



**REPORT OF
THE COMCEC COVID-19 TOURISM CONSULTATION MEETING
(July 9th, 2020, Virtual Meeting)**

1. The COMCEC COVID-19 Tourism Consultative Meeting was held virtually on July 9th, 2020, with the theme of “The Impacts of COVID-19 on Tourism in the OIC Member Countries and the Way Forward.”

(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, which have registered to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the UNWTO, SESRIC 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 highlighted that tourism sector, by its very nature, has been affected most severely by the pandemic. In this vein, he pointed out that tourism sector is considered one of the hardest hit sectors by the Covid-19 outbreak. Furthermore, he expressed that although this pandemic has posed serious challenges for the tourism sector and its complementary industries, it might be perceived as an opportunity for overcoming structural problems of the tourism sector and enhancing its crisis-preparedness and resilience and the service industry related with tourism as a whole.
5. Assoc. Prof. Gürel ÇETİN, Consultant at the COMCEC Coordination Office; moderated the sessions during the meeting. Welcoming the participants, Prof ÇETİN summarized the program of the Meeting.

I. General Overview of the Impacts of COVID-19 on Tourism

6. Under this agenda item, Mr. Beka JAKELI, Chief of Member Relations from UNWTO, made a presentation titled “Covid-19 and its effects on Tourism Sector.” At the outset, he shared some figures on tourism and tourist activities with respect to World and different regions. He stated that according to International Tourism 2020 Scenarios, the potential impact of the loss of demand in international travel would result in a loss of 850 million to 1.1 billion international tourists, loss of 910 USD billion to 1.2 trillion USD in export earnings from tourism and loss of 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs.

7. Mr. JAKELI continued his presentation by informing the participants about the UNWTO's initiatives and activities in response to the pandemic. He mentioned that UNWTO formed the Global Tourism Crisis Committee to guide the sector and to build the foundations for future resilience and sustainable growth. He expressed that UNWTO also launched the "UNWTO Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism", which outlines the roadmap and priorities for the sector in the challenging period ahead, from providing liquidity for vulnerable businesses to opening borders and coordination of new health protocols and procedures.

II. COVID-19's Impacts on Tourism in the OIC Member Countries

8. Dr. Cem TINTIN, Senior Researcher at SESRIC, made a presentation titled "Impacts of COVID-19 on Tourism in OIC Countries". In his presentation, Dr. Tintin provided some key statistics on the role of tourism in the OIC economies such as job creation and contribution to the economic growth. He also mentioned that for some OIC Countries, tourism sector has a particular importance in their economies as a source of foreign exchange and driver of economic growth.
9. Dr. Tintin also underlined that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected all OIC countries but at varying degrees. He stated that some OIC countries with high reliance on tourism receipts may experience severe financial problems unless they identify alternative sources of foreign exchange such as exports and foreign investments. Dr. Tintin concluded his presentation by expressing that enhancing intra-OIC cooperation through such programmes as experience-sharing and transfer of knowledge in the domain of tourism could help member countries to mitigate some negative impacts of the pandemic in a relatively shorter period of time.

III. Member Country Experiences in Resilience Building against Covid-19 in Tourism Sector

10. Ms. ZEHRA ERDOGDU CAYIR, Expert at the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural of Turkey shared Turkey's experiences in tackling the pandemic in tourism sector. She informed the participants of Turkey's Covid-19 Pandemic Management Roadmap, which aims to ensure the safe continuation of tourism services in the recovery period. She also stated that in order to minimize the negative effects of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on tourism sector, some measures have already been taken in terms of planning, financial support, facilitation and certification.
11. She also briefed the participants on "Safe Tourism Certification Program" which was initiated by the Ministry. The Program includes four main components namely, "Health and Safety of Passenger", "Health and Safety of Employee", "Measures at the Facilities and Measures in Transportation Vehicles".
12. Afterwards, Mr. GHASEMI MOHAMMAD, General Director of Tourism Marketing and Promotion at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran, shared his country's experiences in tackling the pandemic in tourism sector. He expressed that at the outset, Iran has taken some preventive measures to mitigate adverse impacts of Covid-19. Then, domestic tourism industry was re-opened. He stated that in the next phase, tourism relations with neighboring countries would be resumed. He concluded his intervention by underlining the importance of ensuring close cooperation

and coordination among the relevant stakeholders in tourism sector both at national and regional levels.

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

13. Under this agenda item, the participants deliberated on the technical cooperation opportunities and capacity building activities that could be realized under the COMCEC umbrella.
14. The participants, after intense deliberations, highlighted the following areas/subjects:
 - Strategic risk and crisis management in tourism,
 - Regional online training on digital marketing and promotion,
 - Tourism marketing and promotion,
 - Promoting cooperation in the area of tourism statistics,
 - Training on tourism product diversification,
 - Revitalization of the medical tourism sector in the OIC Member States,
 - Establishing a tourism exchange platform (i.e online tourism exhibition)
 - Encouraging bilateral border arrangements in tourism sector between OIC Member Countries.
 - Encouraging the utilization of modern technologies (e.g. self-service systems, robots) in tourism service provision for curbing the spread of COVID-19 virus.
 - Developing safe and clean destination brands in the OIC Region.
 - Redesigning tourism products and processes amid Covid-19 and future epidemics

Closing

15. 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 Tourism Working Group, which was postponed due to the global pandemic, would be held virtually on September 24th, 2020 with the theme of “Medical Tourism in the OIC Member Countries.”
16. He also informed that Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 36th COMCEC Session will be held on November 25th, 2020, with the theme of “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness.” In this respect, he expressed that the 15th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group, in its second day, would serve as a preparatory event for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Sessions. He concluded by thanking all the attendees for their active involvement and contributions to the discussions and deliberations and expressing his best wishes for their health and well-being.



***“COMCEC CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON
TOURISM IN THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES AND THE WAY FORWARD”
(Virtual Meeting, July 9th, 2020)****

AGENDA

Opening

1. General Overview of the impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis on Tourism Sector
2. Covid-19's Impacts on Tourism in the OIC Region
3. Member Country Experiences in Resilience Building against Covid-19 in Tourism Sector
4. Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries

Closing



**“COMCEC CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON
TOURISM IN THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES AND THE WAY FORWARD”**

(July 9th, 2020)

PROGRAMME

(Ankara Time - GMT+3)

13.15 – 13.30	Joining the Online Meeting <i>(The internet link for participation will be communicated to the participants prior to the Meeting)</i>
13.30 – 13.45	Opening Remarks <i>Moderator: Associate Professor Gürel ÇETİN, Consultant, COMCEC Coordination Office</i>
13.45 – 14.15	Covid-19 and its effects on Tourism Sector <i>Presentation: Mr. Beka JAKELI Chief of Member Relations UNWTO</i>
14.15 – 14.30	<i>Discussion</i>
14.30 – 15.00	General Overview of Covid-19 Pandemic Crisis and its Impacts on OIC Tourism Industry <i>Presentation: Mr. Dr. Cem TINTIN Senior Researcher SESRIC</i>
15.00 – 15.15	<i>Discussion</i>
15.15 – 16.00	Experiences of the Member Countries on Tackling Covid-19 Crisis
16.00-16.45	Exploring Capacity Building and Experience Sharing Opportunities among the Member Countries
16.45-17.00	Closing

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
COMCEC COVID-19 TOURISM CONSULTATIVE MEETING

(09 July 2020, Ankara)

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

- Ms. ERIOLA SOJATI
Expert, Ministry of Tourism and Environment

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. AZER ORUCOV
Senior Consultant, State Tourism Agency

REPUBLIC OF BENIN

- Mr. FULBERT GODONOU
Expert, Ministry of Tourism

BURKINA FASO

- Mr. EMMANUEL SOME
Legal Adviser,
Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism

REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

- Mr. EVARISTE BOKA YAO
Manager, Ministry of Tourism

REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

- Mr. ABOUBAKER HASSAN BARREH
Promotion Expert, National Tourism Agency

REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- Mr. ALAGIE LAYE
Senior Manager, Gambia Tourism Board

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

- Mr. GHASEMI MOHAMMAD
General Director of Tourism Marketing and Promotion,
Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts
- Ms. FARAH VALINEJAD
Tourism Marketing and Promotion Expert,
Ministry of Cultural and Tourism

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

- Mr. MAKSAT DAMIR UULU
Director, Ministry of Culture of Information and Tourism

LIBYA

- Mr. ADEL OMAR
Manager, Ministry of Tourism

MALAYSIA

- Mr. JAYAPPRAGAS MUTHUVEEROO
Senior Principal Assistant Director,
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia
- Ms. NUR NAJIHAH MD ABAS
Senior Assistant Director,
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia
- Mr. MOHD DAUD MOHD ARIF
Senior Director,
Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia
- Mr. MUHAMMAD MUHSIN MOHAMMED
Assistant Manager, Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council
- Mr. ALI ABDUL AZIZ
Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council, Expert
- Ms. NUR FARHANA JAAFAR SIDEK
Senior Executive, Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

- Mr. MARIEM SIDI SALEM

Director, Ministry of Trade of Tourism

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

- Mr. ADIL BENSOUDA
Head of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Tourism, Handcrafts, Air Transport and Social Economy

REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

- Mr. JOSÉ FARIA
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

- Mr. ALIYU MUSA ABANA
Assistant Director,
Federal Ministry of Information and Culture

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Ms. ATIYEH KHATEEB
Director General, Ministry of Tourism

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. OMAR ABDULRAHMAN
Director, National Tourism Council

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. KHALED ALZHRANI
Head of Joint Committees, Ministry of Tourism
- Mr. ABDULLAH HAFIZ
Commercial Advisor, Tourism Development Fund

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

- Mr. CLAUDE BUNDU-SAMA
Expert, Ministry of Tourism

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

- Ms. FARIDY LILA
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industry Tourism

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Ms. BASAK ONSAL DEMIR
Acting Head of Department, Ministry of Tourism and Culture
- Ms. ZEHRA ERDOGDU CAYIR
Expert, Ministry of Tourism and Culture
- Mr. FARUK CUBUKCU
Expert, Ministry of Tourism and Culture
- Ms. YASEMİN CELİK
Interpreter, Ministry of Tourism and Culture

B. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

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

- Mr. CEM TİNTİN
Senior Researcher,
- Ms. FATIMA ZAHRA KAMAL
Technical Cooperation Officer,

C. OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION

- Mr. BEKA JAKELI
Chief of Member Relations, UNWTO
- Ms. CLAUDIA LISBOA
Expert, UNWTO

D. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. EMİN SADIK AYDIN
Director General
- Mr. FATİH ÜNLÜ
Deputy Director General
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department

- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN
Head of Department

- Mr. GÖKTEN DAMAR
Expert

- Ms. AYTEN AKMAN
Expert

- Ms. EDA AKÇA
Expert

