also offered its cooperation to be part of the said Plan of Action, since ICCIA believes that synergy of efforts by all relevant stakeholders would lead to better coordination and effective implementation.

#### **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, ICCIA invites all OIC Institutions to cooperate in this endeavor.

#### **Training Programmes on Entrepreneurship Development:**

In collaboration with a local Business School, in Karachi, a series of two day Workshops have been and are continuing to be held at the Headquarters of the ICCIA. Each Workshop is addressing different sectors, such as Banking, SMES, Women, Youth etc. The aim of this workshop is to empower young and aspiring entrepreneurs by equipping them with skills, tools that helps them initiate business ventures to bring about a social-economic uplift for the benefit of their respective country.

Efforts are being undertaken to carry out similar Workshops in other member states as well.

#### **International Entrepreneurship Congress (ENTRECON 2012):**

As part of the cooperation with the said Business School and to promote entrepreneurship, ICCIA organized, the First ENTRECON on 14-15 July in Karachi with the theme: "Entrepreneurship – Key to Self-Reliance and Prosperity". The aim was to uplift the spirit of change and leadership and to encourage the youth to find imaginative and innovative ways to seek solutions to many problems being faced by the OIC Countries and to put forward solutions how entrepreneurship can be a tool to bring about prosperity and development.

#### **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 will be held on 9-12 October 2012 Ankara-Turkey.

## **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 is organizing the Web-Reach Internet Marketing Workshop in Karachi, Pakistan in January 2013. The Workshop will help businesses achieve online presence and increase their market reach via various online marketing strategies.

## **Media & Information:**

In the area of Media & Information, the ICCIA has an extensive mechanism, by means of which it covers its activities, new developments, world news, briefs on member countries and business opportunities. In this context it has:

### **“The Chamber” Magazine**

- The quarterly printed magazine titled “The Chamber” has been first issued in Arabic and English languages since June 2008.
- It contributes to achieving and publicizing the goals and activities of the Chamber and its members through promotion of their activities.
- Each issue highlights one of the Islamic countries and its wealth, resources and the available opportunities in it.

### **ICCIA Website ([www.iccionline.net](http://www.iccionline.net))**

- The new design for the ICCIA main website is made with the aim of being more dynamic and useful for its visitors. And now it enjoys an average of one million visitors monthly.
- Comprehensive broadcast coverage with photos and videos for the Chamber’s major events, conferences and meetings of the executives.
- The Website provides ad space in accordance with the comprehensive marketing plan of the Secretariat’ products..

### **Online Magazine ([www.chambermag.com](http://www.chambermag.com))**

- The e-magazine is published in Arabic and English languages
  - It focuses on the top stories of the Chamber as its prime priority, then the events of the federations of chambers and the OIC countries, specifically the economic proceedings.
- Moreover, the e-magazine gives due attention to the economic reports and studies in addition to the contributions of the experts of the Islamic economics.

### **Weekly Newsletter**

- The weekly newsletter of the Chamber has been created since July 2008. It is issued in Arabic and English languages.



- It includes fixed sections, covering the economic news of the Chamber, federations of the chambers of commerce in the OIC member countries, and the whole world.
- It is sent to the federations of chambers in the OIC countries, some companies, businessmen, major economic institutions and relevant bodies.

The ICCIA also issues press releases and holds TV interviews to publicize the Chamber and its goals.

**Business Owners Union (BOU):**

Another mechanism the ICCIA is using to implement its goals is the Business Owners Union (BOU). Its membership is open to all. The objective of the BOU is to

- Provide the opportunity for the chambers’ members, organizations, trade clubs, NGOs, business owners and entrepreneurs in the Islamic countries to take part in activating the Objectives of the Ten-Year Work Plan.
- Encourage communication and acquaintance among the business owners in the 57 Islamic States so as to increase trade and investment exchange amongst the countries.
- Provide opportunities and deliberate on projects conducted by the offices of the Union Advisory members in the Islamic countries.
- Displays the opportunities of commercial agencies and goods of the Union’s manufacturing companies in the Islamic world.
- Help the companies operating in the Islamic countries to increase their sales in the non-Muslim countries

**Key achievements**

- Since May 2011, BOU has been inviting chambers’ members, trade associations and organizations to join the Union.
- The BOU has started entering information about the chambers and trade associations on the Portal’s Data Bank in September, 2011
- The process of registration and classification of the members’ projects on the Portal of Business Owners Union has been conducted since October, 2011.

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