



**REPORT OF
THE COMCEC COVID-19 TRADE CONSULTATION MEETING
(July 13th, 2020, Virtual Meeting)**

1. The COMCEC COVID-19 Trade Consultative Meeting was held virtually on July 13th, 2020, with the theme of “The impacts of COVID-19 on Trade and the Way Forward in the OIC Member Countries.”

(The Agenda and Programme of the Meeting are attached as Annex-I and Annex II)

2. The meeting was attended by the representatives of 21 Member States. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the UNCTAD, SESRIC, ICDT, SMIIC and COMCEC Coordination Office.

(The List of Participants of the Meeting is attached as Annex-III)

3. The Meeting started with a recitation from the Holy Quran.
4. At the outset, Mr. Emin Sadık AYDIN, Acting Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), delivered his opening remarks. Welcoming all participants to the meeting, he briefly mentioned the adverse effects of the pandemic and stressed that international cooperation bears utmost importance for their mitigation. In this vein, he pointed out that it is timely and critical to discuss the possible cooperation opportunities to address this common challenge with the OIC Member Countries. He also highlighted that COMCEC Trade Working Group is the pertinent platform for this purpose.
5. Mr. Ercan SAKA, Consultant at the COMCEC Coordination Office, moderated the Sessions during the meeting. Welcoming the participants, Mr. SAKA briefly informed the attendees about the program.

I. General Overview of COVID-19 Pandemic and Its Impacts on OIC Economy and Trade

6. Under this agenda item, Mr. Kenan BAĞCI, Senior Researcher from SESRIC, made a presentation titled “The COVID 19 Pandemic and Its Impacts on Trade and Economy.” He started his presentation by sharing some figures on the number of Covid-19 cases. He pointed out that the share of the OIC Countries in the confirmed Covid-19 cases is relatively small with 15.8 % of whole world.
7. Mr. BAĞCI continued his presentation by informing the participants regarding the economic and trade impacts of the pandemic. He emphasized that by April 2020 the growth expectation for the OIC countries is -2% in 2020 although the same expectation

was +3.7% in October 2019. He also mentioned that the economic contraction in the OIC Member Countries (-2%) is expected to be below the world average (-3%) and significantly lower than the average of developed countries (-6.1%). Regarding the employment, he pointed out that the global unemployment increased by 0.7 %. If the rate of unemployment increases at the same rate in the group of OIC countries and reaches 7.4% (from 6.7%), the total number of unemployed people would increase from its previously estimated level of 47.7 million to 53.3 million in 2020.

8. Regarding the trade flows of the OIC Member Countries to the World, Mr. BAĞCI stated that based on the different scenarios on commodity prices, the OIC's total trade volume is expected to decrease between 17.3% and 33.3% whereas according to WTO the global trade is anticipated to fall between 13% and 32% in 2020. Moreover, Mr. BAĞCI expressed that intra-OIC exports would fall by 4.9% in optimistic scenario or 14.9% in pessimistic scenario based on SESRIC's estimations. He also expressed that an additional decline in commodity prices would bring further losses in export earnings of the OIC Countries.

II. COVID-19's Pandemic Crisis and Trade Facilitation Policies

9. Under this agenda item, Ms. Pamela UGAZ, Economic Affairs Officer at UNCTAD, and Ms. Sijia SUN, Junior Professional Officer at UNCTAD, made a presentation titled "How countries can leverage trade facilitation to defeat the COVID-19 Pandemic." Ms. UGAZ started the presentation by expressing that trade facilitation can help find the balance between expediting relief consignments and protecting officers' health while ensuring controls. She outlined trade facilitation solutions to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic in four categories, which are process optimization, cost reduction, transparency and cooperation as well as technology display.
10. In the presentation, Ms. UGAZ briefly explained process optimization through expediting procedures, relaxing procedures, temporary admission and transit measures. She pointed out that expediting and relaxing procedures is the most important part of the process optimization. Regarding the cost reduction, she expressed that deferring payments of taxes and duties without interests, refunding or reducing fees and dismissing the need of guarantees would be helpful in this regard. Regarding the technology display part, she gave some information on the efforts of G-20 to support trade and investment to response COVID-19 by using information technology. She also touched upon the importance of the single window systems in speeding up the procedures and reducing physical interaction.
11. Afterwards, Ms. SUN informed the participants of the transparency and cooperation. She stated that publication, online tools and help-desk have major importance in the transparency of customs issues with practical examples that countries implement. Then, she explained the cooperation in three levels, which are national, regional and multilateral.
12. In the closing remarks, Ms. SUN mentioned UNCTAD's trade facilitation efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted COVID-19 Crisis Response Package as an important tool for countries. She ended up the presentation by underlining the importance of active and effective cooperation on the trade facilitation issues.

III. Experiences of the Member Countries on Tackling COVID-19 Crisis

13. Under the third agenda item, at the outset, Mr. Nazriq LAMIEN, Deputy Director of Bilateral Economic and Trade Relations Division of Ministry of International Trade and Industry in Malaysia, shared his country's experience in tackling the pandemic in trade area. He started his presentation by stating that trade in the world is negatively affected by the pandemic. Then he shared some statistics regarding Malaysia's trade performance in 2020. He expressed that imports and exports of his country have fallen sharply since the beginning of the pandemic.
14. Mr. LAMIEN continued his presentation by informing the participants regarding the Movement Control Order (MCO), which provides certain restrictions on movement of people and business operations. He expressed that MCO allowed the operation of businesses that produce essential products and services. Furthermore, Mr. LAMIEN pointed out that there are four phases of MCO between March and June 2020. In each phase, he added, the restrictions were softened step by step. He also mentioned the measures to facilitate trade during MCO such as exemptions from import duty and sales tax, immediate releases of priority consignments, expedited processing of imports etc.
15. Mr. LAMIEN, then, informed the participants of the measures to assist business and relieve the economy during the pandemic. He briefly explained PRIHATIN Economic Stimulus Package which provides 50 billion USD in order to support businesses and 500 million USD to strengthen economy. In his closing remarks, he also mentioned briefly from e-Manufacturing license, acceleration and coordination unit and Malaysia Lighthouse programs as well as efforts of the MATRADE.
16. Afterwards, Mr. Hakkı GURKAN, Trade Expert in the Ministry of Trade of Turkey, delivered a presentation on the experiences of Turkey in coping with the pandemic crisis. He started his presentation by stating that Turkey's response to COVID-19 aimed at stopping the spread of the virus within the borders while ensuring seamless flow of international trade. Then, he informed the participants about the policies generated to tackle with the disruptions in trade. He pointed out that these policies are categorized in transit & transport, contactless trade and coordination among border agencies.
17. Mr. GURKAN gave some examples regarding the transit and transport policies. He pointed out that the drivers coming from a restricted country or another one, were not restricted from entering Turkish Customs Area, as long as they pass through. He added that drivers are encouraged to take necessary nutritional and protection goods during their transit operations. He also informed the participants of the policies in touchless trade. In this vein, he emphasized the importance of the using the electronic systems and protective measures for customs.
18. In the last part of the presentation, Mr. GURKAN gave information regarding the policies for the border agency cooperation. He stated that as the flagship agency for international trade and customs, Ministry of Trade, immediately introduced several measures for seamless flow of trade in coordination and communication with Ministry of Health. He

expressed that Ministry of Health managed the activities regarding individuals and drivers' health.

IV. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries

19. Under this agenda item, the participants deliberated on the cooperation opportunities based on the needs and experiences of the member countries. The main aim of the session was to make a brainstorming on technical cooperation opportunities and capacity building efforts that could be realized under the COMCEC umbrella.

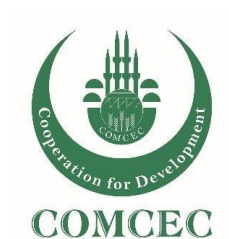
20. The participants after intense deliberations highlighted the following areas/subjects:

- Designing/ strengthening mechanisms for supporting and financing SMEs for a healthy recovery during the crisis,
- Helping the digitalization of trade companies especially SMEs both in terms of improving their digital infrastructure and enhancing their access to online trading platforms.
- Supporting digitalization and touchless trade by using electronic technologies in the customs services during the pandemic,
- Easing the accessibility of medical products and facilitating their trade among the Member Countries,
- Ensuring the public and private sector dialogue and cooperation in trade facilitation during the crisis times,
- Strengthening the fragile structure of the OIC Countries in responding crisis like pandemic,
- Sharing experience regarding pre-shipment security measures,
- Increasing the dialogue and cooperation among the border agencies of neighboring countries by regional and multilateral arrangements in order to provide seamless cross border trade during the crisis,
- Providing mechanisms and arrangements in order to secure the logistical connectivity in the global supply chain during the crisis,
- Establishing an information platform among the member countries for facilitating the follow-up of the updates in their trade policies,
- Providing a platform for publishing the COVID-19 action plans/programmes of the Member Countries in order to facilitate experience sharing,
- Providing sustainability of the domestic and international investment flow during the pandemic time,
- Providing technical support regarding the customs services and other trade policies to the Member Countries in need,

- Raising awareness on the support programmes and projects of the international organizations related to trade and investment.
- Enhancing the effectiveness of National Trade Facilitation Bodies in Member Countries to better cope better with pandemic.

V. Closing

21. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Emin Sadık AYDIN, Acting Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) thanked all the presenters and participants for the fruitful deliberations made during the meeting. He announced that 15th Meeting of the Trade Working Group, which was postponed due to the global pandemic, would be held virtually on September 22th, 2020 with the theme of “Handbook of Highly-Performing National Trade Facilitation Bodies.” He concluded by expressing his sincere thanks to participants for their active involvement and contributions to the discussions and deliberations.



“COMCEC ONLINE CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON TRADE AND THE WAY FORWARD”

(July 13th, 2020)

AGENDA

Opening

1. General Overview of Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis and its Impacts on OIC Economy and Trade
2. Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis and Trade Facilitation Policies
3. Experiences of the Member Countries on Tackling Covid-19 Crisis
4. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries

Closing



**COMCEC Online Consultation Meeting on the Impacts of COVID-19
on Trade and the Way Forward
(July 13th, 2020)**

PROGRAMME

(Ankara Time - GMT+3)

13.15 – 13.30	Joining the Online Meeting (The invitation link will be provided by the CCO)
13.30 – 13.45	Opening Remarks Moderator: <i>Mr. Ercan SAKA</i> <i>Consultant</i> <i>COMCEC Coordination Office</i>
13.45 – 14.00	General Overview of Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis and its Impacts on OIC Economy and Trade • <i>Presentation: Mr. Kenan BAĞCI</i> <i>Senior Researcher</i> <i>SESRIC</i>
14.00 – 14.15	• <i>Questions and Answers (Q & A)</i>
14.15 – 14.35	Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis and Trade Facilitation Policies • <i>Presentation: “How countries can leverage trade facilitation to defeat the COVID-19 Pandemic”</i> <i>Ms. Pamela UGAZ</i> <i>Economic Affairs Officer</i> <i>UNCTAD</i> <i>Ms. Sijia SUN</i> <i>Junior Professional Officer</i> <i>UNCTAD</i>
14.35 – 14.45	• <i>Q & A</i>

14.45 – 15.20	<p>Experiences of the Member Countries in Tackling Covid-19 Crisis</p> <p><i>Member States Presentations (10 minutes max)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Malaysia ✓ Turkey
15.20 - 16.00	<p>Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries</p> <p><i>Questions for Discussion</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main areas/themes that can be identified within the scope of COMCEC COVID Response (CCR)? 2. Which challenges has your country/institution encountered (or expected to encounter) in the sector so far? 3. Which intervention(s) (both on a national and international level) do you think should be appropriate once the immediate effects of the pandemic (i.e. on human health) starts to wear off? 4. What are the most suitable areas/themes that your country can
16.00 - 16.15	Closing

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
COMCEC COVID-19 TRADE CONSULTATIVE MEETING
(13 July 2020)**

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. MUSHFIQ OSMANOV

Head of Desk, Ministry of Industry and Trade

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

- Mr. RENE AKOWANOU

Expert, Ministry of Industry and Trade

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

- Ms. MEE JIEN HONG

Acting Assistant Director, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Ms. AMALINA MURAD

Special Duties Officer, Ministry of Finance and Economy

REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

- Mr. MAX-BERTIN DJACORE

Chief of Service, Ministry of Trade and Industry

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

- Mr. HAYTHAM ABDELGHANY

Trade Consul, Egypt Consulate Istanbul

REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- Mr. FABBA JAMMEH

Director of Industry and Investment, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and
Employment Independent Drive

REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

- H.E. BOUBACAR BARRY

Minister of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Ms. AYU WULAN SAGITA

Deputy Director, Ministry of Trade

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

- Ms. ELHAM HAJI KARIMI

Head of Desk, Iran Trade Promotion Organization

MALAYSIA

- Mr. EMMY JOSEFINA JAMIL

Principal Assistant Director, Bilateral Economic and Trade Relations Division,, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

- Mr. NAZRIQ LAMIEN

Assistant Director, Bilateral Economic and Trade Relations Division, , Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

- Mr. AHMED IFTHIKHAR

Director, Ministry of Economic Development

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

- Mr. MOHAMED LEMINE VAYDA

Deputy Director, Ministry of Trade and Tourism

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

- Mr. TAQUI MOULAY ISMAIL
Head of Trade Division, Ministry of Industry

REPUBLIC OF NIGER

- Mr. HASSANE MOUNKAILA
Director General, Ministry of Commerce

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. JAVAD ALMUTY
Director of Trade Development Department, Ministry of National Economy

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. HASAN ALMOHANNADI
Consultant, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Mr. ABDULRAHMAN ALMULLA
Researcher, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. ABDULAZIZ ALSAKRAN
General Manager, Saudi General Authority for Foreign Trade
- Mr. SAUD ALGHARIR
General Manager, Saudi Customs Authority
- Mr. FAWAZ ALGHAMDI
Commercial Attache, Commercial Attache Office in Istanbul
- Mr. MOHSEN ALDOSSARI
Specialist, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade
- Ms. NADA ALHATHLOL
Specialist, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade

REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

- Mr. OUSMANE GOUDIABY

Director, Ministry of Commerce

- Ms. KHADIDIATOU JOCELYN FALL

Deputy Head of Office, Ministry of Trade

REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

- Mr. NADIR ELRAYAH AWAD

Director of International Organizations, Ministry of Industry and Trade

- Ms. LIMYAA ELNUR

Director of International Relations, Ministry of Industry and Trade

- Ms. HUWAIDA ABDALBAGI ALI

Expert, Ministry of Industry and Trade

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

- Mr. MOHAMED JAMEL EL IFA

Director, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. MEHER ARFOUI

Deputy Director, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. MOHAMED DALDOUL

Head of Service, Ministry of Trade

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Ms. AYLİN BEBEKOĞLU

Deputy Director General, Ministry of Trade

- Ms. AYŞEGÜL DEMİR AĞBAL

Expert, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. HAKKI GÜRKAN

EU Expert, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. NURULLAH ASIM AKBULUT

Expert, Ministry of Trade

B. THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC TRADE FINANCE CORPORATION (ITFC)

- Mr. AYMEN KASEM

Division Manager, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

- Mr. AMODOU CIRE SALL

Senior Associate, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

C. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

ISLAMIC CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)

- Mr. MAMOUDOU SALL

Head of ICDT, ICDT

- Ms. LATIFA ELBOUABDELLAOUI

Director General, ICDT

STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Mr. MAZHAR HUSSAIN

Director, SESRIC

- Mr. ONUR ÇAĞLAR

Acting Director, SESRIC

- Mr. FADI FARASIN

Assistant Director General, SESRIC

- Mr. KENAN BAĞCI

Senior Researcher, SESRIC

D. OIC STANDING COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION (COMSTECH)

- Mr. MUHAMMAD IQBAL CHOUDHARY
Coordinator General, COMSTECH

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)

- Ms. SIJIA SUN
Senior Researcher, UNCTAD
- Ms. PAMELA UGAZ
Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD

E. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. EMİN SADIK AYDIN
Director General, COMCEC
- Mr. FATİH ÜNLÜ
Deputy Director General, COMCEC
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department, COMCEC
- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN
Head of Department, COMCEC
- Mr. ERCAN SAKA
Consultant, COMCEC
- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR
Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. FATİH ARSLAN
Expert, COMCEC
- Ms. EDA AKÇA
Expert, COMCEC