

REPORT OF THE FORUM OF THE OIC TRADE PROMOTION ORGANS: TOWARDS MORE SYNERGIES WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Sharjah- State of the United Arab Emirates
17- 18 March 2014

In compliance with the resolutions of the 29th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC and the Sixth Meeting of Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) of the OIC held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal in November 2007, relating to the revitalization of cooperation relations between these Organs, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) organized the Forum of Trade Promotion Organs of the OIC Members States: Towards more synergies with the private sector at Sharjah, State of United Arab Emirates, on 17th and 18th March 2014.

The objective of this forum was to exchange national and regional best practices in promoting exports in a bid to strengthen intra-OIC trade and secondly, to draw up a program of cooperation for the 2015-2019 period.

During the opening session, the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sharjah, as well as those of the OIC, the Islamic Development Bank Group, the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) delivered their speeches describing the revitalizing activities of the Trade Promotion Organs of the OIC Countries in collaboration with regional and international institutions.

This forum was attended by more than 70 representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, the COMCEC, the ICDT, the ICCIA, the ICIEC, the ITFC, ITC Geneva, COMESA, the GCEL, Thailand Trade Centre, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Guinea, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritania and Tunisia.

FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION AMONG THE NETWORK OF THE TRADE PROMOTION ORGANS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

The First Meeting of the Global Network of the Trade Promotion Organs of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation with the participation of representatives of Governments, Trade Promotion Organs as well as OIC and Regional and International Institutions and private sector held in Sharjah, State of the United Arab Emirates on 17th - 18th March, 2014;

Recalling the Resolutions of Islamic Summit Conferences, the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in the area of promoting intra-OIC trade;

Bearing in mind the Provisions of the General Agreement for Economic, Technical and Commercial Cooperation among the OIC Member States adopted in 1977 and entered into force in April 1981;

Compliance with the provisions of the “Ten Year Programme of Action (TYPOA)” adopted by the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Makkah Al Mukarramah, Saudi Arabia, on 7- 8 December 2005;

Commending the New Strategy of the COMCEC adopted by the 4th Session of the Extraordinary Summit Conference of the OIC held in Makkah Al Mukarramah in August 2012;

Recalling the provisions of Dakar Declaration adopted by the Sixth Meeting of the Trade Promotion Organs of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation held on 22nd November 2007, and in particular paragraph 3 concerning the establishment of the Global Network of the Trade Promotion Organs in the OIC Member States, with the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) acting as its Secretariat;

Taking into consideration the pivotal role played by the Trade Promotion Organs in promoting intra-OIC trade and the future achievements of this network that will give new momentum to cooperation between these organs and with the Institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation working in this area;

Commending the important role played by the Secretariat of the three regional networks speaking the three OIC working languages in communicating among themselves and with the Secretariat of the Global Network;

Noting with satisfaction the progress made so far to reach the 20% target of intra-OIC Trade by 2015 as stipulated in the Ten Year Programme of Action (TYPOA) and lauding the efforts made for the implementation of the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States TPS/OIC, including the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS) and the Rules of Origin;

Stressing on the utmost importance of supporting the active involvement of the private sector in economic and trade cooperation between the Member States as the main driving force;

Expressing appreciation for the work of various institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, working in the economic domain;

Desiring to enhance the Joint Islamic Action as well as cooperation with relevant regional and international organizations in order to benefit from their expertise and facilitate the work of this ambitious program.

The Meeting agreed on the following:

- To launch the Global Network of the Trade Promotion Organs in the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, including its regional networks in the three working languages of the organization of Islamic Cooperation starting from the beginning of April 2014;
- To entrust to the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade the task of the Secretarial of the Global Network of the Trade Promotion Organs of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC);
- To establish a dedicated dynamic website to the Network of the TPOs of the OIC Member States;
- To entrust the task of the coordination of the OIC Arabic-speaking Network of the Trade Promotion Organs to the Tunisian Export Promotion Centre (Tunisia Export), the OIC French-speaking Network of the Trade Promotion Organs to the Senegalese Agency for Export Promotion (ASEPEX) and the English-speaking Network of the Trade Promotion Organs (to be determined through consultations between ICDT and Member States) for a 4 years term;
- To entrust the coordinating of the Regional Networks, when the four years expire to other Trade Promotion Organs to be appointed by common consent between all TPOs, Members of the Regional Network during the first meeting to be held immediately after the expiry of the above mentioned period (4 years);
- To hold a Global conference every two years in order to assess the work of the Global Network of Trade Promotion Organs of Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and provide a progress report;
- To create a trophy of the best TPO in the OIC Member States that will be awarded on the occasion of the holding of the Global Conference of the TPOs, which will take place on a regular basis, once every two years in conjunction with the Trade Fair of the OIC Member States (TFOIC);
- To mobilise resources for the implementation of Projects adopted by the Network;

The mandate of the Network may include:

Capacity building activities:

- ❖ Training of specialized executives from TPOs in international trade and organization of workshops;

- ❖ Organization of training of trainers courses in various trade procedures ;
- ❖ Organization of informative seminars in international trade negotiations and the benefits of international and regional agreements;
- ❖ Providing Technical Assistance for creating TPOs in Member States that do not have such organs.

Trade Promotion activities:

- ❖ Encouraging broader participation in the General and Specialized Exhibitions of OIC including:
 - Exhibitions organized by the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade;
 - Exhibitions organized by Member States;
 - Exhibitions organized at regional level;
- ❖ Contribution to the virtual exhibition of the Islamic Center for Development of Trade in order to promote goods within the framework of the network.

Trade Information activities:

- ❖ Creating and promoting Exchange of economic and trade information;
- ❖ Coordination and cooperation among the databases of the Trade Promotion Organs and OIC Institutions and exchange of experiences;
- ❖ Providing technical assistance for the establishment of modern data bases and the use of modern applications of information technology and the development of digital infrastructure ;
- ❖ Dissemination of information about the economic and trade policies of the Member States and market access and the existing trade opportunities.

Studies and Business Missions:

- ❖ Preparation and sharing of sector-based and market studies;
- ❖ Organization of business missions and meetings between investors and businessmen in order to conclude business deals (B2B Meetings) and other promotion mechanisms.

Trade and Investment Facilitation:

- ❖ To promote the services provided by the institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in the fields of trade and investment, including, marketing, financing and exports insurance and guarantee;
- ❖ To provide Consultancy services to economic operators in order to facilitate trade and improve the investment climate ;
- ❖ To contribute to the monitoring of non-tariff barriers to trade and receive the complaints of economic operators in order to process and deal with them by collecting, analyzing and disseminating customized information about export markets;
- ❖ To act as a bridge between policy makers and businesses to design better policies for OIC TPOs and facilitate negotiations between standards agencies to foster harmonization
- ❖ To promote the benefits of trade agreements and investment among Member States.