



**PROCEEDINGS OF
16TH MEETINGS OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING
GROUP
(May 31st, 2021, Virtual Meeting)**

1. The Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) held virtually its 16th Meeting on May 31st, 2021, with the theme of “Mitigation Strategies for Transport Service Providers During and After COVID-19 in the OIC Member Countries”.

(The Agenda and Program of the 16th Meeting are attached as Annex-I)

2. The 16th meeting was attended by 21 Member States. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the SESRIC, Port Operators Association of Turkey (TURKLIM), International Shippers Association (UND), and COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO).

(The List of Participants of the 17th Meeting is attached as Annex-II)

3. The 16th Meeting started with a recitation from the Holy Quran.
4. At the outset, Mr. Fatih ÜNLÜ, Director General of the CCO, delivered his opening remarks. Concerning the recent developments in Palestine, he deeply condemned the unlimited military operations carried out by the Israeli security forces against Palestinian civilians. He also condemned the attacks of racist Jewish groups and the security forces on al-Aqsa Mosque and Haram Al-Sharif.
5. He underlined that COVID-19 has had unusual implications on the transportation systems and services of the countries. The responses to COVID-19, from implementing social distancing to lockdown policies for affected areas, have huge implications for the mobility and connectivity of people and goods and the continuity of transport services. This also has cumulative impacts on the economic activity of cities, regions, freight logistics, as well as related industries, markets, and supply chains.
6. Highlighting the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global transportation industry, Mr. ÜNLÜ expressed that according to the estimations, there has been approximately 90% air traffic reduction compared to a year ago, 85% reduction in long-distance rail passenger service, 80% reduction in regional rail passenger services and more than 90% reduction for cruise and passenger ships compared to a year ago. Besides, he expressed that the contribution of the logistics industry to the global GDP is estimated to decrease by 6.1% this year. In addition to this, the global freight forwarding market is expected to shrink by 7.5 % in 2020 compared to 2019.
7. Furthermore, Mr. ÜNLÜ outlined that in addition to national efforts, this outbreak requires strong cooperation and joint efforts at the international level. In the post-pandemic period, the crisis could also provide viable opportunities for our countries to formulate and implement sound policies for uninterrupted and seamless transportation.

8. Mr. Özcan BAŞOĞLU, Acting Deputy Director General, General Directorate of Civil Aviation of the Republic of Turkey, chaired the meeting. Welcoming the participants, Mr. BAŞOĞLU briefly informed the attendees of the agenda and program of the meeting.
9. Mr. BAŞOĞLU expressed that transport is undoubtedly one of the most important sectors within this platform. The working group mechanism is crucial as it secures a long-standing platform for new cooperation initiatives and a common understanding against challenges.
10. He continued that the pandemic placed our interconnected world in an unprecedented situation and generated a grand economic downturn. Early responses to restraining the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the limited coordinated action between countries led to curtailing travel and closing borders and this negatively impacted transport operations. As a result, disruption of supply chains and trade flows emerged. So, international cooperation has become more important than ever.
11. He concluded his remarks by underlining that this meeting of the working group on transport is a unique platform for sharing our common goals and strengthening our close cooperation remarkably with a specific focus on strategies for “building back better” and shifting to a new, more sustainable transport system in the post-COVID-19 world.

I. General Introduction of the Research Report (*The Scope, Conceptual Framework and Method of the Study, and the Implications of COVID-19 on the Transport Sector Providers*)

12. Under this agenda item, Mr. Alpaslan GIRAYALP, Consultant, Pglobal, made a presentation on the general introduction of the research report.
13. Mr. GIRAYALP started by providing some important figures on the effects of COVID-19 on countries' economies, and their national and international transportation services.
14. Mr. GIRAYALP stated that the spread of the virus worldwide and the government restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic initiated the worldwide economic crisis. Global GDP declined significantly with the workplace closures and the other lockdown measures. As a consequence of the fall in production, shortages in intermediate goods and disruption in global value chains occurred. The decline in mid-2020 global trade was sharper than the fall during the global financial crisis. Government restrictions also affected international transport. As a consequence of border closures, restrictions to travel and new measures introduced at the customs halted both international freight and passenger transportation.
15. Mr. GIRAYALP outlined that national stay-at-home and lockdown restrictions, which were imposed in many countries globally to reduce transmission of the virus, have caused a massive decline in road traffic, air travel, and public transport ridership. Globally, passenger air traffic fell by as much as 80% at the beginning of the pandemic while the number of passengers using public transport declined by 80% in some cities as commuter demand disappeared and transport operators reduced their services.
16. He expressed that after containment measures imposed by governments, road passenger transport activities declined between 40% and 80% in almost every city globally. While road transportation workers experienced substantial declines in income, the revenues from online ordering and delivery both for food and non-food items increased.
17. He further expressed that social distancing affected all transport modes but the most severe impact was on the public transport and railway systems. Crowded public transport systems are considered to be areas having high virus transmission risk. Most of the travel in big cities around the world is conducted via high-capacity railway lines and networks. Travel to schools, shops,

places, and various other sectors has been restricted almost globally during the COVID-19 pandemic and the volume of railway transportation decreased dramatically.

18. On the other hand, in the maritime sector, major ports across the world adopted a 14-day quarantine period for vessels arriving from, or transiting through, affected countries, and many ports have ceased calls for passenger ships. Strict restrictions have been imposed on crew disembarkation, shore leave, and substitution. The restrictions on the movement of people in the form of port closures and reduced flights left a large number of maritime sector workers stuck on ships. The expiring seafarer's certificates prevented ships from sailing. COVID-19 has also adversely affected the maritime tourism industry. The fear of contracting the virus during cruise tourism has resulted in almost complete suspension of cruise sailings.
19. Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic, airlines reduced their operations, grounded their planes, and aviation enterprises faced financial crises. Seats offered by airlines are estimated to decrease by 50% overall, while the number of passengers transported worldwide declined by 60% causing huge losses to all airlines.
20. Mr. GIRAYALP emphasized that most of the high GDP members of OIC countries ensured short-term economic and financial support to the transport sector. As with the disparities in economic wealth among the OIC member countries, there are significant variations between countries regarding their current supportive expenditures. Timely and proper financial support is highly effective in protecting operators, services, and jobs in the transport sector in all forms of transport.
21. He expressed that all these issues will be deeply analyzed in the report. Then, he provided the participants with the methodology of the report and the way to be followed to reveal the best output. He also said that they will conduct an online survey to better understand the state of affairs in the member countries.
22. Mr. GIRAYALP ended his presentation by giving some information on the possible case countries and the rationale behind their selection.

II. OIC Member Countries' Practices and Lessons Learnt from the Selected Case Countries

23. Prof. Dr. Mehmet BALCILAR, consultant, PGlobal, presented the initial findings of the research report regarding Pakistan.
24. Prof. BALCILAR expressed that for Pakistan the passenger demand for air travel was 52% lower in 2020 compared to 2019 and the expected revenue loss is around USD 1.83 billion, as well as a job loss of 259,400. In Pakistan, road transport services fell significantly during the COVID-19 period.
25. He stated that to contain the outbreak of COVID-19, Pakistan implements various restriction measures related to public transport. Public transport in Pakistan was closed from March to June 2020 and during this period there were no restrictions on international travel.
26. He underlined that the loss or job disruption in the transport sector of Pakistan could vary between 60 to 90% as a percentage of total vulnerable employment and wage losses for the transport sector are estimated to vary between PKR 12.15 billion to PKR 18.22 billion. He said that around 8.5 million USD is required to provide support to the vulnerable in the sectors.
27. Concerning the responses to the pandemic, Prof. BALCILAR stated that Pakistan has provided PKR 200 billion as a fiscal stimulus package for workers and laborers who lost their work due to the pandemic. A National Command and Operation Centre was established, in which the representation of all stakeholders was ensured. However, the policy announcement and incentives were not specific to the transport

28. He continued that the Pakistan government compensates for the economic deterioration and other calamities on transport providers. The government has waived off-airport fees, air navigation fees, landing, and parking fees on domestic routes for the airline industry.
29. Prof. BALCILAR concluded the presentation by expressing some administrative measures taken by the government to decrease the transmission of the virus, especially in different transport modes.

III. Member States' Experiences

30. Under this agenda item, Indonesia, Turkey, and Uganda made presentations concerning their country practices in mitigating the adverse effects of COVID-19 on Transport Service Providers.

IV. Private Sector Perspective

31. Under this agenda item, Mr. Erhan ÇİLOĞLU, Board Member, TÜRKKLİM, delivered a presentation titled "The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Maritime Sector: The Challenges and Opportunities".
32. Mr. ÇİLOĞLU started his presentation by giving some info about the TURKLİM. He said that TURKLİM was established in 1996 to find solutions to the sectoral problems of the private sector port and pier operators. It is a Member of the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) and has 69 member ports.
33. Then, Mr. ÇİLOĞLU provided some key figures on the Turkish Port Sector saying that Turkey's ports, which are the main pipelines of international trade, have increased their connectivity in recent years. He underlined that the ports industry's estimated contribution to GDP is TRY46.6 billion while supporting approximately 228,000 jobs in 2018.
34. Afterward, Mr. ÇİLOĞLU mentioned about their report titled "Covid-19 Economic Impact Analysis for Ports in Turkey". He said that The study was published monthly between March and December 2020 and the Study aims to analyse COVID-19 impacts on:
 - Ports with a decline in vessel calls
 - Ports with extra restrictions on vessels
 - Port call delays due to extra procedures
 - Hinterland transport delays
 - Ports facing high capacity utilisation of warehousing
 - Ports facing shortages in port-related workers
35. Concerning the methodology and the result of the Study, Mr. ÇİLOĞLU stated that a survey on the impact of COVID-19 was conducted and the findings were impressive.
36. Then, Mr. Alper ÖZEL, Chairman of the Executive Board of, the International Shippers Association (UNDA) made a presentation concerning logistics challenges and opportunities in the post-COVID-19 world.
37. At the beginning of his presentation, Mr. ÖZEL gave some key information about the EU as a response to border restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Then he dealt with Turkey's logistics performance. He said that Turkey ranks 47th in the "Global Logistics Performance Index" of the World Bank published in 2018. Logistics performances must be equalized along the Caspian Corridor for effective supply chains.
38. Mr. ÖZEL continued his presentation by sharing some observations regarding the economic downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic and some key solutions as follows;

- Keep national and international mobility and supply chains operational, while ensuring safe working conditions for transport workers.
- Encourage targeted financial support measures for road transport operators to address the current liquidity crisis and prevent mass bankruptcies.
- Encourage the use of digital tools that already exist, including eTIR, e-CMR, and e-ticketing, which facilitate the flow of goods and passengers across borders without physical human contact.
- Recognize road transport workers as key workers and award them the same protection as other vital service workers during the COVID-19 response, including vaccination priority.
- Consider coordinated approaches for a digital COVID-19 negative test/vaccine passport for commercial drivers.
- Investigate the possibility of creating a network of designated focal points among Member States for enhanced coordination and collaboration.

V. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

39. Mr. M. Adil SAYAR, Expert at COMCEC Coordination Office delivered a presentation on utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding (CPF) for the transport-related projects of the member countries as well as the OIC institutions.

(All presentations made during the meeting are available on the COMCEC website.)

VI. Closing

40. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Director at the CCO, expressed his thanks to all the presenters and participants for the fruitful deliberations made during the meeting.



AGENDA

16TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

(May 31st, 2021, Virtual Meeting)

“Mitigation Strategies for Transport Service Providers During and After COVID-19”

(1st Session- Discussion and Review of First Draft of the Report)

Opening

1. The Implications of COVID-19 on the Transport Sector and Global Trends for Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of COVID-19 on the Transport Service Providers
2. OIC Member Countries’ Practices and Lessons Learnt from the Selected Case Studies
3. Member States’ Experiences in Mitigation Strategies for Transport Service Providers
4. Private Sector Perspective on the Impacts of COVID-19 on Transport Service Providers
5. Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding

Closing



PROGRAMME

16TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

(May 31st, 2021, Virtual Meeting)*

“Mitigation Strategies for Transport Service Providers During and After COVID-19”

(1st Session- Discussion and Review of the First Draft of Report)

- 13.15-13.30** **Joining the Online Meeting**
*(The link will be shared prior to the Meeting)
- 13.30-13.40** **Opening**
- 13.40-14.00** **General Introduction of the Research Report**
(The Scope, Conceptual Framework and Method of the Study, and the Implications of the COVID-19 on the Transport Sector Providers)
- *Presentation: Alpaslan GİRAYALP*
Consultant
PGlobal
- 14.00-14.10** - Discussion
- 14.10-14.30** **OIC Member Countries’ Practices and Lessons Learnt from the Selected Case Countries**
- *Presentation: Prof. Dr. Mehmet BALCILAR*
Consultant
PGlobal
- 14.30-14.40** - Discussion
- 14.40-15.10** **Member States’ Experiences in Mitigation Strategies for Transport Service Providers**
- 15.10-15.40** **Private Sector Perspective**
- The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Maritime Sector: The Challenges and Opportunities**
- *Presentation: Mr. Erhan ÇİLOĞLU*
Chief Marketing Officer at YILPORT Holding Inc.
TURKLIM Board Member
- Logistics: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-Covid-19 World**
- *Presentation: Mr. Alper ÖZEL*
Chairman of the Executive Board
International Shippers Association (UND)
- 15.40-15.50** **Utilizing the COMCEC Project Funding**
- 15.50-16.00** **Closing**

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
16TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING
GROUP 31 May 2021

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

- Mr. ALI AHMAD SAHDAT
Director General Local Development, Ministry of Economy

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

- Mr. TEYMUR ABBASOV
Chief Advisor, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

- Ms. SULTANA YASMIN
Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges
- Mr. MD ABDULLAH AL MAMUN
Additional Chief Engineer, Roads and Highways Department

BURKINA FASO

- Mr. DAOUDA KOUDA
Chief of Service, Ministry of Transport
- Mr. BASSIROU OUEDREAGO
Expert, Ministry of National Aviation

REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

- Mr. ABDOULAYE TOURE
General Secretary, Ministry of Transport

REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA

- Mr. SULAYMAN GAYE
Senior Planner, Ministry of Transport, Works and Infrastructure

REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

- Ms. MADINA DIAWARA
Head of Division, Ministry Of Transports

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Mr. M.I. DERRY AMAN
Head of Centre, Ministry of Transportation Republic of Indonesia

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

- Mr. ABBAS AZADI M. ARANI
Deputy Director General for Economy and Transportation Productivity, Ministry of Road and Urban Development
- Mr. HOMAYOUN SABBAGHZADEH SHOUSHARI

Deputy Minister Assistant Responsible for CDTIC's International Affairs, Construction & Development of Transportation Infrastructure Company (CDTIC)

REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

- Ms. ISRAA HANOON
Chief Engineer, Ministry of Transportation

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

- Mr. QAIS QAQZEH
Director of Planning & Studies Directorate, Ministry of Transport
- Mr. SAWSAN SHABSOUGH
Researcher, Ministry of Transport

MALAYSIA

- Mr. ROSBI ABD. RAHMAN
Under Secretary, Ministry of Transport

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

- Mr. FATHIMATH SHAHEEDHA
Deputy Minister of Communication, Science and Technology, Maldives, Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology, Maldives
- Mr. AHMED IFTHIKHAR
Director, Ministry of Economic Development

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

- Ms. MHANI LOUDIYI
Head Cooperation Department, Ministry of Equipment, Transport Logistics and Water

REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

- Mr. CERINA BANU MUSSA
Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Industry and Trade

REPUBLIC OF NIGER

- Mr. AHMED ELHADJI AYAHA AHMED
Director, Ministry of Transport

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

- Mr. LAMI KATCHY
Assistant Director, Federal Ministry of Transport

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. SHUROUQ ANTAR
Director, Ministry of Transport

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. SALEH SAED ELMARRI
Land Transport Planning Expert, Ministry of Transport and Communication

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. HAMOOD ALALI
Director General, Saudi Ports Authority
- Mr. YAZEED ALAHMAD

Investment Researcher, Transport General Authority

REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

- Mr. YASIR SAWOS
General Manager, Sudan Airways
- Mr. IBRAHIM ABUSIN
Operation Director, Sudan Airways
- Mr. MIRGHANI MAHMOUD
Safety and Quality Director, Sudan Airways

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

- Mr. CINDY TOEMIN
Policy Advisor, Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- Mr. AŞIR KILIÇASLAN
Head of Dpt., TCDD
- Mr. FURKAN ÖZDEMİR
Assistant Aviation Expert, Directorate General of Civil Aviation

REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

- Mr. WINSTONE KATUSHABE
Commissioner Transport Regulation And Safety, Ministry of Works and Transport

B. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

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

- Mr. ESAT BAKIMLI
Senior Researcher, SESRIC
- Mr. DAVRON ISHNAZAROV
Researcher, SESRIC
- Mr. THIerno BALDE
Assistant Project Officer, SESRIC

B. INVITED INSTITUTIONS

- Mr. ERHAN ÇİLOĞLU
Chief Marketing Officer, Turklım Board Member / Yılport Holding Inc.

C. CONSULTANTS

- Mr. SUBİDEY TOGAN
Emeritus Professor, Bilkent University
- Mr. DENİZ MACİT
Assist. Prof. Dr. , Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University