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ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA

39TH SESSION OF THE COMCEC

(2-5 December 2023)

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**DRAFT AGENDA
OF THE 39TH SESSION OF THE COMCEC
(2-5 December 2023)**

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to give background information about the current status of the cooperation areas, programs, and projects of the COMCEC for its 39th Ministerial Session, to be held on 2-5 December 2023, in İstanbul.

The document provides background information and the required actions on the Draft Agenda Items from 2 to 14. As the remaining Agenda Items are self-explanatory, they are not included in the Document.

The reports and studies to be submitted under each agenda item will be uploaded to the COMCEC's website (www.comcec.org).

ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA ITEMS

AGENDA ITEM 2

Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation

COMCEC continues its efforts in light of the COMCEC Strategy. The Working Groups (WG), as part of the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, provide a regular platform for the Member Country experts to discuss the policies and practices and share experiences in each cooperation area to create a common understanding, and approximate policies among the Member Countries. The COMCEC Project Funding, as a policy support instrument, enables Member Countries, registered with the Working Groups, as well as the relevant OIC Institutions, to submit concrete projects for the realization of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations.

Within this framework, since the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the Working Groups have conducted their 20th and 21st rounds of meetings (19th and 20th Meetings for the Financial Cooperation) and elaborated on important themes in each cooperation area. The details about the developments in each Working Group are given under the relevant agenda item.

In terms of the projects realized under the COMCEC Project Funding, 15 projects were realized in 2022 within the scope of the 9th Project Call. Moreover, 17 projects are being implemented by the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions this year. The 11th project call was made on October 1st, 2023. Under the COMCEC COVID Response (CCR), 6 projects were completed by the end of 2022. The CCR Program has been finalized successfully with the realization of these projects.

Furthermore, within the framework of the COMCEC Al-Quds Program, 5 projects were implemented in the 2021-2022 period. The scope of the program has been enriched with new thematic priorities including tourism entrepreneurship, creating job opportunities and empowerment of youth, e-commerce, and SME development. In this regard, 5 projects are being implemented under the Al-Quds Program in 2023. All the details regarding the COMCEC Support Programs are available on the COMCEC website (programs.comcec.org).

Moreover, cooperation efforts carried out by the relevant OIC Institutions bear great importance for the realization of the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy and the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations. In line with the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC, the OIC Institutions organize activities aligned with the objectives and expected outputs of the COMCEC Strategy as well as the policy recommendations adopted by the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions.

In this framework, the 38th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the Progress Report submitted by the CCO highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy commended the Member States and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to its implementation, and requested the Member Countries and OIC Institutions to further their full support to the

implementation of the Strategy. Moreover, the Session welcomed the successful convening of the COMCEC Working Groups in the cooperation areas and the research studies conducted by the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) for enriching the discussions in the COMCEC Working Group Meetings. The Session also commended the efforts of the Working Groups towards approximating policies among the Member Countries in their fields of competence and welcomed the policy recommendations made by the Working Groups in their meetings in 2022.

Furthermore, commending the valuable outcomes of projects financed by the COMCEC since 2014, the Session invited Member Countries to intensify their efforts to harness the benefits of COMCEC Project Funding, particularly with a view to materializing the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.

Required Action(s): The CCO will present a progress report to the Session with respect to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. The Session will consider the report submitted by the CCO for necessary action.

- Report of the 39th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC

The 39th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC, held on 23-24 May 2023, reviewed the implementation of the programs and projects on the agenda of the COMCEC, prepared a draft agenda, and proposed a set of recommendations for the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The 39th Session of the COMCEC will be briefed by the Rapporteur of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC on the recommendations of the Follow-up Committee Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3

The Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action

The OIC Programme of Action for the period of 2016-2025 (OIC-2025: Programme of Action) was adopted at the 13th Islamic Summit held in İstanbul, Republic of Türkiye, on 14-15 April 2016. Underlining the importance of the active follow-up of the economic and commercial section of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action by the COMCEC, the 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the OIC General Secretariat to regularly submit comprehensive progress reports on the implementation of the Programme to the COMCEC Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.

Required Action(s): The OIC General Secretariat is expected to submit a comprehensive progress report on the implementation of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action. The Session will consider the General Secretariat's report on the subject for necessary action.

AGENDA ITEM 4

World Economic Developments with Special Reference to OIC Member Countries

SESRIC, in light of the relevant decision of the 12th Session of the COMCEC, has been preparing an annual report on recent world economic developments and their implications on the OIC Member Countries and submitting it to the annual sessions of the COMCEC.

The Annual Economic Report provides an overview of the global and regional economic and financial developments as well as several policy recommendations for the OIC Member Countries. The 38th Session of the COMCEC entrusted the SESRIC to continue monitoring world economic developments and their implications on the Member Countries, as well as continue to report thereon to the annual sessions of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to submit an annual report on recent world economic developments and their implications on the OIC member countries. The Member Countries will share their experience regarding the recent economic developments.

AGENDA ITEM 5

Intra-OIC Trade

Expansion of intra-OIC trade is one of the most important strategic objectives of the COMCEC in trade domain. In this regard, trade occupies an important place in the COMCEC agenda.

In accordance with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, Trade Working Group, in its 20th and 21st Meetings, has focused on the theme of “Improving E-commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries.”

Regarding the projects supported under the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding, Bangladesh, Iran, Suriname, Türkiye are implementing five projects and SMIIC in trade domain in 2023 and 16 Member Countries in total will benefit from the projects.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 20th and 21st Meetings of the Trade Working Group and the projects being implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding.

There are also some important programs and projects on the agenda of the COMCEC in the field of trade. Some of the ongoing programs and activities are; TPS-OIC, Islamic Trade Fairs, WTO-Related Technical Assistance, Trade Financing Activities, and Trade Related Activities of SMIIC.

- **TPS-OIC**

TPS-OIC (Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member Countries) is the most important project of the COMCEC in the trade area. The System is based on three agreements, namely the Framework Agreement, the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme (PRETAS), and the Rules of Origin. The legal basis of the TPS-OIC was completed in 2011.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 37th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC and the decision of the Trade Negotiating Committee Meeting held in June 2021, the System has become fully operational as of July 1st, 2022.

Within this framework, welcoming the effectuation of the System, the 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the TPS-OIC Participating States, which have not done so yet, to expedite the completion of their internal procedures and called upon the Member Countries, which have not yet signed or ratified the TPS-OIC Agreements to do so at their earliest convenience and complete other procedures for joining the System.

A TNC Meeting was held virtually on 6-7 June 2023 and the Participating States considered the issues related to the effective implementation of the TPS-OIC as well as the experiences witnessed during the first year implementation of the System. In accordance with the decision of the aforementioned meeting, the TNC will convene on November 20th, 2023 to consider the matters during the implementation of the System before the upcoming COMCEC Session.

Furthermore, a training programme on “Strengthening Institutional Capacity for the Implementation of TPS-OIC Rules of Origin” was conducted on 14-16 August 2023 in Ankara, Türkiye towards the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic Iran under the COMCEC Project Funding.

Required Action(s): As the co-secretariat of the TNC, the CCO will brief the Session on the recent developments regarding the TPS-OIC. The Session will consider the recent developments and take appropriate action if necessary.

- **Islamic Trade Fairs**

Islamic trade fairs are held every two years in one of the OIC Member Countries by ICDT in order to promote intra-OIC trade. In addition to the Islamic Trade Fairs, sector-specific exhibitions are also organized by the ICDT in the Member Countries.

The 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session and 39th Follow-up Committee reiterated their request to the Member Countries to encourage their private sector to actively participate in the Islamic Trade Fairs and requested ICDT to submit progress reports on the Trade Fairs of Islamic Countries regularly and the other specialized fairs as well as exhibitions to the COMCEC Sessions and other related OIC fora.

Required Action(s): The ICDT is expected to report the recent developments on the Islamic Trade Fairs and sector-specific exhibitions.

- **WTO Related Technical Assistance**

COMCEC encourages its members to join the WTO in order to benefit from the international trade system on an equitable and fair basis. For this purpose, the IsDB Group and ICDT organize training courses, seminars, and workshops on WTO-related issues for the benefit of the Member Countries.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC and the 39th Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC expressed their thanks and appreciation to the IsDB Group and the ICDT for organizing WTO-related training courses and seminars and called upon them to continue providing technical assistance to the Member Countries on WTO-related issues and to enhance their efforts in sensitizing the Member Countries to the impact of WTO trade negotiations on their economies by monitoring matters relating to WTO activities and reporting them to the annual sessions of the COMCEC and other concerned fora.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the ICDT and IsDB to develop a technical assistance program for the benefit of the State of Palestine on WTO-trade negotiations, trade facilitation, training local negotiators, and market access strategies of the national SMEs through reverse linkage program with other Member Countries

Required Action(s): The IsDB and ICDT are expected to report their activities in this field to the Session.

- **Trade Financing Activities**

Access to affordable trade financing is one of the crucial factors for business people to engage in international trade. Trade financing activities are mainly carried out within the IsDB Group's trade financing organ, the Islamic Trade Financing Corporation (ITFC). Moreover, the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC) has been providing export credit insurance to mitigate the risks of trade.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC and the 39th Follow-up Committee appreciated the trade finance, promotion and development, and capacity-building activities of ITFC and the mobilization of funds from the international market and development partners for funding trade finance operations in the Member Countries, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent.

Moreover, the 38th Session of the COMCEC and the 39th Follow-up Committee took note of the progress report submitted by the ICIEC on the OIC Business Intelligence Program and requested

the ICIEC in collaboration with SESRIC to complete the technical preparations for launching the Program at the earliest.

Required Action(s): The IsDB Group is expected to report its activities on trade financing and export credit risk insurance. The IsDB Group (ICIEC) is also expected to inform the Session of the latest developments with regard to the OIC Business Intelligence Program.

- **Trade-Related Activities of SMIIC**

SMIIC, as the affiliated institution of the OIC, aims to enhance trade among the Member Countries by realizing harmonized standards and eliminating technical barriers among them.

The 38th COMCEC Session and the 39th Follow-up Committee expressed their appreciation to the SMIIC for organizing capacity-building activities in its field of competence and invited Member Countries to support to further increase its visibility in international fora, particularly through its accession as an observer to the WTO-Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.

The 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session as well as the 39th Follow-up Committee invited the Member Countries to adopt and use the OIC/SMIIC Standards as their national standards with a view to contributing to the harmonization of standards and alleviating technical barriers to trade among the Member Countries and calls upon the relevant Member Countries, which use OIC/SMIIC Standards, to officially adopt the standards according to SMIIC adoption guidelines.

Required Action(s): The SMIIC will inform the Session of the recent developments regarding its trade-related activities.

AGENDA ITEM 6

Enhancing the Role of the Private Sector in Economic Cooperation

- **Private Sector Meetings**

The Private Sector Meetings, organized by the Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (ICCIA), serve as a platform for the private sector of the OIC Member Countries to communicate with each other, and explore the opportunities for trade and investments. Apart from private sector meetings, the ICCIA also organizes various sector-specific Forums in the areas of Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Tourism, Islamic Economy, Investment, Digital Economy, and Entrepreneurship to support the sustainable development of the OIC private sector for the resilient economic growth of the member countries.

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of in-person participation of SMEs for trade facilitation, the Committee requested OIC Member Countries to incentivize SMEs through subsidies to participate in the ICCIA sector-specific forums, particularly from Palestine, G5 Sahel states, and geographically distant member countries.

Required Action(s): The ICCIA is expected to inform the Session of the recent developments regarding private sector meetings.

The 39th Follow-up Committee welcomed the proposal to intensify and expand the existing efforts in the field of competition law and policy among the Competition Authorities and relevant national institutions in the OIC Member Countries in charge of competition and requested SESRIC to undertake the necessary technical work, in cooperation with the interested Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions and to report the progress regularly to COMCEC Ministerial and Follow-up Committee Meetings.

- **OIC Arbitration Center**

The OIC Arbitration Center has been operating towards the settlement of trade and investments disputes. In this respect, the 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the Member Countries to encourage their Chambers to actively participate in the work of the OIC Arbitration Center with a view to enhance the utilization of the Center's services by their private sector. Similarly, the 39th Follow-up Committee called upon the Member Countries to encourage their relevant institutions to actively participate in the activities of the OIC Arbitration Center with a view to making use of services provided by the Centre.

Required Action(s): The ICCIA and OIC Arbitration Center are expected to brief the Session on the recent developments. The Session will consider the issue and take the necessary action accordingly.

- **Financing Private Sector Development**

Islamic Corporation for the Development of Private Sector (ICD), a member of the IsDB Group, works towards the development of the private sector in the Member Countries and provides financing to private sector projects for this purpose.

Commending the investment, financing, advisory, and development activities of ICD for supporting the private sector development in OIC Member Countries, the 38th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC requested ICD to regularly submit comprehensive reports regarding its efforts on promoting the private sector to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings. Furthermore, the 39th COMCEC Follow-up Committee invited the Member Countries to better utilize the facilities of the ICD through solid projects aimed at creating competition, entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities.

Required Action(s): The ICD is expected to brief the Session on its efforts in financing the private sector in the OIC Member Countries.

Taking into consideration the vital role of Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)

for countries' economies in terms of production, investment, employment, and growth, the 38th Session of the COMCEC welcomed the suggestion of the Republic of Türkiye to develop a well-designed MSME Program and requested the CCO, in cooperation with the interested Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions, to initiate technical studies with the relevant stakeholders and to report the progress thereon to the 39th COMCEC Session.

Based on this resolution, the 39th Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC requested the CCO, in collaboration with the interested Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions, to finalize the technical preparations through, among others, conducting a survey to get insights about the needs and expectations of the Member Countries and organizing technical meetings (when needed) with a view to launching the program during the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session.

In accordance with this task, the CCO conducted a survey to get insight on the state of the SMEs in the OIC Member Countries and the challenges faced. In addition, a Technical Meeting on the COMCEC MSME Programme was held virtually on October 11th, 2023 with the participation of the representatives of the interested Member Countries. During the Meeting, the current situation of the SMEs in the Member Countries, the main challenges faced and the thematic cooperation areas were elaborated. Furthermore, another Technical Meeting on the COMCEC MSME Programme will be conducted in November 2023 within the scope of the preparation of the above-mentioned programme.

Required Action(s): The CCO is expected to brief the Session on the COMCEC SME Programme.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Deepening Financial Cooperation

The deepening and widening of financial cooperation bear great importance for the socio-economic development of the OIC Member Countries.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the 19th and 20th Meetings of the Financial Cooperation Working Group were held in 2023 with the theme of "Improving Cooperation among Central Banks in Terms of Digital Currencies: Challenges and Prospects for OIC Member Countries".

Regarding the projects supported within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding in 2023, SESRIC is implementing the project titled "Improving the Role of Islamic Finance in Supporting Microenterprises and SMEs in Post-Pandemic Period" for the benefit of 40 Member Countries in 2023.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 19th and 20th Meetings of the Financial Cooperation Working Group as well as the projects being implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding.

Furthermore, other ongoing activities in the area of financial cooperation have been carried out under the OIC Exchanges Forum, COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum, and OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum.

- **OIC Exchanges Forum**

As a special platform and communication channel for the member countries, the OIC Exchanges Forum aims to deepen and widen cooperation among the relevant authorities of the member countries. The Forum conducted sixteen meetings so far and developed some important projects including the S&P OIC/COMCEC 50 Shariah Index and OIC Gold Exchange. The 17th Meeting of the Forum will be held on October 31st, 2023. Detailed information about the efforts of the Forum is available on its website (<http://www.oicexchanges.org/>).

The 38th COMCEC Session commended the Task Force on Indices for the successful completion of the establishment of the S&P/OIC COMCEC 50 Shariah Index Fund. Moreover, the 38th COMCEC Session took note of the briefing by the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum on the efforts towards establishing the OIC Gold Exchange Project among the volunteering Member States and requested the Forum's Secretariat to advance the technical preparations on the new blockchain-based model for the OIC Gold Exchange Project in cooperation with central banks, and report to the progress to the 39th COMCEC Session and Follow-up Committee Meeting.

Accordingly, the 39th Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC called upon the Member Countries to support the active promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Shariah International Fund, requested the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum to complete the technical preparations on the OIC Gold Project, based on the block-chain model, in cooperation with central banks of the interested Member Countries.

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the Forum, Borsa Istanbul is expected to inform the Session of the recent developments regarding the activities of the Forum as well as the S&P OIC/COMCEC 50 Shariah Index, and to report the progress towards the realization of the above-mentioned Gold Exchange Project. The Session will discuss the issue and take necessary action.

- **COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum**

As a regular platform exerting efforts towards increasing coordination and cooperation in the fields of regulatory and legal infrastructure among the Member Countries, the COMCEC Capital Markets Regulators Forum conducted eleven meetings till now. The 12th Meeting of the Forum will be held virtually on November 7th, 2023. Detailed information about the efforts of the Forum is available on the Forum's website (<http://www.comceccmr.org/>).

The 38th COMCEC Session took note with appreciation of the completion of the GEFAS Platform (Real Estate Based and Developing Financial Instruments Information System) designed to be an information hub for real estate-themed capital market instruments and invited the interested Member Countries to encourage their relevant authorities to join this platform and provide the necessary information to be published in GEFAS.

Furthermore, recalling the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the 39th Follow-up Committee requested the Secretariat of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum to expedite the necessary legal, administrative, and technological preparations for the establishment of the COMCEC Real Estate Electronic Platform/COMCEC Real Estate Exchange and invited the Member Countries, which have not done so yet, to identify their authorized bodies as well as notify them to the Forum's Secretariat for enhancing coordination.

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the Forum, the Capital Markets Board of Türkiye is expected to brief the Session on the recent developments regarding the endeavours of the Forum. The Session will discuss the issue and take necessary action.

- OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum

Since its inception, the OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum has been providing a regular platform to discuss monetary, banking, and financial issues, along with the efforts aimed at deepening the cooperation and coordination among Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member Countries. Within this framework, the 5th Meeting of the Forum was held in 24-25 September 2023. Detailed information about the efforts of the Forum is available on the Forum's website (<http://comceccentralbanks.org/>).

Furthermore, the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session commended the training and capacity-building programs, particularly on risk management in Islamic financial institutions, monetary operations, and integration of financial technologies in Islamic finance, organized by the SESRIC for the benefit of Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member States and requested SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the benefit of the relevant national institutions of the Member States within the framework of its Central Banks Capacity Building Programme (CB-CaB).

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the Forum, the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye is expected to inform the Session about the activities of the Forum.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Improving Transport and Communications

The transport and communications sector is of particular importance for the economic and social development of the Member Countries.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) conducted its 20th and 21st Meetings in 2023 with the theme of “Measuring Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries”.

Regarding the projects supported under the COMCEC Project Funding, three projects are being implemented by Benin, The Gambia and SESRIC within the in transport sector and 22 Member Countries in total will benefit from the projects.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Committee on the outcomes of the 20th and 21st Meeting of the TCWG, the projects being implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding as well as other developments regarding the cooperation in this field.

AGENDA ITEM 9

Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector

Tourism industry, which is an increasingly important source of income, employment, and wealth in many countries, is one of the important cooperation areas of the COMCEC. In line with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the Tourism Working Group (TWG) conducted its 20th and 21st Meetings in 2023 with the theme of “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness”.

Regarding the projects supported under the COMCEC Project Funding, two projects have been implemented by Mali and Uganda in 2023 in tourism area and 5 Member Countries have benefited from the projects.

Furthermore, recalling the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the 39th Follow-up Committee requested the ICDT and SESRIC, in close cooperation with the relevant OIC institutions and international key stakeholders, to organize training and promotional events for the benefit of West African Countries Members with respect to the regional project entitled “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa” to boost community-based tourism in the region and thereby support the local economy within the West African region.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 20th and 21st Meetings and the projects implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding as well as other developments regarding the cooperation in this field.

AGENDA ITEM 10

Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security

Agriculture is one of the significant cooperation areas defined in the COMCEC Strategy. In line with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the 20th and 21st Meetings of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group were held in 2023 with the theme of “Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries.

The Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development was held on 1-2 October 2023, in Doha/State of Qatar.

Concerning the projects supported under the COMCEC Project Funding, 4 projects are being implemented by Benin, The Gambia, Malaysia and Türkiye in 2023 in agriculture domain and 7 Member Countries will benefit from the projects.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Session on the outcome of the 20th and 21st Meetings of the Agriculture Working Group, the projects being implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding and other developments in this cooperation area.

AGENDA ITEM 11

Alleviating Poverty

As one of the most challenging issues facing humanity, poverty remains at the top of the global development agenda. Unfortunately, achievements in poverty alleviation in the last decades have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In line with the relevant resolution of the 38th Session of the COMCEC, the PAWG conducted its 20th and 21st meetings in 2023 with the theme of “Effective Vocational Education and Training Strategies to Reduce Youth Unemployment in the OIC Member Countries.”

Under the COMCEC Project Funding, 2 projects are being implemented by Benin and SESRIC in 2023 and 36 Member Countries in total will benefit from the projects.

Required Action(s): The CCO will brief the Session on the outcomes of the 20th and 21st meetings and the projects being implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding.

Moreover, the ongoing cooperation efforts in the area of poverty alleviation have been carried out under the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), Special Program for Development of Africa (SPDA), Vocational Education and Training Program for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET), and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and Special Program for Development of Africa (SPDA)

Following the 3rd Extraordinary Islamic Summit held in 2005, a special fund called as Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) was established under the Islamic Development Bank. Since it was officially launched in 2007, the fund has aimed to help the reduction of poverty in the Member Countries. Another important initiative of IsDB, launched in 2008, is the Special Program for Development of Africa (SPDA). Along with creating more employment, this fund aims to enhance economic growth and agricultural production in African Member Countries.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC reiterated its request to the Member Countries, which have pledged to the ISFD to fulfil their commitments and make fresh contributions to finance more poverty alleviation projects in Member Countries. The Session also welcomed the efforts of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) for mobilization of resources from different financing institutions for more effective implementation of the SPDA, and requested the ISFD to enhance its endeavours for resource mobilization and advocacy from different resources including governmental, non-governmental resources, and the private sector in the Member Countries and to report the progress to the 39th COMCEC Session. The 38th Session of the COMCEC also reiterated its request to the ISFD to prepare and issue a publication containing the gist of activities and best project implementations throughout the 15 years of its existence.

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the recent COMCEC Sessions on the observations of the Member Countries for improving the performance of the ISFD in serving the purpose of poverty alleviation through, among others, augmenting the project base and outreach of the Fund by focusing on a greater number of projects, especially grant based small/medium sized projects, requested the ISFD to consider these observations during planning its future programs and activities and report the progress to the relevant OIC Fora including forthcoming meetings/sessions of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The IsDB Group is expected to submit reports on the implementation of the ISFD and SPDA and to inform the Session on the implementation of the aforementioned programs.

- **OIC-VET Program**

To achieve quality vocational education and training, SESRIC initiated a Vocational Education and Training Program for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET) in 2009.

Recognizing the efforts of SESRIC in the execution of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020, the 38th Session of the COMCEC and 39th Follow-up Committee requested SESRIC to continue submitting progress reports on the implementation status of the Road Map to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the SESRIC to conduct more capacity-building training activities in the field of TVET focusing on the cooperation areas of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020-2025, namely, "legislative framework, governance, and promotion", "TVET teacher education", "occupational standards, qualification and quality assurance system" and "certification and 27 modular training programs" and called upon the Member Countries to participate in and support the various capacity development activities of SESRIC organized under the OIC-VET Programme.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to present its progress report on the implementation of the OIC-TVET Strategic Roadmap 2020-2025.

- **Implementation of SDGs**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the UN Special Summit in September 2015, presenting a more ambitious and comprehensive global development agenda.

The 38th Session of the COMCEC requested the SESRIC to continue preparing annual reports on the progress towards achievement of the prioritized SDGs in the OIC Member Countries, submit them to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, and continue carrying out statistical training activities with a focus on prioritized SDGs for the benefit of National Statistical Offices of the Member Countries within the framework of its Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.

Furthermore, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the CCO compiles the relevant OIC Institutions' activities aligned with the prioritized SDG areas and submits to the COMCEC Sessions. In this respect, the CCO will report the aforementioned activities during the 39th COMCEC Session.

Required Action(s): SESRIC is expected to present its report on the progress towards achievement of the SDGs in the OIC Member Countries. The CCO will inform the Session of the activities of the relevant OIC Institutions' aligned with the prioritized SDG areas.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Cooperation on Digital Transformation

Underlining the emerging trends with respect to digital technologies in all government services in particular amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic, the 37th Session of the COMCEC decided the inclusion of digital transformation as an additional cooperation area in the COMCEC Agenda. Furthermore, the 38th Session of the COMCEC took note with appreciation the Declaration of the High-Level Meeting on “COMCEC High Level Digital Cooperation Initiative/Programme” hosted by Digital Transformation Office (DTO) of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye on November 27, 2022 on the sidelines of 38th COMCEC Session in particular the commitment of the Member Countries to continue their cooperation in this field under the “COMCEC High Level Digital Transformation Forum”. Digital Transformation Leaders Online Training Program was held on 9-13 October 2023 within the framework of the Forum.

Required Action(s): As the Secretariat of the COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Forum, the DTO of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye is expected to brief the Committee on the Forum’s endeavours.

AGENDA ITEM 13

Exchange of Views on

“Improving the E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries”

Exchange of views sessions are held regularly at the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions. The 38th Session of the COMCEC decided the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views of the next COMCEC Session as “Improving the E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries” and requested the COMCEC Trade Working Group in its 21st Meeting, in cooperation with the relevant OIC Institutions, to come up with concrete policy recommendations on this topic and report it to the 39th COMCEC Session.

In line with the above-mentioned resolution, the COMCEC Trade Working Group, in its 21st Meeting, has elaborated on the preparations for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session and come up with some policy recommendations to be submitted to the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The CCO is expected to inform the Session of the preparations for the Exchange of Views Session including the recommendations of the Working Group to be submitted to the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session for consideration. The Session will consider the recommendations and take necessary action.

- Possible Themes for the Exchange of Views Session of the 40th Session of the COMCEC

During its 39th Meeting, the COMCEC Follow-up Committee discussed the possible themes for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 40th Session of the COMCEC:

The 39th Meeting of the COMCEC Follow-up Committee requested the CCO to circulate a questionnaire to explore the Member States' views on the subject and report the outcome to the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

Required Action(s): The CCO is expected to present the results of the questionnaire on the theme of the exchange of views session of the 40th Session of the COMCEC. The 39th Session of the COMCEC will decide on the theme of next year's ministerial exchange of views session.

AGENDA ITEM 14
Date of the 40th Session of the COMCEC

The Session will decide on the dates of the 40th Session of the COMCEC and the 40th Meeting of the COMCEC Follow-up Committee.

Required Action(s): CCO will propose specific dates for the 40th Session of the COMCEC and the 40th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee. The Session will decide on the dates of the said meetings.

AGENDA ITEM 15
Any Other Business

