



**COMCEC**

# **REPORT THIRTY NINTH SESSION OF THE COMCEC**



**COMCEC Coordination Office  
December 2023**

**COMCEC**  
**Standing Committee for Economic and**  
**Commercial Cooperation of the Organization**  
**of the Islamic Cooperation**

**REPORT**  
**THIRTY NINTH SESSION**  
**OF THE COMCEC**

**(2-5 December 2023)**

**COMCEC Coordination Office**  
**December 2023**

**Address:**

**COMCEC Coordination Office**

**Necatibey Cad. 110/A**

**Ankara-TÜRKİYE**

**Phone : 90-312-294 57 10**

**Fax : 90-312-294 57 77-57 79**

**Website: <http://www.comcec.org>**

**e-mail : [comcec@comcec.org](mailto:comcec@comcec.org)**

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**PART ONE**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE THIRD ISLAMIC SUMMIT  
CONFERENCE ESTABLISHING THE STANDING COMMITTEES  
OF THE OIC CHAIRED BY HEADS OF STATE**

**I.**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE THIRD ISLAMIC SUMMIT  
CONFERENCE ESTABLISHING THE STANDING COMMITTEES  
OF THE OIC CHAIRED BY HEADS OF STATE**

**Resolution No. 13/3-P (IS)**

The Third Islamic Summit Conference (Palestine and Al-Quds Session), meeting in Mecca Al-Mukarramah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 19th to 22nd Rabi-Al-Awal, 1401 H. (25-28 January, 1981);

**Having** listened to the proposals by His Majesty King HASSAN II, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, that three committees will be established and chaired by the Kings and Presidents of the Islamic States,

**Proceeding** from a firm belief that joint Islamic action needs to be consolidated in the scientific and technological field, and in the economic and trade sphere,

**Prompted by the desire** to give information and culture a fresh impetus to help world public opinion understand the basic issues of the Islamic nations, particularly those of Al-Quds and Palestine, and to confront the tendentious campaign launched against Islam and Muslims,

**DECIDES:**

1. To establish three Standing Committees, the first for scientific and technological cooperation, the second for economic and trade cooperation, and the third for information and cultural affairs;
2. These Committees shall undertake to follow up implementation of the resolutions passed, or about to be passed, by the Islamic Conference in those fields; to study all possible means of strengthening cooperation among Muslim States in those fields, and to draw up programmes and submit proposals designed to increase the Islamic States' capacity in those fields;
3. Each Committee shall consist of the representatives of ten Islamic States, at ministerial level, and shall be chaired by the Head of State of an Islamic State;
4. Members of these Committees shall be elected by the Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference for a renewable term of three years;
5. A Committee shall hold a meeting, if invited to do so by its Chairman or by a majority of its members; its meeting shall be valid if attended by a majority.



**II.**

**FINAL COMMUNIQUE  
OF THE FIFTH ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE  
ENTRUSTING THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION TO  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE**

**Final Communiqué No. IS/4-84/E/DEC**

".... The Conference decided to entrust H.E. Mr. Kenan EVREN, President of the Republic of Türkiye, with the Chairmanship of the Permanent Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation..." (Page 18, para 40).

**III.**

**FINAL COMMUNIQUE  
OF THE THIRTEENTH ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE  
“UNITY AND SOLIDARITY FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE”  
REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE, İSTANBUL  
(14-15 April 2016)**

**OIC/13TH SUMMIT 2016/FC/FINAL**

129. The Conférence attached great importance to multi-modal connectivity to further advance economic coopération among OIC Member States. In this regard, it noted the recent developments on execution of the OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway project and encouraged OIC project owners and stakeholders to continue their efforts towards mobilizing technical and funding support for the successful implementation of this integrative project.

130. The Conférence commended the rôle of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Coopération (COMCEC) under the chairmanship of the Président of the Republic of Türkiye in contributing to the realization of OIC objectives in the economic domain.

131. The Conférence expressed its profound appréciation for the successful implementation of the COMCEC revised statute and strategy adopted at the 4th Extraordinary Summit. It called on Member States to enhance the implementation of the revised COMCEC statute and strategy, in close coordination and coopération with the General Secrétariat and in accordance with the OIC Charter, and requested Member States to continue to actively participate in the work of the COMCEC under the chairmanship of H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Président of the Republic of Türkiye.

**PART TWO**

**AGENDA, RESOLUTIONS AND REPORT OF THE  
THIRTY NINTH SESSION OF THE COMCEC**

**AGENDA**  
**OF THE 39<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE COMCEC**  
**(2-5 December 2023)**



**AGENDA  
OF THE 39<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE COMCEC  
(2-5 December 2023)**

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation
3. The Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action
4. World Economic Developments with Special Reference to the OIC Member Countries
5. Intra-OIC Trade
6. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
7. Deepening Financial Cooperation
8. Improving Transport and Communications
9. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
10. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
11. Alleviating Poverty
12. Cooperation on Digital Transformation
13. Exchange of Views on “Improving the e-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries”
14. Date of the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC
15. Any Other Business
16. Adoption of the Resolutions

**II**

**RESOLUTIONS  
OF THE THIRTY NINTH SESSION  
OF THE COMCEC  
(2-5 December 2023)**

Original: English

**RESOLUTIONS  
OF THE THIRTY NINTH SESSION  
OF THE COMCEC  
(İstanbul, Türkiye, 2-5 December 2023)**

The Thirty Ninth Ministerial Session of the COMCEC (Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) was held on 2-5 December 2023, in İstanbul;

Recalling the relevant resolutions of the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 31 May 2019, which commended the role of the COMCEC under the chairmanship of the President of the Republic of Türkiye, in contributing to the realization of OIC objectives in the economic domain and highly commended the successful implementation of the COMCEC revised Statute and the Strategy adopted at the Fourth Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference;

Recalling the relevant Resolutions of the Islamic Summit Conferences, the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) and the COMCEC, the 4<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference, the COMCEC Economic Summit in 2009, the 49<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, and the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC;

Reaffirming the commitment of all Member Countries to the OIC-2025: Programme of Action adopted at the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held on 14-15 April 2016 in İstanbul, Türkiye and to the COMCEC Strategy adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference held on 14-15 August 2012 in Makkah Al-Mukarramah;

Recalling the objectives and mandate of the COMCEC in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Islamic Summit and the COMCEC Statute including to serve as the central forum for the Member Countries to discuss international economic and commercial issues.

Taking note of the submission of the progress reports, working papers and studies on the different agenda items submitted by the OIC General Secretariat, the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group, Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC);

Expressing its appreciation to the Member Countries for hosting Ministerial Conferences, Meetings, workshops, fairs and other activities in the cooperation areas;



Commending the efforts made by the OIC General Secretariat, the COMCEC Coordination Office and the OIC institutions working in the area of economic and commercial cooperation, namely SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB Group, ICD, ITFC, ICIEC, ISFD, IOFS, SMIIC, and ICCIA.

1. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the Joint Arab Islamic Extraordinary Summit on Israeli Aggression Against the Palestinian People on 11 November 2023 Riyadh, **encourages** Member Countries to fully implement the said resolution.
2. **Commending** the endeavors towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and the Ministerial Policy Recommendations by the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions, **invites** the Member Countries to exert every effort, to the extent possible, to implement the Policy Recommendations and to harness the benefits of the current facilities and mechanisms, in particular the COMCEC Working Groups and COMCEC Project Support Programs, and **requests** the OIC Institutions to support the Member Countries to this end.
3. **Calls upon** the Member Countries to utilize the COMCEC Policy Follow-up System to submit necessary information and data on the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations in their respective countries and **requests** the CCO to regularly report the progress in the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy to the COMCEC Sessions, the Follow-up Committee Meetings and other relevant OIC fora.
4. **Expresses its appreciation to** the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat, CCO, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, IOFS, ISFD, SMIIC, and ICCIA towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.
5. **Underlining** the importance of the realization of the objectives set by OIC 2025: Programme of Action and active follow-up of the economic and commercial section of the Programme by the COMCEC, the Committee **requests** 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.
6. **Taking note** of the findings of the SESRIC's report titled "OIC Economic Outlook 2023: The Rise of the Digital Economy and Bridging the Digital Divide", in particular, **highlighting** a number of policy recommendations for promoting the integration of digital technologies in economic activities and bridging the digital divide in access to digital services and infrastructure, **encourages** SESRIC to initiate a digital transformation capacity building programme aimed at enhancing the capacities of member countries to effectively navigate and thrive in the digital age and **entrusts** SESRIC to continue monitoring world economic developments and their implications on the Member Countries as well as to continue to report thereon to the annual sessions of the COMCEC.
7. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, **requests** the Member Countries, who have not done so yet, to sign and ratify the agreements in the economic domain for furthering economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member Countries.

8. **Considering** the importance of an equitable and fair multilateral trading system for sustainable growth of the countries and **taking note of** the current technical assistance provided by WTO Member Countries of the OIC to the Non-Participating States for their accession efforts to the WTO, **calls upon** the IsDB and ICDT to keep on extending their technical assistance to the Member Countries in the context of the multilateral trade negotiations and coordinate the position of the Member Countries within the WTO with a view to setting up a common platform of negotiations in the framework of 13<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.
- 
9. **Welcoming** that the TPS-OIC has been effectuated as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 in line with relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the decisions of the TPS-OIC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC), **requests** the Participating States, which have not done so yet, to complete their internal procedures and **calls 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.
10. **Underlining** the significant role of the TNC in considering the issues experienced in the implementation of the TPS-OIC as well as discussing the road-map for the period ahead, **commends** the convening of the TNC Meetings on 6-7 June 2023 and 20 November 2023, respectively, and **calls upon** the TPS-OIC Participating States to actively participate in the meetings of the TNC in the upcoming period and report the status of implementation in their respective countries to the TNC Secretariat regularly.
11. **Welcomes** the convening of Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations on 4th of December 2023 in the margin of 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session where Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations deliberated on issues regarding the OIC trade agenda, particularly TPS-OIC.
12. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Republic of Türkiye for volunteering to host the Third Session of the Trade Negotiation Committee at ministerial level in an open ended format in the third quarter of 2024 and **requests** all Member Countries to actively participate in this important event.
13. **Appreciates** the organization of workshops, webinars, trainings, and Forums by ICDT and partner countries' institutions in the domain of trade and **requests** the Member Countries to keep on providing the ICDT with data relating to trade and investment statistics and regulations.
14. **Also appreciates** the trade finance and trade development activities of ITFC and the mobilization of funds from the development partners for funding trade operations in the Member Countries, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent by the year 2025.
15. **Requests** the ICIEC, in collaboration with the SESRIC, ICDT, and ICCIA to continue their efforts to complete the technical preparations for launching the OIC Business Intelligence Programme and submit a Progress Report to the 40<sup>th</sup> Follow-up Committee Meeting and the 40<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session.

16. **Commending** the efforts of SMIIC in the areas of standardization, metrology and accreditation as well as quality infrastructure and their impact on trade facilitation and capacity building, **invites** 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 Member Countries using OIC/SMIIC Standards to officially adopt the standards according to SMIIC adoption guidelines.
17. **Calls on** Member Countries to take necessary measures that would exempt Palestinian goods and commodities from customs duties, duties and taxes of similar effect, without quantitative or qualitative restrictions, which would have a positive effect on strengthening the steadfastness of the Palestinian people on their own territory and supporting the efforts of the State of Palestine to put an end to the Israeli occupation.
18. **Recognizing** the importance of in-person participation of SMEs for trade facilitation, **requests** 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 and facilitate the conduct of B2Bs among SMEs in different sectors, particularly in Palestine and special exhibitions in the OIC Member Countries.
19. **Taking note** of the important role of the OIC Arbitration Centre for the settlement of disputes, **calls upon** the Member Countries to encourage their relevant institutions to actively participate in the activities of the OIC Arbitration Centre with a view to making use of services provided by the Centre.
20. **Welcomes that** the Kingdom of Morocco hosted the Second Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in cooperation with General Secretariat of OIC and ICDT on 14-16 September 2023 in Casablanca to negotiate the Study of the development of a mechanism for the settlement of investment-related disputes or to explore the possibility and technical aspects of integrating the settlement of investment-related disputes to the OIC Arbitration Centre's portfolio of functions, and **also welcomes** that the Republic of Türkiye will host the Third Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in 2024 in İstanbul.
21. **Taking into consideration** the crucial role of private sector financing in mobilizing private investments and ensuring sustainable economic growth of the Member Countries, **commends** ICD for its efforts in promoting private sector development and aiding the economic progress of OIC member states by offering financial support and advisory services to the private sector and **invites** the Member Countries to further utilize the facilities of the ICD through concrete projects aimed at creating competition, entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities.
22. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 38<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session and the decision of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Follow-Up Meeting on developing a well-designed SME Program, **commends** the efforts exerted by the interested Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions through conducting the research including Surveys and technical meetings towards designing COMCEC SME Program.
23. **Welcomes** that the High-Level Meeting on COMCEC SME Program was hosted by

Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) of the Republic of Türkiye on 3 December 2023, in İstanbul.

24. **Taking note with appreciation** the recommendations of the High-Level Meeting on COMCEC SME Program was hosted by KOSGEB of the Republic of Türkiye on December 3, 2023 in İstanbul on the sidelines of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session, **invites** interested Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate in the activities to be conducted under the Program.
25. **Calls upon** the Member Countries to support the promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Shariah International Fund, which includes shares from the OIC COMCEC 50 Shariah Index, developed under the coordination of OIC Exchanges Forum, to the investors and the finance community in their respective countries.
26. **Requests** the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum to complete technical preparations on the OIC Gold Exchange Project, based on block-chain model, in cooperation with Central Banks of the interested Member Countries.
27. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, **requests** 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 and invites 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.
28. **Reiterating** the importance of the Dakar-Port Sudan Railway project as one of the most significant development projects aimed at enhancing the movement of people and goods among the African OIC Member Countries, **requests** the General Secretariat, in cooperation with the IsDB Group, to expedite their communications with Member Countries wishing to hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> OIC Transport Ministerial Meeting as soon as possible with a specific agenda on the project mentioned above.
29. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, **calls upon** the Member Countries to continue supporting their relevant institutions, tourism companies and tour operators etc. to further their efforts through, among others, organizing promotion campaigns and additional tours to Quds al-Sharif for supporting Palestinian residents of Al-Quds and to demonstrate solidarity with them.
30. **Welcoming** the organization of the Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development held in Doha/State of Qatar on 1-2 October 2023, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers (ICLM) held on 21-23 November 2023, in Baku, Azerbaijan, respectively, **calls upon** the Member Countries to further their efforts towards the realization of the resolutions adopted by these Conferences.
31. **Underlining** the importance of "IOFS Strategic Vision 2031" for scaling-up agriculture, rural development and food security in the OIC geography, **invites** the Member Countries to support to the extent possible the efforts of IOFS, and requests relevant OIC Institutions to accordingly assist the Member Countries in that process.
32. **Commends** the efforts of SESRIC in the execution of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020-2025, and **requests** SESRIC to continue providing regular progress updates to both COMCEC Sessions and Follow-up Committee Meetings and to identify

potential challenges and propose strategic responses to ensure the continued successful implementation of the OIC-VET Programme.

33. Also **commending** the efforts of SESRIC in conducting annual reports on the progress towards achievement of the prioritized SDGs in the OIC Member Countries and submission to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions on a regular basis, **requests** SESRIC to continue to carry out statistical training activities with a focus on SDGs for the benefit of National Statistical Offices of the Member Countries within the framework of its Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.
34. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the COMCEC Sessions, **requests** the CCO to carry on compiling the relevant OIC Institutions' activities aligned with the prioritized SDG areas for submission to the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.
35. **Underlining** the important role of Social Security Institutions (SSIs) in promoting social welfare and economic security within the OIC Member Countries, **acknowledges** SESRIC for its efforts in this area and requests the Centre to further its efforts in technical preparations and collaborations with interested Member Countries aiming at initiating an Intra-OIC network of cooperation among the SSIs, thus contributing to the goal of enhanced economic security in the OIC region.
36. **Taking note with appreciation** the efforts of the COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Forum in exchanging experience among the Member Countries in digital transformation area and **calls upon** the Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate in the activities of the High-Level Forum in the upcoming period.
37. **Welcomes** the policy recommendations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Trade Working Group, which served as the preparatory meeting for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session, on "Improving E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries" held on 16-17 October 2023, and **calls upon** the Member Countries to implement these recommendations and report the progress through COMCEC Policy Follow-up System.
38. **Decides on** "Digital Transformation in Payment Systems in the OIC Member Countries" as the theme for the Exchange of Views Session at the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC and **requests** the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group in its 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting, in cooperation with the relevant OIC Institutions, to come up with concrete policy recommendations on this topic and report it to the 40<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session.
39. **Decides** that the 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Follow-up Committee will be held on 22-23 May 2024, and the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC will be held on 2-5 November 2024, in Türkiye.

## SUPPLEMENTARY RESOLUTIONS OF THE 39<sup>TH</sup> COMCEC MINISTERIAL SESSION

1. **Welcomes** the Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy submitted by the CCO highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy and **commends** the Member Countries and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to the implementation of the Strategy.
2. **Welcomes** the enlargement of the scope of the COMCEC Al-Quds Program with new thematic areas such as entrepreneurship, job creation, youth empowerment, e-commerce, and SME development, and the implementation of five projects to be finalized by the Ministry of National Economy of Palestine under the Program by the end of 2023.
3. **Welcomes** the 11<sup>th</sup> Call for Project Proposals made by the CCO in October 2023 within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding.
4. **Taking note with appreciation** the report presented by the OIC General Secretariat on the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the OIC-2025: Program of Action, **calls upon** the relevant OIC Institutions to attend the Seventh Annual Coordination Meeting of OIC Institutions (ACMOI) in January 2024, in Jeddah, OIC Headquarters.
5. **Welcomes** the launching of the OIC Labour Centre, a new specialized institution of the OIC, to serve as an executing agency for implementing OIC resolutions and programmes in the domain of labour, employment and social protection.
6. **Commends** OIC Member Countries, which have already signed and ratified the Statute of the OIC Labour Centre, and **encourages** other OIC Member Countries to conclude all necessary arrangements to accede to the said Statute at their earliest convenience.
7. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Meetings of the COMCEC Trade Working Group held on 2 May 2023 and 16-17 October 2023, respectively, with the theme “Improving E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries”, **welcomes** its policy recommendations categorized under four different headings.

(Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)

8. **Welcomes** the activities conducted by the CCO, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, IOFS, ISFD, ICCIA, and SMIIC in their field of competency, aligned with the COMCEC Strategy since the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.
9. **Commends** SESRIC for its ongoing dedication to crafting technical background reports and research studies covering diverse socio-economic matters relevant to OIC Conferences And Meetings, Particularly Sectoral Ministerial Conferences And Standing Committee Sessions, **and expresses its appreciation** to SESRIC for its specific reports and research studies conducted since the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of COMCEC, addressing vital areas of intra-OIC trade cooperation, the role of the private sector in economic collaboration, transport and communication, agriculture and food security, poverty alleviation, and financial cooperation.

10. **Commends** SESRIC for implementing a comprehensive range of capacity-building programs and training activities in various socio-economic fields, crucial to the needs of OIC Member States, and **takes note with appreciation** of the implementation of 58 capacity-building activities since the 38<sup>th</sup> Session of COMCEC under seven cooperation areas of COMCEC, which have been specifically designed to serve the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations as well as the COMCEC Strategy.
11. **Commends** the efforts of Bangladesh, Iran, Suriname, Türkiye, and SMIIC for the successful implementation of the following trade projects in 2023 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:
- The project entitled “Developing Export Competitiveness of Potential Halal Products of Bangladesh ” implemented by Bangladesh in partnership with Türkiye, and SMIIC
  - The project entitled “Capacity-building and Institutional Strengthening for Rules of Origin in OIC Member States” implemented by Iran in partnership with Türkiye,
  - The project entitled “Supporting and Ensuring SMEs in Suriname and Guyana to Continue Business during Crisis” implemented by Suriname with Guyana and Türkiye,
  - The project entitled “Raising Awareness for Multilateral/Mutual Recognition According to the OIC/SMIIC Halal Standards” implemented by Türkiye with six beneficiary countries,
  - The project entitled “Halal food and meat Detection Methods Training and Inter-laboratory Comparison for OIC Countries” implemented by SMIIC with ten beneficiary countries.
12. **Appreciates** ICDT’s following activity conducted in 2023 and **invites** the Member Countries to actively participate in the following fairs, exhibitions, and forums to be organized by the ICDT in 2024:
- A Panel discussion on gastronomy, health, and Muslim tourism on the sidelines of the 3<sup>rd</sup> OIC Tourism Fair in Doha from November 20 to 22, 2023.
  - A workshop on Market Access and Management of regional value chains for the benefit of woman owned enterprises and corporations in OIC English speaking Countries will be held from 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December 2023 in Banjul, The Gambia.
  - The 18<sup>th</sup> OIC Trade Fair "18<sup>th</sup> TFOIC," to be held in the first semester of 2024 in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
  - The Pakistan-Africa Business Forum, which will take place in the first semester of 2024 alongside the 18<sup>th</sup> TFOIC.
  - The OIC-Azerbaijan Halal Business Forum, which will take place in Baku on 24-26 April 2024.
  - The 10th OIC Halal Products Exhibition, referred to as the "10th OIC Halal

Expo" which will take place on 8-12 October 2024 in Tunis, Republic of Tunisia.

- The 5th OIC Health Fair, scheduled for July 4 to 7, 2024, in Dakar, Republic of Senegal.

13. **Appreciates** the Republic of Tunisia for hosting the workshop, to be organized on 10-11 January 2024 as a preparation for the 13th Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization, in cooperation with IsDB and ICDT.
14. **Welcomes** the readiness of the ICDT and CCO, as the Secretariat of the TNC, to organize awareness-raising workshops on the TPS-OIC and its impact on the private sector in Bangladesh, Chad, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Arab region, and at the level of ECOWAS and CEMAC in the year of 2024.
15. **Reiterates its request** to 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 of local negotiators, market access strategies of the national SMEs through reverse linkage program with other Member Countries.
16. **Calls upon** the WTO members of the OIC to assist non-WTO Members of the OIC in their accession process to the WTO.
17. **Also calls upon** the Member Countries and the relevant OIC institutions to extend support to the Member Countries who need technical assistance on trade facilitation practices towards the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
18. **Takes note with appreciation** that by 2023, ITFC's cumulative trade finance approvals and disbursement reached US\$73.5 billion and US\$61.9 billion, respectively, and **also notes that** ITFC's cumulative funds mobilized from partner banks and financial institutions reached US\$ 44.8 billion.
19. **Takes note of** ITFC efforts to extend financing for SME and agriculture sector that has direct and prominent impact on improving food security, productivity, job creation, increasing export revenues and alleviating poverty.
20. **Commends** the efforts of ITFC for its Global SMEs program aiming at improving access to credit for the SMEs with its latest program launched in partnership with Saudi Exim Bank and Saudi Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority.
21. **Takes note with the appreciation of** the efforts of ITFC for the design of the Trade Connect Central Asia+ (TCCA+), in consultation with the targeted countries, aiming at strengthening the capacities of the trade support institutions and the private sector in the CIS Member Countries and Azerbaijan, as well as promoting the regional cooperation initiatives in partnership with stakeholders.
22. **Welcomes** the efforts of ITFC for expanding the Arab Africa Trade Bridges (AATB), which is designed to promote trade and investments as a tool to expand economic opportunities and support inclusive and sustainable growth across the Arab and sub-Saharan OIC Member Countries.
23. **Takes note of** the Progress Report submitted by the ICIEC on the OIC Business



Intelligence Centre (OBIC) and the efforts exerted by ICIEC and its Partners for organizing two Capacity Building Programmes for the Users of the OBIC in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and Istanbul, Türkiye in 2023.

24. **Takes note with appreciation** of the initiatives taken by ICIEC to lessen the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Member Countries, specifically, the launching of the ICIEC-ISFD Emergency Response Initiative (ICERI) and the COVID Guarantee Facility (CGF).
25. **Takes note with appreciation** the performance of ICIEC operations, which resulted in USD 11.6 billion as business insured during 2022, compared to USD 9.8 billion in 2021, in addition to USD 5.52 billion as business insured during H1 2023, bringing the cumulative amount of business insured to USD 100.5 billion since its inception.
26. **Acknowledges** ICIEC's role in supporting USD 47.8 billion of intra-OIC business insured since its inception till the end of H1 2023 (USD 40.2 billion of intra-OIC trade and USD 7.6 billion of intra-investment) and involving 37 countries.
27. **Welcomes** the memberships of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Tajikistan, which has increased the number of SMIIC Member Countries to 44 along with 3 Observers.
28. **Welcomes** the efforts of SMIIC for conducting the following activities in its field of competence;
  - Training program on “Introduction to SMIIC, its activities, and OIC SMIIC Halal standards” for 66 participants from the Chadian Standardization Agency (ATNOR) staff, and stakeholders on 11-12 September 2023, in N'djamena, Republic of Chad.
  - COMSTECH-SMIIC Training Course on “OIC/SMIIC Halal Products Standards and Testing” held between 25-29 September 2023 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in collaboration with Islamic University of Technology in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
  - 12<sup>th</sup> Technical Committee Week Meetings and SMIIC Committee on Standards for Conformity Assessment meeting on 2-6 October 2023 in Istanbul, Republic of Türkiye.
  - Training program titled “Halal Food and Meat Detection Methods Training and Interlaboratory Comparison for OIC Countries” which was funded under the COMCEC Project Funding and held between 23-26 October 2023 in SFDA Food Control Laboratory Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
29. **Calls upon** Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB) to develop and maintain Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) among the national halal accreditation bodies of the OIC Member Countries based on OIC/SMIIC standards as defined in OIC Global Halal Quality Infrastructure (OHAQ).
30. **Expressing its appreciation** to the Republic of Türkiye for hosting the Halal Expo 2023 İstanbul and 9<sup>th</sup> World Halal Summit in collaboration with SMIIC and ICDT on 23-26 November 2023, in Istanbul, **calls upon** the Member States to

actively participate in the Halal Expo 2024 –İstanbul and 10<sup>th</sup> World Halal Summit to be held in İstanbul, Türkiye on 27-30 November 2024.

31. **Requests** SESRIC to implement a training program in diagnosing and analysing markets with high export potential for SMEs for the benefit of women and young entrepreneurs.
32. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting Halal Expo during February 2024, **encourages** Member Countries to actively participate in Bahrain Halal Expo which will cover a range of products, services and industries, including food products, livestock, pharmaceutical products, health and medical services, cosmetics products, and various financial, tourism and educational services.
33. **Emphasizing** the role of ICCIA, as an engine of mobilizing investment, contributing to policy-making related to the private sector development, and undertaking different initiatives for the capacity building of the chambers of commerce of the OIC region, **welcomes** the continuous efforts of ICCIA towards initiating a wide range of workshops for the Member Chambers with a view to enhance the capacity and quality of their institutions through ICCIA Academy and **invites** the OIC Member Countries to encourage their public - private sector organizations to take part in ICCIA's mega sector specific forums and events organized for the development of the private sector in OIC Member Countries.
34. **Takes note of** efforts and following activities of the ICCIA in organizing 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:
  - Green Entrepreneurship in Pakistan: Opportunities & Challenges on 8 December 2022 at Karachi School of Business & Leadership (KSBL)
  - Culture & Creative Economy: “Unlocking the Creative Economy”, Launching Ceremony, on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023, Federation House, Karachi
  - Angel Investors Summit, ICCIA Headquarters Karachi-Pakistan, on 18 March 2023 13<sup>th</sup> Textile Asia Expo, March 10 - 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023
  - Manafea Forum- The Way to a Promising Future, Makkah Chamber Headquarters, 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023
  - Urban Innovation- Opportunities & Challenges: held on 25 May 2023 at Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science & Technology (SZABIST), Karachi
  - Textile & Commerce: Crafting Success in Business on 18 August 2023, at Indus Valley School of Arts (IVS)
  - Ceramic Art: From Passion to Profit, on 5 October, 2023, at Indus Valley School of Arts (IVS)

35. **Taking note of** the vision of the tripartite MANAFEFA partnership between the Islamic Chamber, Makkah Chamber, and Madinah Chamber, to promote Makkah and Madinah as the hub of financial and business activities in the Islamic world, **invites** the OIC Member Countries to encourage their Member Chambers to actively participate in the series of events and forums conducted under the tripartite MANAFEFA.
36. **Also taking note of** the continuous efforts of the ICCIA to establish Microfinance institutions and the initiation of the feasibility study in collaboration with IsDB in the G5 Sahel region in Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, **requests** ICCIA in mobilizing available funds from international organizations working particularly for poverty alleviation, small farmers and green economy, to fund the creation of operational manuals for ICCIA Islamic Microfinance Institutions.
37. **Takes note** that ICD's gross cumulative approvals stand at \$ 6.7 billion, and cumulative disbursements totals \$ 4.4 billion as the end of September 2023.
38. **Takes note with appreciation** the dedicated cooperation efforts of ICD to develop more than 10 joint transactions worth over \$150Million where ICD partnered with ITFC and ICIEC during 2023 to capture synergies across Islamic Development Bank Group Entities.
39. **Commends** ICD's efforts in addressing food security challenge facing OIC member countries including allocation of dedicated \$270 million with a focus on basic food products and agriculture yield enhancement tools.
40. **Also commends** ICD for its 2023 private sector development activities including financing approvals of approximately \$700 million and financing disbursements of about \$525 million for private sector projects within its member countries.
41. **Appreciates** SESRIC and ICD for jointly preparing report entitled "Investment Outlook in the OIC Member Countries".
42. **Acknowledging** the challenges faced by Palestine and the need for supportive measures, **invites** Member Countries to support Palestinian businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to enhance their export capacity.
43. **Welcoming** the organization of the Fourth Edition of Pak-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition on 9-11 January 2024 in Cairo, Egypt by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, **encourages** the OIC Member Countries to actively participate in the event towards enhancing intra-OIC trade, investment, and private sector collaborations.
44. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group on 9-10 October 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, with the theme "Improving Cooperation among Central Banks in terms of Digital Currencies: Challenges and Prospects for OIC Member Countries" and **welcomes** its policy recommendations.

(Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)

45. **Commends** the efforts of SESRIC for the successful implementation of the project entitled “Unleashing the Potential of Islamic Finance in Supporting MSMEs in the OIC Member Countries” implemented by SESRIC in 2023 in collaboration with Bank Indonesia (BI), Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), Saudi Central Bank (SAMA) and the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye (CBRT) for the benefit of 40 Member Countries.
46. **Welcomes** the convening of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OIC Exchanges Forum on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and the offer of Borsa İstanbul, as the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum, to host the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum in 2024, and **invites** the Member Countries to actively participate in the activities organized under this Forum.
47. **Commends** the efforts of SESRIC in organizing training and capacity-building activities on various technical and regulatory aspects related to the work of the Stock Exchanges and **requests** SESRIC, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum, to organize such activities for the benefit of the Stock Exchanges and relevant national authorities in the Member States within the framework of SESRIC’s Stock Exchanges Capacity Building Programme (SE-CaB).
48. **Commends** the efforts exerted by the Task Forces of COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum namely capacity building, market development, Islamic finance and financial literacy, **welcomes** the convening of the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum on 6-7 November 2023 and the offer of the Capital Markets Board (CMB) of the Republic of Türkiye, as the Forum Secretariat, to host the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC CMR Forum, in 2024, and **requests** all the Member Countries to actively participate in this Meeting.
49. **Welcomes** the efforts the convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum on 24-25 September 2023 in İstanbul and the offer of the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye as the Secretariat of the OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum, to host the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum in 2024, and **requests** the Member Countries to actively participate in this Meeting.
50. **Commending** the training and capacity building programs, particularly on Islamic banking and finance, financial stability and monetary policy, organized by SESRIC for the benefit of Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member States, **requests** SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the benefit of the relevant national institutions of the Member States within the framework of the Central Banks Capacity Building Programme (CB-CaB).
51. **Takes note with appreciation of** the convening of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group on 12-13 October 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, with the theme "Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries" and **welcomes** its policy recommendations.

(Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)

52. **Commending** SESRIC for preparing the report entitled “Transportation for Development in OIC Member Countries: Implications for Trade and Tourism & Challenges for Landlocked Countries”, as a technical background document for the upcoming OIC Conference of Ministers of Transport, **appreciates** SESRIC for conducting capacity building activities in the domain of transportation and **requests** SESRIC to continue developing the national capacities of the member countries in this important area.
53. **Commends** the efforts of Benin, The Gambia, and SESRIC for the successful implementation of the following transport projects in 2023 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:
- The project entitled “Increasing Human and Institutional Capacities for the Establishment of a Road Safety Lead Agency” implemented by The Gambia with Morocco, as the beneficiary country,
  - The project entitled “Implementation of a Mechanism for Renewing the Fleet of Road Transport Vehicles in Benin” implemented by Benin with Burkina Faso as the beneficiary country,
  - The project entitled “ Increasing the Utilization of Innovative Financing Tools to Maintain Transport Infrastructure and the Services of Transportation Service Providers in the OIC Member Countries” implemented by SESRIC with 16 beneficiary countries.
54. **Takes note with appreciation** the convening of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group on 16-17 October 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, with the theme “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness in the OIC Countries” and **welcomes** its policy recommendations.
- (Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)
55. **Acknowledging** the efforts of SESRIC towards organising the capacity-building training event for the benefit of Uzbekistan in the field of Halal Tourism and Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services, **appreciates** SESRIC for organizing training activities in the domain of tourism and **calls upon** to continue conducting training activities in this domain for the benefit of the member countries.
56. **Commends** the efforts of Uganda and Mali for the successful implementation of the following tourism projects in 2023 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:
- The project entitled “Enhancing the Capacity of Tour and Travel Personnel for Adapting to Changing Trends in Tourism Sector” implemented by Uganda,
  - The project entitled “Accommodation Establishments Quality Improvement Program in Tourism Sector” implemented by Mali with Burkina Faso and Guinea as the beneficiary countries.

57. **Taking note with appreciation** of the activities of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum, **welcomes** the convening of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum on 7 November 2023.
58. **Takes note with appreciation of** the convening of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group on 12-13 October 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, with the theme “Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries” and **welcomes** its policy recommendations.
- (Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)
59. **Commends** the efforts of Benin, The Gambia, Malaysia, and Türkiye for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2023 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:
- The project entitled “Increasing Agricultural Productivity in West Africa through Promoting Village Beekeeping” implemented by Benin in partnership with Uganda,
  - The project entitled “Capacity Building on Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting in the Agriculture Sector” implemented by The Gambia with Senegal, Nigeria, and Türkiye,
  - The project entitled “Needs Assessment on the Adoption of Sustainable Approaches for Rice Cultivation in Facing Climate Change” implemented by Malaysia,
  - The project entitled “Capacity Building on Using Remote Sensing Systems in Agriculture” implemented by Türkiye in partnership with Malaysia.
60. **Taking note** of the increasing membership composition of IOFS, **invites** the Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions to participate in the programs and activities towards ensuring food security and agricultural development in the Member Countries.
61. **Taking note** of the important role of private sector in improving the food security sector, **invites** the Member Countries to encourage the collaboration of their private sector entities with the IOFS in the field of tech-driven agriculture and in the implementation of the program Bio&Agri-Tech.
62. **Taking note** of the establishment of the “IOFS Fund” aimed at stabilizing the grain/food market price policy, while reducing vulnerability and dependency on volatile global food prices and agriculture by increasing OIC agri-food production system and building up intra -OIC food supply chains, **invites** the Member Countries, the IsDB and other relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate at the intergovernmental expert group meetings.
63. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group on 9-10 October 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, with the theme “Effective Vocational Education and Training Strategies to Reduce Youth Unemployment in the OIC Member Countries” and **welcomes** its policy recommendations.

(Ref: Document Code OIC/COMCEC/.....)

64. **Commends** the efforts of Benin and SESRIC for the implementation of the following projects in 2023 within the framework of the 10<sup>th</sup> Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:
- The project entitled “Improving interoperability between information systems of social assistance programs” implemented by Benin in partnership with Türkiye,
  - The project entitled “Promoting digital technologies for an integrated and efficient social protection systems in the OIC Member Countries” implemented by SESRIC with 36 beneficiary countries.
65. **Taking note with appreciation** of the efforts of the ISFD for mobilizing resources, **reiterates** its request to the Member Countries, which have pledged to the ISFD to fulfill their commitments and make fresh contributions to finance more poverty alleviation projects in Member Countries.
66. **Taking into account** the need for supporting the livelihood of Palestinian youth and enhancing human resources capacity of Palestine, **calls on** Member Countries to increase scholarships opportunities for Palestinian students to the extent possible and initiate special programs for university graduates.
67. **Taking note with appreciation** successful implementation of the microfinance model by 'Akhawat' in Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as a best practise alleviating poverty, women empowerment, and inclusive growth, **invites** the OIC Member Countries to benefit effectively from this model.
68. **Takes note of with appreciation** of the convening of online training programme on “Digital Transformation Leaders Training” organized by the Digital Transformation Office (DTO) of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye as the Secretariat of the "COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Forum" on 9-13 October 2023.

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**III**  
**REPORT**  
**OF THE THIRTY NINTH SESSION**  
**OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC**  
**AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE OIC**  
**(2-5 December 2023)**



**REPORT  
OF THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION  
OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC  
AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE OIC  
(2-5 December 2023, İstanbul)**

1. The Thirty-Ninth Ministerial Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) was held on 2-5 December 2023, in İstanbul.
2. The Session was attended by representatives of the following Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC):
  1. Republic of Albania
  2. People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
  3. Republic of Azerbaijan
  4. Kingdom of Bahrain
  5. People's Republic of Bangladesh
  6. Republic of Benin
  7. Brunei Darussalam
  8. Burkina Faso
  9. Republic of Cameroon
  10. Republic of Chad
  11. Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
  12. Republic of Djibouti
  13. Arab Republic of Egypt
  14. Gabonese Republic
  15. The Republic of The Gambia
  16. Republic of Guinea-Bissau
  17. Republic of Indonesia
  18. Islamic Republic of Iran
  19. Republic of Iraq
  20. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
  21. Kazakhstan
  22. The State of Kuwait
  23. Kyrgyz Republic
  24. Republic of Lebanon
  25. State of Libya
  26. Malaysia
  27. Republic of Maldives
  28. Republic of Mali
  29. Islamic Republic of Mauritania
  30. Kingdom of Morocco
  31. Republic of Mozambique
  32. Federal Republic of Nigeria

33. Sultanate of Oman
  34. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
  35. The State of Palestine
  36. State of Qatar
  37. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
  38. Republic of Senegal
  39. Federal Republic of Somalia
  40. Sudan
  41. United Arab Emirates
  42. Republic of Tunisia
  43. Republic of Türkiye
  44. Turkmenistan
  45. Republic of Uzbekistan
  46. Republic of Yemen
3. The Russian Federation, Kingdom of Thailand, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Central African Republic and Bosnia Herzegovina participated in the Session as observers.
  4. In addition to the OIC General Secretariat and the COMCEC Coordination Office, the following OIC Organs/ Institutions attended the Session:
    - 1- Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMSTECH)
    - 2- Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRI)
    - 3- Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT)
    - 4- Research Centre For Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA)
    - 5- Islamic University of Technology (IUT)
    - 6- Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group
    - 7- International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)
    - 8- Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC)
    - 9- Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD)
    - 10- The Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)
    - 11- Islamic Organization of Food Security (IOFS)
    - 12- Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC)
    - 13- Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA)
    - 14- Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC)
    - 15- Association of National Development Finance Institutions in Member Countries of the Islamic Development Bank Countries of the Islamic Development (ADFIMI)
  5. Representatives of the following International Organizations and Universities attended the Session:

- 1- Developing Eight (D-8)
- 2- Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
- 3- Organization of the Black Sea Economic (BSEC)
- 4- United Nation World Food Program (UNWFP)
- 5- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- 6- International Trade Centre (ITC)

*(A copy of the List of Participants of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex I.)*

6. The Meeting of Senior Officials of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session that preceded the Ministerial Session was held on 2-3 December 2023 in İstanbul under the Chairmanship of H.E. Abdullah Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice President of the Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye. The Senior Officials deliberated on the agenda items and prepared the Draft Resolutions for consideration by the Ministerial Session.
7. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held virtually on 16 November 2023 with the participation of the relevant OIC Institutions.

*(A copy of the report of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex II)*

## **Opening Session**

8. The Opening Ceremony of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the COMCEC, held on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, began with the inaugural speech of H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, President of the Republic of Türkiye and the Chairman of the COMCEC.
9. At the outset, His Excellency ERDOĞAN condemned the brutal attacks on Palestinian people in Gaza. Noting that two out of every three people martyred in Gaza are children, babies, and women, H.E. ERDOĞAN extended his heartfelt condolences for the loss of lives in Gaza.
10. H.E. ERDOĞAN expressed that many Western countries have been silent, blind and deaf to the massacres that Israel brutally carries out. H.E. ERDOĞAN also underlined that the victims of Israeli persecution include 73 journalists and over 100 officials of the United Nations. H.E. ERDOĞAN stated that the United Nations, which was established to protect global security and peace, couldn't even protect its own employees from Israel's barbarity.
11. Furthermore, H.E. ERDOĞAN highlighted that although the resolution calling for a humanitarian ceasefire was accepted by 121 states in the UN General Assembly, it was not effective in stopping the bloodshed. Recalling his expression "The world is bigger than five", H.E. ERDOĞAN stressed that this distorted structure of the UN Security Council is unfair and dysfunctional in resolving crises and thus should be changed as soon as possible.

12. H.E. ERDOĞAN underlined that Gaza is a Palestinian land, and will remain so eternally. Moreover, calling the Islamic World to stand with Palestine as one, H.E. ERDOĞAN indicated that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, whose founding purpose was to defend the Palestinian cause, offers a pertinent basis for carrying out the struggle with one voice and body.
13. H.E. ERDOĞAN also highlighted that the programs/projects such as TPS-OIC, OIC Arbitration Centre, and Islamic Index Fund implemented within the scope of the COMCEC would make significant contributions to the economic and commercial cooperation among the Islamic Countries.
14. H.E. ERDOĞAN emphasized the contribution of SMEs to the economies of the member countries and the importance of initiation the COMCEC SME Program. Additionally, highlighting the facilitative role of the mutual recognition of halal certificates in increasing the intra-OIC trade, H.E. ERDOĞAN expressed his appreciation for the establishment of the Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB).
15. Moreover, expressing the importance of increasing investments in the fields of digital transformation and e-commerce in terms of economic growth by incentivizing innovation and offering new opportunities in the Member Countries, H.E. ERDOĞAN stated that determination of e-commerce as the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session is timely and pertinent.

*(A copy of the text of the Inaugural Statement of H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN is attached as Annex III)*

16. Following the opening statement of H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, His Excellency Dr. Hussein Ibrahim TAHA, the Secretary General of the OIC, made his statement. At the outset, H.E. TAHA conveyed his special thanks to H.E. ERDOĞAN, President of the Republic of Türkiye and Chairman of the COMCEC and the Government of the Republic of Türkiye for the excellent preparations made for this meeting.
17. H.E. TAHA expressed that the OIC strongly condemns the continuation of genocidal war crimes committed by the Israeli occupation and calls on the international community to urgently intervene to put an end to brutal attacks and criminals of Israel that indiscriminately target all inhabitants of the Gaza Strip. H.E. TAHA stressed that the OIC holds Israel and all those who had the ability to prevent it from committing these crimes against the Palestinian people, but who instead sided with it, fully responsible for the massacres and crimes against humanity that are currently taking place in Gaza and throughout Palestine.

18. Referring to the latest estimates of the ICDT, H.E. TAHA indicated that the share of intra-OIC trade in the overall foreign trade of Member States increased slightly from 19.03% in 2021 to 19.26% in 2022. Highlighting the importance of increasing the trade volume among the Member Countries and realizing objectives set by the OIC-2025 Program of Action, H.E. TAHA stressed that there is a need for combining the collective efforts to enhance intra-OIC trade and the investments in developing tourism and combatting food insecurity.
19. With reference to the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development held in Doha, Qatar on 1-2 October 2023, H.E. TAHA underlined the importance of strengthening intra-OIC cooperation in the food and agriculture sector for having more resilient food systems through, among others, sharing knowledge and best practices with a view to further developing the national production capacities of the member countries.
20. Expressing that more than 70 per cent of the population of the least developed member countries live in rural areas and lack basic facilities, H.E. TAHA invited all OIC institutions to design programs aimed at addressing the socio-economic needs of the rural population in the OIC Member Countries.
21. Welcoming the convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers and launch of the OIC Labor Center in Baku, Azerbaijan, H.E. TAHA emphasized the importance of boosting cooperation among the Member Countries in the field labor, employment and social protection. In this context, H.E. TAHA stated that the new specialized institution of the Organization, OIC Labor Center, responsible for cooperation in the field of labor and employment would play a crucial role in identifying key areas for strengthening institutional capacities and improving the quality of human resources.
- (A Copy of the text of the Statement of the Secretary General of the OIC is attached as Annex IV)*
22. The Heads of Delegations of the State of Qatar, Republic of Senegal and Republic of Kazakhstan made statements on behalf of Arab, African and Asian geographical groups of the OIC, respectively, during the Opening Ceremony.
23. At the outset, H.E. Sultan Bin Rashid AL KHATER, Special Representative of the Emirate Council of State of Qatar, conveyed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Republic of Türkiye, for the convening of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session successfully and expressed that the discussions would contribute to outcomes for enhancing cooperation in various fields and realize expectations of the people of the Member Countries for development and prosperity.
24. H.E. AL KHATER underlined the importance of achieving a humanitarian ceasefire, which will lay the foundation for a comprehensive and sustainable agreement, which will halt the war and lead to serious well-rounded peace talks in accordance with international resolutions.

25. Highlighting that the geo-strategic transformations facing the world today, H.E. ALKHATER emphasized the necessity that OIC Member Countries to join efforts and consolidate the endeavours for enhancing of economic and trade cooperation. H.E. ALKHATER also mentioned the efforts in the Arab Group to monitor and implement the decisions and recommendations of the COMCEC to ensure stronger cooperation and the development of intra-trade with other member countries.
26. H.E. Abdou Karim FOFANA, Minister of Trade, Consumption and SMEs, as the Head of Delegation of the Senegal expressed his deep gratitude to H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, President of the Republic of Türkiye and President of COMCEC and also thanked to the Government and people of Türkiye for the excellent arrangements.
27. Mentioning the global challenges, such as climate change, inflation induced by rising prices of energy and raw materials, and the disruption of supply chains due to the international political context, H.E. FOFANA expressed that Africa, which brings together 54 countries, presents great economic potential with one of the highest growth rates in the world.
28. H.E. FOFANA pointed out that the development of trade among the OIC Member Countries, specifically of agricultural and food products, particularly for the least developed countries, should be paid more attention by supporting the elimination export restrictions within the framework of the multilateral trading system. Additionally, H.E. FOFANA emphasized the important role played by President ERDOĞAN in establishing the grain corridor, which is very important for African countries
29. H.E. FOFANA also underlined the importance of the internationalization of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in Africa to create wealth and jobs by ensuring better reciprocal access to OIC Member Countries and the development of common standards.
30. The Head of Delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Arman SHAKKALIYEV, Minister of Trade and Integration, expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation to the Republic of Türkiye, for the convening of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session successfully. H.E. SHAKKALIYEV highlighted that the OIC Member Countries accounted for 12% of world trade in 2022, although they constitute more than a quarter of the world's population.
31. H.E. SHAKKALIYEV continued his speech by noting that one of the promising areas of cooperation between Member Countries is the services sector. Furthermore, H.E. SHAKKALIYEV underlined that the agriculture sector is one of the key areas of mutual interest of member countries. Expressing the active role of Kazakhstan in the field of the agriculture sector, H.E. SHAKKALIYEV stressed the importance of the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS)

under the OIC, which aims at consolidating the efforts of the Member Countries in addressing the challenges faced in the field of food security.

32. Before concluding, H.E. SHAKKALIYEV stated that Kazakhstan is planning to hold an “Agrarian Forum with the OIC countries”, as well as an exhibition of food products of the OIC countries within the framework of the said Forum.
33. Afterwards, H.E. Dr. Muhammad Sulaiman AL JASSER, President of the IsDB Group, delivered a statement. H.E. AL JASSER expressed his appreciation to the Republic of Türkiye and Chairman of the COMCEC, for the efforts to convene this meeting.
34. H.E. AL JASSER extended his heartfelt condolences for the loss of lives in Gaza and expressed his deep sadness in the face of widespread devastation in the city. H.E. AL JASSER also expressed his solidarity with the affected families, sympathy, and support during this tragic time.
35. Moreover, H.E. AL JASSER extended his heartfelt condolences to Türkiye, Morocco, Libya, and Afghanistan for the natural disasters occurred this year. H.E. AL JASSER stated that the IsDB Group is committed to providing steadfast support for reconstruction and relief efforts in these regions.
36. Concerning the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session, H.E. AL JASSER enumerated the main challenges faced by the Member Countries such as underdeveloped network infrastructure, limited adoption of digital services, and ranking lowest in internet speed.
37. Moreover, H.E. AL JASSER indicated that the IsDB is currently conducting a technical study on e-commerce within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which is to be piloted in Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Uganda, thus assisting these countries in enacting reforms to boost MSME engagement in e-commerce and to minimise disparities in e-readiness levels across the continent.
38. Before concluding, H.E. AL JASSER expressed that the IsDB's 50th anniversary would be celebrated in Riyadh at the Bank's Annual Meeting on April 27-30, 2024.
39. *(A Copy of the text of the Statement of the IDB Group President is attached as Annex V)*

### **Ministerial Working Session**

40. The Ministerial Working Session of the Thirty-Ninth Session of the COMCEC was held on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Cevdet YILMAZ Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye.

41. The Session adopted the Agenda of the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

*(The Agenda of the Meeting is attached as Annex VI)*

42. Following the adoption of the agenda, H.E. Abdullah Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice President of the Strategy and Budget of Republic of Türkiye, as the Chairman of the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), informed the Session of the outcomes of the Senior Officials Meeting as well as the policy recommendations on “Improving E-commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries” deliberated by the SOM and submitted to the consideration of the Ministerial Session.

43. Following the presentation of H.E. AĞAOĞLU, Mr. Abdelhamid MAMDOUH, former Director of the Trade in Services and Investment Division of the WTO, delivered a keynote speech on recent trends in e-commerce, the rise of digital services trade and the role of trade agreements in non-trade issues.

44. At the outset, Mr. MAMDOUH highlighted that the transformative influence of digital technologies, coupled with increased access to faster and more reliable internet, has changed traditional business practices and global trade norms and technological advances have diversified business models, reshaping competition globally.

45. Mr. MAMDOUH stressed that e-commerce offers substantial opportunities for global businesses and countries to enhance their integration into the global economy and leverage the advantages of international trade. Mr. MAMDOUH also shared the estimates of World Trade Organization (WTO) that embracing digital technologies could elevate trade growth by 2 per cent annually from 2021 to 2030.

46. Afterwards, Mr. MAMDOUH touched upon the challenges in e-commerce such as navigating complex regulatory standards across jurisdictions, and the absence of internationally agreed standards for non-trade issues. He also enumerated some benefits of e-commerce including expanded export opportunities, improved performance for SMEs as well as improved access to global and regional markets, economic empowerment of women, and enhanced consumer welfare.

47. At the end of his speech, Mr. MAMDOUH highlighted important action areas such as the requirement of a holistic approach, usage of innovative business models, bridging the digital divide and ensuring e-commerce preparedness by all countries, including least developed countries, and providing financial resources as well as technical support for countries to develop infrastructure and regulation.

48. Following the speech of Mr. Abdelhamid MAMDOUH, the Exchange of Views Session of the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC was held with the theme of “Improving E-commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries.



49. Within this framework, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Member Countries made statements and interventions on their country experiences with respect to the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session. In this respect, the Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations emphasized the actions taken to address the main challenges faced by the Member Countries in e-commerce and digitalization as well as their efforts to strengthen the necessary infrastructure in this domain. They also stressed that cooperation in the field of information technologies would make a great contribution to achieving considerable progress in this crucial field.

### **Side Events/Special Sessions**

50. The Panel on Global Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms was organized on December 5th, 2023. During the Panel, trends and developments in arbitration and other alternative dispute resolutions were presented. Participants were also informed about the efforts within the framework of the OIC Arbitration Centre. In addition to the delegates participating to the 39th Session of the COMCEC, academics, lawyers, businesspeople, civil society representatives, and other pertinent stakeholders also attended the Panel.
51. The Panel titled "Global Recognition of Halal Certificates" for the construction of a reliable international system in the context of mutual recognition of halal-certified products was held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, on the margins of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Meeting. Representatives of civil society, businessmen, academicians, lawyers and other stakeholders attended the event. Participants highlighted the importance of the establishment of the Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB) with regard to harmonising halal standards as well as reducing non-tariff barriers for halal products and flourishing the halal industry.
52. Furthermore, A High-Level Meeting on the COMCEC SME Program was held with the participation of Heads of SME Organizations of the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions to finalize and launch the COMCEC SME Program on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. Representatives of the OIC Member Countries shared their experiences and best practices on the internationalization of SMEs and strengthening their competitiveness. A set of recommendations related to the implementation of the Program have been formulated and the Program has been finalized.
53. The side event titled "COMCEC Project Support Programs: Member Country Experiences" was organized on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. Within the context of COMCEC Project Funding and COMCEC Al-Quds Program, the representatives of the project owners from the Member Countries shared their experiences concerning the implementation of their projects throughout the event.
54. "Manuscript Quran Exhibition" was organized in cooperation with with the Presidency of the Turkish Manuscripts Association on the margins of the

COMCEC 39<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on December 4th, 2023. Unique Quran Mushafs written on parchment and paper were presented in the exhibition.

55. A Ministerial Working Breakfast was hosted by H.E. Dr. Ömer BOLAT, Minister of Trade of the Republic of Türkiye, on December 4th, 2023, with the participation of the Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the OIC Member Countries. Trade-related issues of the COMCEC were elaborated during the event.

### **Closing Session**

56. The Closing Session of the 39th Session of the COMCEC was held on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 under the Chairmanship of H.E. Cevdet YILMAZ Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye.
57. Mr. Yousaf Junaid, Ambassador of Pakistan to Türkiye, as the Rapporteur, summarized the salient points in the Resolutions.
58. Afterwards, the Session adopted the Resolutions OIC/COMCEC/39-232/RES.
59. Afterwards, Dr. Ahmad Kawesa SENGENDO, Assistant Secretary-General of OIC for Economic Affairs, in his closing statement, extended his special gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, the President of the Republic of Türkiye and the Chairman of COMCEC.
60. H.E. SENGENDO called upon the Member Countries to sign and ratify the Statute of the recently established OIC Labour Centre and to give all the necessary support to enable it fulfil its mandate. H.E. SENGENDO also invited all Member Countries to implement the decisions of the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development (MCFCAD), held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 1st-2nd October 2023 and the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM), held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, on 21-23 November 2023.
61. H.E. SENGENDO concluded his remarks by congratulating H.E. Mr. Cevdet YILMAZ, Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye, for the dynamic proceeding of the discussions during the working sessions, and expressed his appreciation to all heads of delegations and other participants and all the staff who contributed to the success of this meeting.
62. The Head of Delegation of State of Palestine, His Excellency KHALID AL-ESSEILY, Minister of National Economy, made a statement on behalf of all the Member Countries participating in the Meeting and thanked all of the participants for their contributions to the successful conduct of the Meeting and also thanked to the Republic of Türkiye for the generous hospitality extended during this Meeting.

63. Expressing the cruelty inflicted by the occupying Israel in its recent attacks and the extent of the disaster, H.E. AL-ESSEILY emphasized that the Western world remained silent in the face of this genocide and called on the Islamic countries to give more support to Palestine.
64. H.E. AL-ESSEILY extended his appreciation to the Member Countries for their efforts to implement the emergency Arab and Islamic Summit resolution in order to immediately end the Israeli aggression, break the siege, secure the arrival of humanitarian aid to Palestinians, and ensure their protection and security, lead to end the occupation and achieve a just and comprehensive peace that leads to the Palestinian people gaining their freedom and independence.
65. Finally, H.E. Cevdet YILMAZ, Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye, delivered a closing statement. H.E. YILMAZ expressed his wishes for the mercy of Allah the almighty to the brothers and sisters murdered by the occupying forces in Palestine and conveyed his condolences to their grieving relatives. H.E. YILMAZ emphasized that Türkiye stands by the just cause of the brotherly Palestinians and condemned all forms of terrorism.
66. H.E. YILMAZ underlined the importance of the Member Countries' contribution and participation in TPS-OIC, which is one of the most important project developed in the trade domain under COMCEC. H.E. YILMAZ also expressed that the endeavors should be further enhanced for the inclusion of new members into the System and expanding the scope of the System with additional areas such as services trade and investment.
67. H.E. YILMAZ pointed out that the OIC Arbitration Centre would become one of the most distinguished arbitration centers in the world, with the endeavors to promote the Centre in front of the business world as a sound mechanism for the settlement of disputes. In this context, H.E. YILMAZ stressed the importance of the panel held by the OIC Arbitration Center within the scope of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session in terms of promoting the activities of the Center.
68. H.E. YILMAZ also expressed his appreciation for the recently developed programs and initiatives namely, COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Forum, COMCEC SME Program and the Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB).
69. H.E. YILMAZ concluded his statement by expressing his thanks to all member country delegations, OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, the Institutions of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and other international organizations for their active and valuable contributions.

*(The text of the Closing Statement of H.E. Cevdet YILMAZ is attached as Annex VII)*

70. All documents submitted to the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of COMCEC will be available on the COMCEC Web Site ([www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org)).

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# **A N N E X E S**

# **ANNEX**

## **1**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**39th Session of the COMCEC (2-5 December, 2023)**

**A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC**

**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**

- Ms. ANXHELA BUSHATI

Head of Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Mr. ALBANA META

Head of Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**

- Ms. HAMIDI SABRINA

Officer, Ministry of Trade and Export Promotion

**REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

- Mr. SAHIB MAMMADOV

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economy

- Mr. TABRİK BABAYEV

Senior Expert, Ministry of Economy

- Mr. RAFİ GURBANOV

Head of Department, the Small and Medium Business Development Agency of The Republic of Azerbaijan

**KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN**

- H.E. ABDULLA FAKHRO

Minister of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Industry and Commerce of the Kingdom

- Mr. EMAN ALDOSERI

Undersecretary of Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce

- Mr. MANAF ALMANNAI

Director of Foreign Trade and Industrial Properties, Director of Foreign Trade and Industrial Properties

- Mr. MOHAMED YAQOOB YUSUF ALABDULLA

First Secretary, Bahrain Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Mr. SALMAN RASHED ALABBASI

Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

- H.E. Amb. M AMANUL HAQ

Ambassador, Embassy of Bangladesh to Türkiye

- Mr. MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH AL MAMUN

Director of International Organization, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Bangladesh

- Ms. DENİZ BULKUR

Honorary Consul, Honorary Consulate of Bangladesh - Konya

- Mr. ERDİL SİĞİNMİS

Advisor, Honorary Consulate of Bangladesh – Konya

**REPUBLIC OF BENIN**

- Mr. HYACINTHE MONTCHO

Director of Studies and Development Aid Coordination, Ministry of Economy and Finance

**BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

- Dr. MAY FAEZAH AHMAD ARIFFIN

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Mr. IRWAN RASHID

Assistant Director, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Ms. AMANINA SHAMSULBAHRIN

Officer, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Mr. MUHAMMAD ADİB HAJİ BUSRAH

Officer, Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Ankara

**BURKINA FASO**

- Mr. LAFARAYIRI ABDOUL KADER YAGO

Director of Special Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation and Burkinabe Abroad

- Mr. JEAN BAPTİSTE OUEDRAOGO

Director of Bilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Economy Finance and Forecasting

**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**

- H.E. ALAMINE OUSMANE MEY

Minister, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development



- H.E. Amb. IYA TIDJANI  
Ambassador, Embassy of Cameroon in Ankara

- Mr. BOUBA AOUSSINE  
Senior Expert, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. AYOUBA DAMBA  
Expert, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development

#### **REPUBLIC OF CHAD**

- H.E. Amb. ADOUM DANGAI NOKOUR GUET  
Ambassador, Embassy of Chad in Ankara

- Mr. MAHAMAT ABDOULAYE ABDARAMANE  
Assistant, Embassy of Chad in Ankara

#### **REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE**

- H.E. COULIBALY DRISSA  
Ambassador, Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire In Riyadh

- H.E. Amb. KHADIDJATA TOURE  
Ambassador, Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire

- Mr. KOUE PIERRE FRANCIS BOLOU  
First Secretary, Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire

- Mr. SANNON ASSI  
Counsellor, Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire

#### **REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI**

- H.E. MOHAMED WARSAMA DIRIEH MOHAMED  
Minister, Ministry of Trade and Tourism

- H.E. Amb. ADEN HOUSSEIN ABDILLAH  
Ambassador, Embassy of Djibouti in Ankara

- Mr. OSMAN ABDIMOHAMED  
CEO, Tourism National Agency of Djibouti

#### **ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

- H.E. AHMED SAMIR SALEH  
Minister, Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Arab Republic of Egypt

- H.E. HAZEM ZAKI  
Deputy Assistant Minister, Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Mr. HOSSAMELDIN HANI ABDELRAHMAN ALI NEGM  
Counsellor, Consulate General of the Arab Republic of Egypt Commercial Bureau in Istanbul

- Ms. RADWA IBRAHİM ABDOL ISMAÏEL RASHED  
Officer, Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry

- Ms. DİDEM KURALP  
Secretary, Consulate General of Arab Republic of Egypt Commercial Bureau in Istanbul

- Ms. FULDA GULLE  
Secretary, Consulate General of Arab Republic of Egypt Commercial Bureau In Istanbul

#### **REPUBLIC OF GABON**

- H.E. PATRICIA DJIPANO  
Minister, Ministry of Commerce

- H.E. JEAN BERNARD AVOUMA  
Ambassador, Embassy of Gabon in Ankara

- Ms. BARNESSE ADA  
Advisor, Diplomatic Advisor

- Mr. JULES CESAR ASSELE LEKOULETSIAYI  
Expert

- Ms. ESTELLE EULALIA AKOUMIGUI  
Head of Cooperation Department, Ministry of Tourism

- Ms. LILIANE NADEGE NGARI  
General Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

- Mr. THIBAUT IFOUNGA  
Protocol Officer of the Embassy, Embassy of Gabon in Ankara

#### **REPUBLIC OF GAMBIA**

- H.E. BABOUCARR OUSMAILA JOOF  
Minister, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment

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

- Ms. JULDEH CEESAY  
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

- Mr. KEMO SM JANKA  
Principal Trade Economy, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment

- Ms. FATOU JAMMEH TOURAY  
Senior Expert, Ministry of Agriculture
  - Ms. NDEY ALIMA CEESAY  
Director of Middle East, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Gambians Abroad
  - H.E. ALKALI F CONTEH  
Ambassador, Embassy of Gambia in Ankara
  - Ms. IDA SONKO  
First Secretary, Embassy of Gambia in Ankara
- REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU**
- Mr. SAICO UMARO EMBALO  
Counsellor, Consulate General in İstanbul
- REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA**
- Dr. AMALIA ADININGGAR WIDYASANTI  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of National Development Planning
  - Dr. PANDE NYOMAN LAKSMI KUSUMAWATI  
Director, Ministry of National Economy
  - Mr. BANNY RAMADHANI  
Trade Attaché, Indonesian Embassy
  - Mr. JONERI ALIMIN  
Counsellor, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the OIC in Jeddah
  - Ms. ROSY WEDIAWATY  
Coordinator of State-Owned Enterprises, Ministry of National Economy
  - Mr. BAHESTIKHAN MUSLIM TANWIR  
Head of Department, Ministry of Cooperatives and SMES
  - Mr. GANGSAR KURNIAWAN  
Officer, Ministry of Trade
  - Mr. ARY APRIANTO  
Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - Mr. CATUR NUGROHO  
Officer, Ministry of Trade
  - Ms. WAHYU ROCHMAWATI  
Analyst, Ministry of Cooperatives and SMES

## **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

- Mr. HOSSEIN SHAHMORADI  
Counsellor, Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran - Istanbul
- Ms. ELHAM HAJIKARIMI  
Counsellor, Trade Promotion Organization
- Ms. RAHELEH KHANDEROO  
Expert, COUNTRY

## **REPUBLIC OF IRAQ**

- Mr. RIYAD FAKHER  
Director General, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. DHEIAA HAMEED SUOD  
Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. DHEYAA NASER  
Manager Assistant, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. AHMED KARAKAS  
Local Staff, Consulate General of Iraq in Istanbul
- Mr. MOHAMMED NEAMAH MAGTOOF ALJUHAISHI  
Officer, Trade Office of Iraq in Istanbul
- Mr. HASIM DEDEOGLU  
Interpreter/ Local Staff, Consulate General of Iraq in Istanbul

## **HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN**

- H.E. YOUSEF ALSHAMALI  
Minister, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply
- Ms. DANA ALZUBI  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply
- Mr. MOHAMMED ABUALRAGHEB  
Deputy Director, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

## **REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

- H.E. ARMAN SHAKKALIYEV  
Minister, Ministry of Trade and Integration
- Mr. AIDAR ABILDA  
Consultant, Ministry of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan

## **THE STATE OF KUWAIT**

- H.E. Amb. WAEL ALENZI  
Ambassador, Embassy of the State of Kuwait
- Ms. JAMANAH AHMAD  
Foreign Relations Research, Ministry of Finance
- Mr. SAAD ALRASHIDI  
Director, Ministry of Finance
- Mr. HASAN ALAJMI  
Diplomatic Attaché, Embassy of the State of Kuwait

## **KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

- Mr. CHYNGYZ TOKTOBEKOV  
Advisor, Embassy of Kyrgyzstan in Ankara

## **REPUBLIC OF LEBANON**

- H.E. GHASSAN MOALLEM  
Ambassador, Embassy of Lebanon in Türkiye
- Ms. ROLA NASRALLAH  
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Economy and Trade

## **LIBYA**

- H.E. MOHAMMED A M HAWEG  
Minister, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. JAMAL SHABAN  
Director, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. SALAHEDDEN ALKASAH  
Ambassador, LIBYA
- Mr. ESAM S. ALMALHOUF  
Head of Organizations Department, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. WISAM ALTAEF  
Director, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. ABDULMOLA ELMAHDAWI  
Head of Department, LIBYA
- Mr. EMAD ASHOUR  
Director, Ministry of Economy and Trade

- Mr. MAJDI ESSEID  
Head of Department, LIBYA
- Mr. OMAR DARHOUB  
Head of Department, LIBYA
- Mr. MOHAMED ALCHAIBE  
Director of Minister Office, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Mr. CEM SUCU  
Officer, LIBYA

#### **MALAYSIA**

- Mr. DATO HAIRIL YAHRI YAACOB  
Secretary General, Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI)
- Ms. NOR HASNAH BADRODDIN  
Undersecretary, Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry
- Ms. MARDIANA MOHD YUSOF  
Principal Assistant Director, Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry
- Mr. MOHD FIRDAUS MOHD ALI  
Special Officer to the Secretary General, Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI)

#### **REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**

- H.E. MOHAMED SAEED  
Minister, MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE
- Mr. MOHAMED NIZAM  
Chief Financial Officer, STATE TRADING ORGANIZATION PLC, MALDIVES
- Mr. SHIMAD IBRAHIM  
CEO, STATE TRADING ORGANIZATION PLC, MALDIVES
- Mr. YUSUF RIZA  
Permanent Secretary, MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

#### **REPUBLIC OF MALI**

- H.E. Amb. ISSA OUSMANE COULIBALY  
Ambassador, Embassy of Mali in Ankara

#### **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA**

- H.E. LEMRABOTT OULD BENNAHI  
Minister, Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Handicrafts and Tourism

- H.E. Amb. SID AHMED EL BEKAYE HAMADI

Ambassador, Embassy of Mauritania in Ankara

- Mr. BA ABDELLAHI

Executive Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Handicrafts and Tourism

- Mr. GUISET DIALEL ABOU

Director, Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Handicrafts and Tourism

#### **KINGDOM OF MOROCCO**

- Mr. ABDELOUAHED RAHAL

Director General, Ministry Industry and Trade

- Mr. YOUSSEF BENABDOUH

Head of Department, Ministry Industry and Trade

- Mr. MONCEF HAMMI

Counsellor, MAROC

#### **REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

- H.E. AMILTON ALISSONE

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transport and Communication

- Mr. TUAHA MOTE

President of the Institution, IINCM - Mozambique Communications Regulatory Authority

- Mr. DAVID COSSA

Officer, Ministry of Transport and Communication

- Ms. NILZA LANGA

Officer, Ministry of Transportation and Communications

#### **FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

- H.E. ZAYYAD HABU ABDUSSARAM

Ambassador, EMBASSY OF NIGERIA

- Mr. AMINU AHMAD

Counsellor, EMBASSY OF NIGERIA

- Mr. HENRY CHIKOGU

Officer, EMBASSY OF NIGERIA, ANKARA-TURKIYE

#### **SULTANATE OF OMAN**

- H.E. Amb. KHALID SULAIMAN ABDUL RAHMAN BAOMAR

Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman in Ankara

- H.E. Dr. SAID ALSAQRI  
Minister, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. IBRAHIM SULAIMAN HAMED ALHASANI  
Counsellor, Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Ankara
- Mr. EMAD ALAJMI  
General, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. YOUSUF ALRAWAHI  
Director of Coordination and Follow-up in the Office Minister, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. YARAB ALRASHDI  
Specialist, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. JUMA ALSHIYADI  
The Customs Manager of Muscat International Airport, ROYAL OMAN POLİCE
- Mr. MUHAMMED SIPAHİOĞLU  
Responsible for the Public Relations, Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Ankara

#### **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN**

- H.E. Dr. GOHAR EJAZ  
Minister, MINİSTRY OF COMMERCE, PAKİSTAN
- H.E. Dr. YOUSAF JUNAID  
Ambassador, Embassy of Pakistan in Ankara
- Mr. NAUMAN ASLAM  
Consul General, Consulate General of Pakistan in Istanbul
- Ms. NUDRAT HUSSAİN KHAN  
Head of Department, Ministry of Commerce
- Mr. DANİSH MEHMOOD  
Deputy Director General, Consulate General of the Islamic Republic Of Pakistan, Istanbul
- Mr. QAZI SALEEM AHMED KHAN  
Officer, Embassy of Pakistan in Ankara
- Mr. MALİK MUHAMMAD SHERAZ  
Staff Officer, Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan

#### **THE STATE OF PALESTINE**

- H.E. KHALED OSAILY  
Minister, Ministry of National Economy



- H.E. FAED MUSTAFA  
Ambassador, Embassy of Palestine in Ankara
- Ms. ISRAA MILHEM  
Head of Department, Ministry of National Economy
- Ms. SUHA AWADALLAH  
Director General, Ministry of National Economy
- H.E. MUATH JABARI  
Head of Department, Ministry of National Economy
- Ms. RANA ABUSEBA  
Director General, Embassy of Palestine in Ankara

#### **STATE OF QATAR**

- H.E. SULTAN ALKHATER  
Undersecretary, Ministry Of Commerce and Industry
- Mr. KHATER ALBOUAINAIN  
Undersecretary office Director, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Mr. SAEED ALBRAIDI  
Head of Regional and International Organizations, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Ms. SALMA ALDOSARI  
Researcher of International Cooperation, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

#### **KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

- H.E. Dr. SAAD ALKASABI  
President of the Institution, Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO)
- H.E. FAREED SAEED ASALY  
Deputy Minister, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade
- Mr. MOHAMMED ALSHAHRANI  
Director General, Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO)
- Ms. NADA ALHATHLOL  
Director, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade
- Mr. JIHAD ALHUTHAIL  
Director General, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade
- H.E. ABDULMAJEED ALDOSARI  
Consul General, Consulate General of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul

- Mr. SULTAN ALSUWAYİD  
Officer, Ministry of Commerce
- Mr. ALI ALHEJJI  
Officer, Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade
- Mr. ALİ ALSHAYA  
Commercial specialist, Saudi Commercial Attaché in Istanbul
- Mr. KHALİD ALAQEEL  
Commercial Attaché, Embassy of Saudi Arabia
- Ms. AYŞEGÜL BAKIR  
Expert, Trade Attaché of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. KHALED ALOTAIBI  
Attaché, Consulate General of Saudi Arabia in Istanbul
- Mr. ABDULVAHAP ŞAYLAN  
ASSISTANT, SAUDİ COMMERCIAL ATTACHE
- Mr. MAJED DAEL  
Director of the Bureau, EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDİ ARABİA
- Mr. MUSA ŞAYLAN  
ASSISTANT, SAUDI COMMERCIAL ATTACHÉ
- Ms. GOZDE ERDOGAN  
Secretary, EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDİ ARABİA

#### **REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL**

- H.E. FOFANA ABDOU KARIM  
Minister, Ministry of Trade, Consumption Affairs and SMES
- Mr. BADJİ ANSOUSOUBA  
Director General, MİNİSTRY OF TRADE, CONSUMPTION AFFAIRS AND SMES
- Ms. AISSATOU SAKHO  
Partnerships Manager, ADEPME

#### **REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA**

- H.E. JAMA ABDULLAHİ MOHAMED  
Ambassador, Embassy of Somalia in Ankara
- Mr. IBRAHIM HASSAN MOHAMUD  
First Secretary, Embassy of Somalia in Ankara

## **REPUBLIC OF SUDAN**

- H.E. CİBRİL İBRAHİM  
Minister, Ministry of Economy and Trade
- H.E. Amb. MOHAMED AHMED TAGELELDIN MOUSA MUSA  
Ambassador, GENERAL CONSULATE OF SUDAN
- Mr. KHALID ALKHAIR DFALLA ABUAAGLA  
Deputy Consul General, the General Consulate of Sudan in Istanbul
- Mr. TAHA MOHAMMED ABAKER TAHA  
Vice Consul, the General Consulate of in Istanbul
- Mr. MOHAMED BASHAR MOHAMED ADAM  
Undersecretary, Undersecretary of Economic Planning
- Mr. ABDELAZİZ IDRİS KEYOU ADAM  
Accompanying Minister of Finance/Sudan, Ministry Of Finance Sudan
- Mr. SULİMAN ABDALLA ISMAİL TABER  
Accompanying Minister of Finance/Sudan, Ministry Of Finance Sudan
- Mr. AHMED ABUBAKR IBRAHİM MOHAMMED FEDAL  
Accompanying Minister of Finance/Sudan, Ministry Of Finance Sudan
- Ms. AFAF MOHAMED MOHAMDANI  
Deputy Head of Mission, SUDAN EMBASSY ANKARA

## **REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA**

- H.E. BEN REJEB EP GUEZZAH KHALTHOUM  
Minister, Ministry of Trade and Export Development
- Mr. BANNOUR LAZHAR  
Director General, Ministry of Trade and Export Development
- Ms. NAIMA DEGHAIS  
Deputy Director General, Ministry Of Communication Technologies

## **TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ**

- H.E. CEVDET YILMAZ  
Vice President, Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
- H.E. MEHMET FATİH KACIR  
Minister, Ministry of Industry and Technology

- H.E. Prof. Dr. ÖMER BOLAT  
Minister, Ministry of Trade
- H.E. İBRAHİM ŞENEL  
President of Strategy and Budget, Presidency of Strategy and Budget
- H.E. MUSTAFA TUZCU  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Trade
- H.E. Dr. HAFİZE GAYE ERKAN  
Governor of Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye,
- Mr. RIDVAN AĞAOĞLU  
Vice president of Strategy and Budget Department, Presidency of Strategy and Budget
- Mr. KORKMAZ ERGUN  
CEO, BORSA ISTANBUL
- Mr. ALİ KOPUZ  
Vice President of TOBB, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB)
- H.E. Amb. MEHMET METİN EKER  
Ambassador, Turkish Permanent Mission to the OIC
- Mr. HÜSNÜ DİLEMRE  
Director General, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. ARSLAN ÖZGÜR  
Deputy Director General, MFA TÜRKİYE
- Ms. AYLİN BEBEKOĞLU  
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. GÖZDE GURGUN  
Deputy Director General, OIC COMCEC Central Banks Forum
- Ms. EMİNE ASLI ÜVEZ  
Director General, OIC COMCEC CENTRAL BANKS FORUM
- STATE OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**
- H.E. ABDULLA BIN TOUQ ALMARRI  
Minister, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. AHMAD ABDULLA BINSULAIMAN  
Head of International Organizations, Ministry of Economy

- Mr. IBRAHIM SAEED ALALAWI  
Minister Coordinator, Ministry of Economy
- Mr. AHMED SALAMA  
Senior Expert, Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Ankara
- Mr. MOZA AL HOSANI  
Deputy Ambassador, Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Ankara
- Mr. CEVDET ACAR  
Officer, the UAE Embassy- Ankara
- Mr. FAHRETTİN GÖKAY  
PR, Protocol, UAE

#### **REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

- H.E. LAZİZ KUDRATOV  
Minister, Ministry of Investment Industry and Trade
- Mr. HAYOT ABDUNAZAROV  
Head of Department, Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade
- Mr. MASHRABJON MAMİROV  
Counsellor, Embassy of Uzbekistan in Ankara

#### **REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**

- H.E. MOHAMED ALASHWAL  
Minister, Ministry of Industry and Trade
- H.E. Amb. MOHAMED TURIQ  
Ambassador, Embassy of Yemen in Ankara
- Mr. AHMED MOHAMMED ALASHWAL  
Advisor, Ministry of Industry and Trade

#### **B. OBSERVER COUNTRIES**

##### **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

- H.E. LJILJANA LOVRIC  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations
- Ms. JELICA GRUJIĆ  
Head of Department, Ministry Of Foreign Trade And Economic Relations Of Bosnia And Herzegovina

## **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

- H.E. JUSTIN GOURNA ZACKO  
Minister, Ministry of Economy, Posts and Telecom

## **KINGDOM OF THAILAND**

- H.E. Dr. PUNTIL JONGJITTRAKOON  
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Commerce
- H.E. SUTTICHAT NILKUHA  
Minister Counsellor (Commercial), Ministry of Commerce
- Ms. AUMAPORN FUTRAKUL  
Executive Director, Ministry of Commerce
- Mr. RACHANON CHAROENPHON  
Working Group of the Minister of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce
- Mr. PANKOSA SUPONGTHORN  
Trade Officer, Ministry of Commerce
- Ms. ACHARA BOONYAWONGVIROT  
Trade Officer, Ministry of Commerce
- Ms. PIYACHAT SUTTHIMA KESKIN  
Officer, Ministry of Commerce

## **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

- Mr. ANTON SKVORTSOV  
Deputy Consul General, Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Istanbul
- Mr. ARTEM TIMOSHCHENKO  
Third Secretary, Consulate General of the Russian Federation In Istanbul

## **TRNC**

- H.E. OLGUN AMCAOĞLU  
Minister of Economy and Energy, Ministry of Economy and Energy
- Mr. ŞAHAP AŞIKOĞLU  
Undersecretary, Ministry of Economy and Energy, Ministry of Economy and Energy
- Mr. MEHMET TUNCAN  
Vice Consul, Consulate General of TRNC in Istanbul

- Mr. MEHMET DİNCER FARUK  
Education Attaché, Consulate General of TRNC in Istanbul

- Ms. FATMA DEMİREL  
Consul General, Consulate General of TRNC in Istanbul

**C. THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC TRADE FINANCE CORPORATION (ITFC)**

- Mr. HANI SALEM SONBOL  
CEO, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

- Mr. AYMEN KASEM  
Head of Department, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

- Mr. HOJAMUROD HOJAEV  
Manager, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

- Mr. MAROUAN ABID  
Permanent Secretary, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation

- Mr. ANVAR NIGMATOV  
Officer, ITFC, ISDB GROUP

**OIC**

- H.E. HISSEIN BRAHIM TAHA  
Secretary General of OIC, OIC

- Dr. AHMAD SENGENDO  
Assistant Secretary General, OIC General Secretariat

- Mr. NAGHI JABBAROV  
Head of Department, OIC General Secretariat

- Dr. HASAN BASRİ ARSLAN  
Advisor, Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- Ms. FARHA RAMDZAN BINTI SAAID RAMDZAN FARHA  
Officer, Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- Mr. ALIOU HIMA HAMANI  
Secretary, OIC

**D. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS**

**ISLAMIC CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)**

- H.E. LATIFA ELBOUABDELLAOUI

Director General, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade

- Dr. MAMOUDOU BOCAR SALL

Director General Assistant, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade

- Mr. ISMAIL TAQUI ISMAIL

Expert, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade

**RESEARCH CENTER FOR ISLAMIC HISTORY, ART AND CULTURE (IRCICA)**

- H.E. Amb. MAHMUT EROL KILIÇ

Director General, OIC Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture

- Mr. MURAT ESAT ÖZER

Head of Department, IRCICA

**STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR**

**ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)**

- H.E. ZEHRA ZUMRUT SELCUK

Director General, OIC SESRIC

- Mr. FADI ABDULLAH FARASIN

Assistant Director General, SESRIC

- Mr. ONUR CAGLAR

Acting of Department, SESRIC

- Ms. NURAY UÇARI

Officer, SESRIC

**ISLAMIC CORPORATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

- Mr. ALİ CAMLIOĞLU

Senior Investment Associate, ICD

- Mr. OSMAN BUYUKMUTLU

Director, Strategy Department, ICD

- Mr. ASKAR BAİMULDİN

Officer, ICD



## **ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION FOR FOOD SECURITY**

- Mr. ABDULA MANAFİ MUTUALO  
Head of Department, Islamic Organization for Food Security

## **E. SPECIALIZED ORGANS OF THE OIC**

### **ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IsDB)**

- Dr. WALİD MOHAMAD ABDELWAHAB  
Director, Islamic Development Bank
- H.E. Dr. MUHAMMAD ALJASSER  
President of the Institution, Islamic Development Bank
- Mr. SALAH JELASSİ  
Director, Islamic Development Bank
- Dr. MOHAMMED ALWOSABI  
Senior Expert, Islamic Development Bank
- Mr. MURAD YANDIEV  
Senior Expert, Islamic Development Bank
- Dr. DİLÂN KALİÇ  
Executive Assistant, Islamic Development Bank
- Ms. NORA MOZZİN  
IsDB President Liaison Officer for Protocol, Islamic Development Bank
- Mr. FARUK ÖZCAN  
Protocol Officer, Islamic Development Bank
- Mr. ÖMER ASLAN  
Head of Admin, Islamic Development Bank

### **OIC ARBITRATION CENTER**

- Mr. MAGED MAMDOUH KAMEL SHEBAITA  
Director General, OIC Arbitration Center
- Mr. ALPER ÇAĞRI YILMAZ  
Deputy Secretary General, OIC Arbitration Center
- Ms. NİHAN ÇETİN  
Head of Department, OIC Arbitration Center
- Ms. HAVVA NUR GETİREN  
Advisor, OIC Arbitration Center

- Ms. MERVE NUR DUYMAZ

Advisor, OIC Arbitration Center

- Dr. İBRAHİM NİHAT BAYAR

Board Member, OIC Arbitration Center

**F. AFFILIATED ORGANS OF THE OIC**

ISLAMIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE (ICCIA)

- Mr. ABDULLAH SALEEH KAMEL

President, ICCIA

- Ms. AALIA JAFAR

Head of Delegation, Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture

**ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTIONS IN  
MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADFIMI)**

- Mr. İLHAMİ ÖZTÜRK

Secretary General, Association of National Development Finance Institutions in Member  
Countries of the Islamic Development Bank

- Mr. MEHMED RAŞİD KANSU

Specialist, Association of National Development Finance Institutions In Member Countries  
of The Islamic Development Bank

**STANDARDS AND METROLOGY INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES  
(SMIIC)**

- Mr. İHSAN ÖVÜT

Secretary General, Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

- Mr. YASİN ZÜLFİKAROĞLU

Specialist, Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

**ISLAMIC CONFERENCE YOUTH FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AND  
COOPERATION (ICYF-DC)**

- Mr. TAHA AYHAN

President, Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum

- Mr. YUNUS SÖNMEZ

Director General of the Cabinet at the Secretariat, Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum

**G. OIC STANDING COMMITTEES**

**STANDING COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION (COMSTECH)**

- Dr. MOHAMMED ALI MAHESAR

Consultant, COMSTECH

**ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (ECO)**

- H.E. Amb. MOHSEN ESPERİ

Deputy Secretary General, Economic Cooperation Organization

**THE ISLAMIC CORPORATION FOR THE INSURANCE OF INVESTMENT AND EXPORT CREDIT (ICIEC)**

- Mr. ALTAYEB ABBAS FADLALLAH

Senior Specialist, Strategic Planning & Communications, ICIEC/ISDB

- Ms. FATMA GAMZE SARIOGLU

Senior Country Manager, ICIEC

- Mr. MOHAMAD ALİ ELCHEIKH

Specialist, Strategic Planning & Communication, ICIEC-ISDB

- Ms. AYŞE SELDA KURT

Country Manager, ICIEC

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER (ITC)**

- Ms. HACHEM NAAS LILIA

Head of Department, International Trade Center

- Mr. LORIDAN MATHIEU

Senior Expert, International Trade Center

**ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT**

- Mr. OULD EMEH MOHAMEDEN

Senior Expert, ISFD

**I. OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

**DEVELOPING EIGHT (D-8)**

- Mr. PUNJUL SETYA NUGRAHA

Head of Department, Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation

## **THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

- H.E. MERVE SAFA KAVAKÇI

First Deputy Secretary General, BSEC

### **K. KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

#### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

- Mr. ABDELHAMID MAMDOUH

Senior Legal Counsel, King and Spalding LLP

### **L. SPEAKERS**

#### **SPEAKER**

- Mr. WILLIAM JAMES MACPHERSON

International Mediator and Special Counsel, Saudi Center for Commercial Arbitration

- Mr. JONATHAN PHILIP WOOD

President, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

### **B. INVITED INSTITUTIONS**

#### **UNITED NATIONS WFP - WORLD FOOD PROGRAM**

- Mr. STEPHEN JOHN CAHILL

Country Representative/Country Director, UN WFP TÜRKİYE

- Ms. EMİNE DERYA BAYKAL UYAR

Protocol Officer, UN WFP TÜRKİYE

- Ms. GÖNENÇ İNAL CİFTÇİ

Translator and Partnerships Assistant, UN WFP TÜRKİYE

#### **INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION**

- Mr. YASSER HASSAN

Director of ILO Office for Türkiye, International Labor Organization

### **O. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE**

#### **COMCEC**

- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ

Director General, Comcec Coordination Office

- Mr. CAN AYGÜL

Head of Department, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Mr. ERHAN SIRT

Head of Department, COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN  
Head of Department, COMCEC
- Mr. MEHMET C AKTAŞ  
Head of Department, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Ms. AYTEN AKMAN KAÇAR  
Senior Expert, CCO
- Mr. GOKTEN DAMAR  
Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. NİHAT AKBALIK  
Senior Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. ALİ ORUÇ  
Senior Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. MEHMET AKİF ALANBAY  
Senior Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR  
Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Ms. ÖZGÜL YÜKSEL  
Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. KADİR ALTINTOP  
Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. YUNUS KAYIŞ  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC
- Ms. HİLAL BAŞKARAHAN  
Assistant Expert, Organization of COMCEC
- Ms. MİNE DEMİR  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Ms. SEYYİDE RAVZA ÇOKSÖYLER  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. MUHAMMED ZİYA SARI  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. RAMAZAN GÖRGEÇ  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Ms. BETÜL ÖZAL  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
  - Ms. TİLBE GOCUKLU  
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
  - Mr. OZAN LİF  
Officer, COMCEC Coordination Office
  - Mr. SELİM UYAR  
Coordinator, COMCEC
  - Ms. HANDE ÖZDEMİR  
Translator, COMCEC
  - Ms. HAVVA YILMAZ  
Officer, COMCEC
  - Mr. MUHARREM TEMLİSU  
Secretary, COMCEC
  - Mr. OĞUZHAN HALİM SAY  
Executive Assistant, Comcec Coordination Office
  - Ms. YELİZ DURAN  
Secretary, COMCEC Coordination Office
-

# **ANNEX**

## **2**

**REPORT OF THE 43<sup>rd</sup> MEETING OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE**  
**(November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Virtual Meeting)**

- The 43rd Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held virtually on November 16th, 2023.
- The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Selçuk KOÇ, Acting Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office. In addition to OIC General Secretariat and COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), the following OIC Institutions attended the Meeting:
  - Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)
  - Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group
  - Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT)
  - International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)
  - Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC)
  - Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD)
  - Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS)
  - Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC)
  - Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA)
- The Meeting agreed on the following agenda items for discussion:
  - Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy: Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the COMCEC Strategy
    - The List of Activities of the OIC Institutions Aligned with the COMCEC Strategy and COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations
    - Utilizing COMCEC Project Funding for the implementation of COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations
  - Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the Implementation of the SDGs in OIC Member States
    - Preparations for Annual Report on the Progress Towards Achieving the Prioritized SDGs at the OIC level
    - Activities of the OIC Institutions Serving to the Implementation of the SDGs
  - COMCEC Flagship Projects
  - The Proposal on the “Business Intelligence Programme”



- Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions for the Benefit of Palestinian People/ Al-Quds Sharif as well as Geographically Distant OIC Member Countries and Observer Countries
- Any Other Business

### **Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy: Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the COMCEC Strategy**

#### **- The List of Activities of the OIC Institutions Aligned with the COMCEC Strategy and COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations**

Highlighting the significant efforts and contributions of the OIC institutions towards the realization of the COMCEC Strategy and the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations, the Committee reviewed the completed and planned activities of the relevant OIC Institutions directly serving the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations and activities serving to the objectives of COMCEC Strategy since the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session based on the cooperation areas, namely trade, financial cooperation, transport and communications, tourism, agriculture, and poverty alleviation.

The Committee was briefed that 6 research reports and guides, 6 sectoral brief notes and 12 Working Group Meetings has been successfully conducted by CCO with the contribution of the key experts from the Member Countries as well as international organizations. In addition to this, sectoral policy recommendations have been formulated during the Working Group Meetings to be submitted for the COMCEC Ministerial Session.

The Committee was briefed in terms of activities related to the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations and activities related to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy reported by the OIC Institutions.

Concerning the activities related to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, the Committee was informed that 227 activities of the OIC Institutions have been completed so far and 43 activities have been planned to be held in the period ahead. In terms of cooperation areas, the reported activities have been mainly conducted and planned in the areas of trade facilitation, trade and investment promotion, SMEs and poverty related monitoring and aid effectiveness.

Afterwards, the OIC Institutions have informed about their activities in line with the COMCEC Ministerial Resolutions and the COMCEC Strategy. The Committee underlined the importance of the contributions of the OIC Institutions and appreciated their intense efforts towards the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations as well as the realization of the objectives of the COMCEC Strategy.

#### **- Utilizing COMCEC Project Funding for the implementation of COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations**

The Committee was informed about the projects implemented under the COMCEC Project Support Programs. It was highlighted that 4 projects are being implemented by OIC Institutions under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2023. Within this context,

SESRIC has implemented 3 projects in the areas of finance, poverty alleviation, transport and communications and SMIIC has implemented one project in the area of trade.

The Committee was also briefed on the novelties brought (CPF) through the 11th Call for Project Proposals within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding. It was pointed out that new cooperation area namely Digital Transformation was added to CPF for the benefit of the Member Countries and OIC Institutions. Furthermore, it was highlighted that Member Countries would have the opportunity to focus on addressing their own challenges and the OIC Institutions might be partner in the project the Member Countries under the CPF. It was also pointed out that new activity types namely peer-to-peer experience sharing and needs assessment were added to CPF for the benefit of the Member Countries.

### **Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the Implementation of the SDGs in the OIC Member States**

#### **- Preparations for Annual Report on the Progress Towards Achieving the Prioritized SDGs at the OIC level**

The Committee was informed by SESRIC regarding the preparations for the annual report on monitoring the progress towards the achievement of the SDGs in the OIC Member Countries to be submitted to the 39th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC. The Committee commended the efforts of SESRIC in conducting annual monitoring covering the progress the eight prioritised SDGs (SDGs 1-5, 8-9, and 13) and well as the remaining 9 SDGs. In presenting the key finding in the report, the representative of SESRIC highlighted that although some progress has been observed in SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy), SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 14 (life below water), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), these improvements are not sufficient to achieve the relevant SDG targets by 2030. Furthermore, it was also added that regarding SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG 15 (life on land), and SDG 17 (partnerships), stagnant progress has been recorded with respect to these 6 SDGs. On the other hand, SESRIC's representative also noted that remarkable progress has been recorded by many OIC countries particularly in ensuring healthy lives, and educational attainments. In SDG 3, the under-five mortality rate decreased from 101 to 56 deaths per 1,000 live births between 2000 and 2021 and regarding the SDG 4 the average completion rates in all education levels have also increased, while the majority of the OIC member countries have also managed to close the gap between males and females.

#### **- Activities of the OIC Institutions Serving to the Implementation of the SDGs**

Furthermore, the Committee was informed by the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) about the SDGs-related activities of the relevant OIC institutions and noted that 186 activities have been completed by SESRIC, 33 by SMIIC, 67 by ICDT, 12 by ICCIA and 3 by IOFS on the prioritized SDGs. The Committee requested the OIC Institutions to communicate the in full list of SDGs-related activities at earliest

convenience to the CCO for their submission to the upcoming COMCEC Ministerial Session.

### **COMCEC Flagship Projects**

The Committee was also informed by the CCO on the progress in the implementation of the COMCEC Flagship Projects such as TPS-OIC, OIC Arbitration Centre and OIC/COMCEC International Investment Fund. It was noted that TPS-OIC, as the most important project of the COMCEC in the domain of trade, has been effectuated as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

It was pointed out that the System provides the necessary basis for enhancing intra-OIC trade and advanced trade arrangements. The Committee commended that the awareness raising and training activities of the TNC Secretariat on TPS-OIC in the Member Countries.

Moreover, the Committee was informed about the current developments regarding the OIC Arbitration Centre. It was pointed out that the Centre has become operational and started its activities. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the Centre is working on the settlement of both investment and commercial disputes among the Member States and private sector institutions.

Regarding the S&P OIC/COMCEC Shariah 50 Index and Fund, it was noted that the Index, which includes 50 stocks from 19 Member Countries published as of 2012. Afterwards, as a concrete and halal investment product, a fund based on the Index, was established and issued in 2021.

The Committee welcomed the promoting and raising awareness activities of SESRIC about the COMCEC Flagship Projects by mentioning them whenever appropriate in its research reports and publications. The Committee also invited the relevant OIC Institutions to further contribute to raising awareness of the Member Countries to those flagship projects.

### **The Proposal on the “OIC Business Intelligence Programme”**

The Committee was informed by the ICIEC (IsDB Group) on the work being undertaken towards launching the OIC Business Intelligence Center Programme. Within this framework, the Committee took note of the first version of the OBIC Capacity Building Programme was organized in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia during the period 20-22 March 2023, under the title of “Role of Credit Information Sharing & Business Intelligence in Supporting Trade & Investment Decisions” and a second version of the Programme was organized in collaboration with IsDB, SESRIC, ICIEC, ICDT, and ICCIA in İstanbul, Türkiye, during the period 26-28 September 2023.

### **Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions for the Benefit of Palestinian People/ Al-Quds Sharif as well as Geographically Distant OIC Member Countries and Observer Countries**

The Committee was briefed by the OIC Institutions regarding their activities, projects and existing and newly launched programs for the benefit of Palestinian people and Al-Quds Sharif and geographically distant OIC Member Countries such as Guyana and Suriname, and Observer Countries.

The Committee appreciated the efforts of the OIC Institutions and requested them to continue their efforts including the possible joint activities, projects, and programmes.

It was noted that SESRIC has organized 25 activities where more than 50 participants from the relevant national institutions of the State of Palestine attended since the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session. It was also stated that SESRIC continues its efforts to reach out to geographically distant OIC Member Countries and in this context, Suriname has actively participated in 9 activities organized by SESRIC and 20 participants benefited from these activities. Similarly, Guyana participated in 12 activities and 30 participants from Guyana benefited from these activities.

The Committee was informed that IsDB Group provided support to the projects development in the historic Old City, which covers a variety of endeavours such as restoring housing, providing housing loans, offering comprehensive support to local hospitals and building new schools.

The OIC General Secretariat representative stated that one of the most important outcomes of the Arab Islamic Summit that was held in Riyadh last week was the mobilization of support for Palestine. In this context, the Committee was informed by OIC General Secretariat that the Statement adopted by the fourteenth session of the Islamic Summit Conference and the resolutions of the Arab Summit urging the activation of the Arab and Islamic financial safety net to provide financial contributions to pay for financial, economic and humanitarian support to the government of the State of Palestine and UNRWA.

The Committee was also briefed on the novelties brought (Al-Quds) through within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding. It was pointed out that the scope of the Al-Quds program was enlarged through including new thematic areas such as entrepreneurship, creating job opportunities and empowerment of youth, e-commerce and SME development. Within this framework, 5 projects are being implemented under this Programme in 2023.

The Committee was also briefed that IOFS has provided efforts towards the membership of Guyana in order to benefit from the activities of IOFS.

Concerning the projects implemented for the benefit of geographically distant countries, the Committee noted that the project of Surinam titled “Supporting and Ensuring SMEs to Continue Business During Crisis” is being supported under the CPF by the CCO.

### **Any Other Business**

The Committee Meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

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# **ANNEX**

## **3**

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY H.E. RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN, THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE AND CHAIRMAN OF  
THE COMCEC AT THE OPENING SESSION**

**(4 DECEMBER 2023, ISTANBUL)**

BISMİLLAHIRRAHMANIRRAHİM.

Dear Ministers, Dear  
Secretary General,  
Esteemed Brothers,

MAY GOD'S PEACE, MERCY AND BLESSINGS BE UPON YOU.

As the President of Türkiye and the President of COMCEC, I greet you with my most heartfelt feelings, affection and respect.

I sincerely hope that the 39<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, COMCEC will be beneficial for our countries, the Islamic world and all of humanity.

I pray to The Almighty God to bless our meeting and to make it a means to solve the problems of the ummah and all humanity.

I would like to take this time to thank all my brothers and all our guests who shall contribute to our meeting with their valuable ideas, critiques and suggestions.

Through you, I convey my greetings and love to my brothers and sisters throughout the world.

I wholeheartedly salute my Gazan and Palestinian brothers who have defended their homeland despite Israel's heinous attacks, especially since October 7.

From here, I send my love to all my brothers and sisters who struggle to live as Moslems in different corners of the world.

I feel great pleasure to host you in our country once again. Welcome, all of you, to Türkiye and our beloved Istanbul.  
Esteemed Guests...

This year, as Türkiye and the Turkish Nation, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of our Republic.

As the last link in the chain of states we established in our geography, the Republic of Türkiye has left behind a century full of glory, honor and success.

With God's permission, we shall not stop until we crown this blessed walk of ours,

extending from the past to the present, with the Türkiye Century.

We shall achieve this shoulder to shoulder with you, our brethren.

In these days when great atrocities are taking place in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially in Gaza, our cooperation becomes much more crucial.

Israel's massacres, which started on October 7, accelerated again as of December 1, after a 6-day break for prisoner exchanges.

Thus far, more than 16,000 martyrs and more than 36,000 injured were killed in Israeli attacks targeting civilians and civilian settlements.

May God have mercy on our martyrs and I wish a speedy recovery to our wounded brothers. Two out of every three people murdered in Gaza; children, babies and women.

The number of people from Gaza who have not been heard from has exceeded 6,500.

Among the victims of Israeli persecution are 73 journalists and more than 100 United Nations officials.

Such a situation that the United Nations, which was established to protect global security and peace, cannot even protect its own employees from Israel's barbarity.

The impotence of the forces defending human rights and freedoms from Europe to America is even more drastic.

These countries are literally giving unconditional support to Israel to kill more children, hit hospitals, schools and houses, and shed more innocent blood.

International media organizations cannot utter a single sentence about their colleagues killed in Gaza, nor can they offer a single criticism against Israel.

However, for years, they had taught us, all of us, lessons in democracy and law. Weren't they the ones who talked about freedom of the press every time they started speaking?

All those who raised eyebrows when the perpetrator became a Moslem suddenly go blind and deaf to the massacres that Israel is brutally conducting today.

Those who physically died in Israeli attacks may be Palestinians.

But the pompous ideologies, contracts, declarations and principles that every person,

institution and country that stands on Israel's side by supporting this oppression or remaining silent has been demolished.

Those who try to turn a blind eye to the deaths of so many innocents in silence and even legitimize them with the excuse of HAMAS no longer have a single word to say about humanity.

Yes, even though we are aware of the hypocrisy behind it, we are watching the utter collapse of the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century design we once looked upon with wishful thinking in the hope it might serve the common interest of humanity.

And despite all our comments, we can't help saying, "What a shame!"

Because, like the closing of every era and the process of building a new one, the coming years will be very painful, troublesome, bloody and full of risks.

So, it is in our hands to turn this process into the greatest gains for ourselves and all our friends and brothers.

For that, we are determined to work harder and fight even harder.

My brothers...

Gaza is serving as a "litmus test" for the global system.

What we have witnessed since October 7, when the war started is showing us the true colors of many structures, from international organizations to human rights organizations, from western democracies to global companies.

Institutionally, the United Nations has failed the Gaza test.

Unfortunately, the sincere efforts of Secretary General Mr. Antonio GÜTERRES have been sabotaged by the members of the Security Council themselves.

The resolution, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly with "121 ayes," was a precious step in terms of translating the conscience of humanity.

However, this decision remained obsolete due to the current structure of the United Nations and was ineffective in stopping the bloodshed.

Unfortunately, the will of 161 countries was ignored, with 40 abstaining votes.

This picture alone is enough to show what kind of trap we, as the Moslem world of 2 billion, are trapped in.

On one side, while 121 countries say "Let's stop the war, no more bloodshed," there are still those handful of countries that write blank checks for Israel's attacks. And only when these handful of countries say, "Okay, fine, stop!" will there be the global mechanism that goes into action.



It is impossible for such a structure to bring peace, stop conflicts, or provide hope for humanity.

This distorted structure of the United Nations Security Council, which we have been saying for years, "THE WORLD IS BIGGER THAN FIVE," is unfair and dysfunctional in resolving crises, should be changed, and the sooner, the better.

None of us are obliged to accept this system.  
None of us can say "That's just the way it is."

Now is the time to raise our objections more loudly. As Moslems, we say, "A MORE JUST WORLD IS POSSIBLE."

Struggling towards this ideal is our responsibility, not only to our own citizens, but also to future generations.

Of course, during this endeavor of ours, we shall not wait on the sidelines, but will try to make full use of the opportunities at hand.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, whose founding purpose was to defend the Palestinian cause, offers us a crucial foundation for carrying out the struggle in unison and under a single umbrella.

As the Islamic world, we revealed our stance regarding the Palestine issue with the joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit held in Riyadh last month.

At said summit, we made truly milestone decisions, including defining the occupying settlers as terrorists for the first time.

Israel's theft, as well as its thuggery, has now begun to be discussed about more and more in the international arena.

Formed within the scope of that summit, the 'Foreign Ministers Contact Group' held talks in various countries.

These talks will continue until the bloodshed in Gaza stops. We also need to take other steps.

One of these is that Israeli rulers are held accountable for the war crimes they committed.

We definitely need to take the United Nations Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court in consideration within this framework.

Likewise, we will not allow the issue of nuclear weapons, which Israel admits to exist, to be swept under the table.

We must start preparations for the reconstruction of Gaza now.

We must also take a very clear stance against Israel's policies of depopulating Gaza.

I would like to remind Israeli administrators who pursue different ambitions this fact once again.

GAZA IS A PALESTINIAN LAND.

GAZA BELONGS TO THE PALESTINIANS, AND IT WILL REMAIN THAT WAY FOREVER.

As the Islamic world, it is our duty not to cede even a single inch of Gaza's land to the occupying Israel.

We must do this not only for our Gazan and Palestinian brothers, but also for our own security and territorial integrity.

We know very well that those who occupy Gaza today will set their sights on other places tomorrow with the delusion of “The Promised Land.”

As a matter of fact, they do not even feel the need to hide these intentions anymore.

Netanyahu, the butcher of Gaza, personally revealed in front of the cameras that the issue is not Gaza or Ramallah, but that he is pursuing expansionist goals.

Therefore, defending Gaza and Palestine today means defending Mecca, Medina and Istanbul along with Al-Quds; It also means defending Damascus, Beirut, Baghdad and other Islamic lands.

If we wait for the fire, pain and screams to reach our home, Allah forbid, that fire will definitely reach our home one day.

If we act with the awareness and sensitivity that we are a big family with two billion members from Asia to Africa, from America to Europe, no one can threaten us or point a finger at us.

It has become even more critical for us to raise our solidarity with the Palestinian people, especially in these difficult days for our brothers.

As Türkiye, in addition to our efforts in the international arena, we are trying to deliver humanitarian aid to the region.

In cooperation with our Egyptian brethren, so far, we have shipped 12 planes full of supplies and two civilian aid vessels to El Arish.

We ensured the transfer of injured people, especially cancer patients and children, to Türkiye.

We personally visited these patients and shared their pain on behalf of our country and nation.

Organized under the auspices of my wife with the participation of the spouses of heads of state and government and special representatives from many countries, the 'One Heart for Palestine' meeting was also meaningful in terms of showing our country's stance.

Hopefully, we will continue all these efforts in a more versatile way.

With the latest events, it has again become quite clear how vital it is to establish an independent, sovereign and geographically integrated Palestinian state within the 1967 borders, with Al-Quds as its capital.

The road to peace in our region passes through the establishment of the Palestinian state. Together with other countries, we are ready to undertake all kinds of responsibilities, including guarantorship, for the establishment and maintenance of peace within this framework.

My Dear Brothers,

As Moslems, one of our increasingly threatening problems is Islamophobia.

While comprising an overwhelming majority of the immigrant population in many European countries, Moslems are subjected to new xenophobic, racist, discriminatory and anti-Islamic treatment on a daily basis.

In recent years, there has been a deplorable increase in attacks and threats against our citizens, their properties and mosques, especially in Western European countries.

Since January 2023, nearly 500 anti-Islamic attacks have been conducted in which the Holy Quran was burned, especially in front of the Embassies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation countries in Europe.

Just last week, three young people wearing the Palestinian keffiyeh were attacked with firearms in the middle of the street in the United States.

It is possible to tell of more examples of this...

While hostility to Islam is spreading plaguelike in western societies, unfortunately, no precautions are taken by governments.

Vile acts against the Holy Quran are legitimized and excused under the guise of "freedom of expression".

We have all seen and see how those who turn a blind eye to these attacks suddenly become prohibitive when it comes to defending the rights of innocents in Palestine and Gaza.

We know very well that those who say, "Freedom of thought and assembly" do not actually harbor such sensitivity.

The main purpose here is to provoke Muslims and create a "MOSLEM PROBLEM", as was created 85 years ago.

God willing, we will not allow this to happen.

We will not fall into the trap they want to pull us and our brothers into.

As a member country of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, I find it useful to underscore once more the importance of our joint action against these hate crimes.

We will continue our determined ordeal against hate crimes, both at the bilateral level and using international platforms.

Esteemed Guests,

We are very pleased that the Preferential Trade System amongst Islamic countries was implemented last year.

We attach great importance to the countries included in the system, by taking the necessary precautions and fully implementing the agreement.

We cordially invite countries that have not yet become party to the system to participate as soon as possible.

The economic opportunities to be developed in conjunction will bring prosperity, abundance and economic stability.

Another important issue that will encourage and increase trade and investments between our countries is that of resolving disputes.

We find your support very valuable for the Arbitration Center of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which continues its activities in Istanbul, to become the address for resolving investment and commercial disputes.

We believe that the COMCEC SME Program will contribute to the bolstering of SMEs operating in the Organization's member countries.

We have determined the topic of 'Developing Electronic Commerce' to be the main theme of the consultation session of our Ministerial Assembly this year.

It is clear that the fields of e-Commerce and Digital Transformation stimulate innovation and offer new opportunities in economic growth.

The matter of halal foods constitutes a vital area where we need to intensify cooperation.

Thank God, we have come a long way in the studies conducted within the framework of the Islamic Countries Standards and Metrology Institute.

We welcome the foundation of the Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies and the fact it held its first meeting last month.

The work to be conducted within the scope of the Forum will make significant contributions towards increasing trade between our countries.

We also encourage the development of halal and innovative product alternatives amongst our countries, such as the Gold Exchange and the International Investment Fund.

Unfortunately, we have yet to achieve the desired situation in the field of finance. When in fact, the center of gravity of global finance is shifting from west to east.

We opened the Istanbul Financial Center this past April in order to evaluate the potential of our region as well as our country.

With a total area of 1.4 million square meters, the Istanbul Financial Center is a project that is a candidate to become the hub of the sector, especially in Fintech and participation finance.

We wish our organization and you, our friends, to benefit from this center of high strategic importance.

By moving the ALBARAKA Forum to the Istanbul Financial Center, our goal is to strengthen our cooperation in the Islamic economic zone.

We believe that Albaraka Islamic Finance Foundation taking such a step will contribute to the enrichment of the intellectual and theoretical ground in this area.

We shall be proud to host the Islamic Financial Summit, which will bring together leading academics, investors, bankers and researchers from around the world, in Istanbul next April.

We expect the General Council of Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions, the Islamic Development Bank as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to provide the necessary support for this summit.

My Esteemed Brothers,

With the participation of relevant experts from our countries, many development issues were tabled for discussion at the COMCEC Sectoral Working Group Meetings this year.

Policy recommendations developed by the Working Groups shall support the development of our countries and increase the welfare of our citizens.

COMCEC Project Support Programs fulfill an important function in the implementation of these policy recommendations.

130 projects within the scope of COMCEC Project Financing, 14 projects within the scope of COMCEC COVID Response Program and 13 projects within the scope of COMCEC Al-Quds Program have been successfully implemented until now.

Moreover, this year we decided to support projects in the field of digital transformation cooperation.

We hope our countries will benefit even more from these support mechanisms.

As members of a religion that commands us to ‘compete in charity,’ I wholeheartedly believe we will make every last effort to reinforce the solidarity, friendship and cooperation between our countries.

I pray Our Allah will help us.

With these thoughts, I hope the 39<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session of COMCEC will be a beneficial one; I extend you all my deepest respects.

Cordially yours...

# **ANNEX**

## **4**

Original: Arabic

**SPEECH OF H.E. DR. HISSEIN BRAHIM TAHA,  
SECRETARY GENERAL OF  
THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)  
AT THE 39<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE OIC STANDING COMMITTEE FOR  
ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION (COMCEC)  
(2-5 December 2023)**

**Your Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Türkiye  
and Chairman of COMCEC,  
Honorable Ministers and Distinguished Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatihu*

It is a great honour and privilege for me to address the 39th Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC), which is traditionally held in this historic and beautiful city of Istanbul. I would like to express my deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Türkiye and Chairman of the COMCEC, for his support to the activities and programmes of the OIC, particularly in the economic and commercial fields. I would also like to thank the Government and the people of the Republic of Türkiye for the excellent arrangements made for the success of our meeting today.

**Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen**

I would like to take this opportunity to address the tragedy being experienced by our brothers and sisters in Gaza and throughout Palestine. The OIC strongly condemns the continuation of the genocidal war crimes committed by the Israeli occupation and calls upon the international community to intervene urgently to put an end to this brutal and criminal Israeli aggression which is indiscriminately targeting all the inhabitants of the occupied Gaza Strip, including civilians, children, the sick, the wounded, journalists, ambulances, hospitals, etc. The OIC calls upon the international community to ensure that the Israeli occupation is brought to an end. The continuing occupation, bombardment and total blockade of Gaza has had disastrous consequences for the livelihoods of its people, who are deprived of access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, water, medicine, electricity, fuel and other essentials. The OIC holds Israel and all those who have the capacity to prevent it from committing these crimes against the Palestinian people, but who have instead sided with it, fully responsible for the massacres and crimes against humanity currently taking place in Gaza and throughout Palestine. We call for a permanent cessation of hostilities and a just and lasting



settlement of the Palestinian question. The Palestinian people have suffered for too long and deserve their homeland back with Al-Quds as its capital. The OIC will work tirelessly to achieve this noble goal.

**Dear Chair,**

**Distinguished participants,**

Since the 38th COMCEC meeting, the General Secretariat and the concerned OIC institutions have continued to coordinate and support the implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted at the previous session to ensure their timely execution. The implementation of the decisions and resolutions is important to achieve the objective of strengthening socio-economic cooperation among Member States. At the same time, the challenges encountered along the way will enable us to explore innovative solutions while learning from the technical cooperation and capacity building organized by our institutions.

I am pleased to mention that the major achievements are highlighted in my report to this session. I would like to take this opportunity to warmly applaud all concerned OIC institutions for the activities and achievements accomplished since our last meeting in November 2022. According to the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) data estimates of May 2023, the volume of net intra-OIC trade reached 436.57 billion US dollars in 2022, against 367.88 billion US dollars in 2021, i.e. an increase of 18.67%. The share of intra-OIC trade in the overall foreign trade of the Member States has slightly increased by 1.22%, rising from 19.03% in 2021 to 19.26% in 2022. OIC Member States are also encouraged to make progress in the various existing multilateral trade instruments of the Organization by implementing the relevant economic agreements, including the Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC). To achieve our objectives set out in the Programme of Action: OIC-2025, we must continue to combine our collective efforts to intensify intra-OIC trade and investment promotion, tourism development and the fight against food insecurity and capacity building within our Organization's Member States.

**Your Excellencies,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to note that the 9th Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development (MFSAD) was held in Doha, Qatar, on 1-2 October 2023. In the current situation of rising global food prices and increasing food insecurity, it is essential for OIC Member States to further strengthen intra-OIC cooperation in the food and agriculture sector in order to create more resilient food systems, share knowledge and best practices to help develop the national production capacities of our countries.

Hence, the support and active participation of Member States in the various OIC programmes in this crucial sector are essential factors in increasing agricultural productivity to meet the challenges of food security and improve the well-being of the populations in our countries.

In this context, I would also like to stress the need to support rural populations in our least developed countries (LDCs), particularly in Africa. More than 70% of the inhabitants of our least developed countries live in rural areas and lack basic amenities. I call upon the COMCEC Coordination Office and all OIC institutions to design programmes to address the socio-economic needs of rural populations in our LDCs.

In the same vein, the convening of the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM) and the launching of the OIC Labour Centre in the course of this year will further boost cooperation among OIC Member States in the field of labor, employment and social protection. In this context, I would like to stress that the OIC Labour Centre, which is a new specialized institution of the Organization in charge of the implementation of its projects and programmes in the field of labor and employment, will be very useful for the OIC countries in identifying key areas of mutually beneficial cooperation, with a view to strengthening institutional capacities and improving the quality of human resources.

Therefore, in order for member States to benefit from the enormous socio-economic potential available in our member States, enhanced cooperation, harmonization and pooling of efforts, plans and strategies are needed more than ever. OIC Member States are encouraged to focus on investment in key sectors such as agriculture, the food industry and halal tourism, logistics and the financing of start-up projects in order to support and promote the innovative projects of young people and to implement all OIC initiatives aimed at promoting intra-OIC cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like, from this rostrum, to assure you that the OIC General Secretariat and its concerned institutions will continue to work closely with the Member States to provide a joint response in order to facilitate economic recovery in our countries. I also take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the COMCEC Coordination Office and all concerned OIC institutions, which have continued to collaborate with the General Secretariat in the implementation of the various projects under the socio-economic agenda of the Organization.

I wish you a very fruitful meeting and look forward to the outcome of your deliberations.

**Wassalamu Alaykum wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Barakatihu.**

# **ANNEX**

## **5**

Original: English

**ADDRESS BY DR. MUHAMMAD SULAIMAN AL JASSER,  
PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IsDB  
GROUP) AT THE OPENING SESSION  
(2-5 December 2023)**

Your Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye,

Your Excellencies, the Ministers

Your Excellency, Hissein Ibrahim Taha, Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin by extending my sincere appreciation to HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye and Chairman of the COMCEC Committee, for his efforts to convene this meeting and for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to us since our arrival in this generous country.

The Islamic Development Bank Group deeply mourns the loss of lives and widespread devastation in Gaza. We extend heartfelt condolences and stand in solidarity with affected families, expressing sympathy and support during this tragic time.

I also extend our heartfelt condolences to our People in Türkiye, Syria, Morocco, Libya, and Afghanistan for the natural disasters. The IsDB Group is committed to providing steadfast support for reconstruction and relief efforts in these regions.

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,**

Despite the anticipated post-pandemic recovery, the world and, in particular, OIC member countries are grappling with various challenges:

- Global inflation hit nearly 9% in 2022, the highest in 26 years, impacting financial stability and growth prospects.
- Global growth is falling, thus pushing hundreds of millions into poverty and extreme poverty. Unfortunately, 40% of these impoverished people reside in our member countries.
- Debt distress, limited fiscal space, and widening financing needs result in increasing vulnerabilities of our member countries to food insecurity and climate change.

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,**

Mindful of these challenges and in line with its endeavor to support its member countries, the IsDB Group is implementing several ambitious initiatives in cooperation with our key development partners.

The Arab Africa Trade Bridges (AATB) Program, an initiative championed by IsDB's trade financing arm, ITFC, launched a US\$1.5 billion Food Security Program to address food insecurity issues in the Arab and African regions amidst the ongoing global food security crisis.

Last month, during the Saudi-African Summit held in Riyadh, the Arab Coordination Group announced the allocation of US\$50 billion to help build resilient infrastructure and inclusive societies in the African continent.

This enhances the Arab Coordination Group initiative announced last year for a food security financing package of US\$10 billion to support medium- and long-term food supply security in member countries, as well as the climate action financing package of US\$24 billion.

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,**

The focus of this COMCEC session on e-commerce underscores the crucial need to address the significant digital divide, a fundamental requirement for the success of e-commerce. Once considered a luxury, digital connectivity is now a basic necessity without which economic development cannot occur. Our countries grapple with challenges in digitalization and sustainable ICT, including issues of underdeveloped network infrastructure, limited adoption of digital services, and ranking lowest in internet speed while leading in the highest data costs globally. In order to address these challenges, IsDB developed its ICT Roadmap 2025 and its Digital Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027 in a consultative and collaborative manner.

Moreover, the Bank is currently conducting a technical study on e-commerce within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area. This study will be piloted in Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Uganda, thus assisting them to enact reforms to boost MSME engagement in e-commerce and to minimize disparities in e-readiness levels across the continent.

As SMEs are the driving force for e-commerce, an important study is under finalization by IsDB, ICDT, and the SME Development Organization of Türkiye (KOSGEB) on the business support network for improving the competitiveness of SMEs in COMCEC member states.

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,**

We are looking forward to celebrating our IsDB's 50th anniversary during the Bank's Annual Meeting that will be generously hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on April 27-30, 2024, in Riyadh. This signifies a journey of partnership and collaboration that benefitted the Ummah. The Bank's noble mission has relied on the support and cooperation of our member countries, partners, and all stakeholders.

In the next 50 years, our collective efforts should be focused on:

**First**, ensuring more solidarity for shared prosperity so that the economic and social benefits would be distributed equitably among all members of our communities, promoting inclusive growth and well-being for everyone.

**Second**, achieving better economic cooperation and integration that facilitates collective growth by fostering trade, removing barriers, harmonizing policies among participating nations or regions, and enhancing preferential customs and tax treatments.

**Third**, scaling up investment in seamless connectivity infrastructure in transport, energy, information, and communications technologies.

**Fourth**, developing the necessary human and institutional capacity while benefiting from South-South Cooperation.

We will continue to engage with COMCEC and other OIC institutions to reinforce our joint efforts to support a fast, robust recovery in the member countries through inclusive, resilient, and balanced economic transformations of our current socio-economic models.

I look forward to practical recommendations and proposals that will further promote and strengthen cooperation among our member countries.

**Thank you, Mr. President**

# **ANNEX**

## **6**

Original: English

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY H.E. CEVDET YILMAZ, THE VICE  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE**

**(5 December 2023, İSTANBUL)**

**Assalamu Aleykum ve Rahmetullahi ve Berekatuh**

**Honorable Ministers,**

**Esteemed Delegates,**

After a series of fruitful consultations, we have successfully concluded the 39<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

I would like to thank all member country delegations, international organization representatives and other participants for their contributions.

This year, at the Ministerial Session, we focused on **‘Improving the E-Commerce Capacity of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member Countries.’**

In addition to the economic and commercial issues on our agenda, we discussed the current situation of the Islamic world on the occasion of the meeting.

- OIC Preferential Trading System (TPS-OIC)
- OIC Arbitration Center
- Works in the Field of Halal Accreditation
- OIC / COMCEC International Investment Fund
- On our meeting agenda were; the COMCEC SME Program, Digital Transformation Program, Gold as well as the Real Estate Exchange Project.

We observed with satisfaction that the bilateral meetings held between our countries and organizations during this intense four-day long meeting formed an important basis to further strengthen our cooperation.

More than 45 bilateral meetings were held with the participation of 19 countries, eight OIC organizations, as well as various private sector companies.

I hope that our meetings and the efforts made within the scope of COMCEC will result in the best possible outcome.



**Dear Participants,**

As Islamic countries, we believe that there is no obstacle we cannot overcome if we realize our opportunities and direct our energy to the right areas.

In making important policy recommendations and presenting them to the benefit of our countries, the COMCEC Working Group meeting agendas held throughout 2023 covered matters such as ‘improving e-commerce capacity, reducing youth unemployment, combating food insecurity, environmental impacts of transportation infrastructures, digital currencies and encouraging entrepreneurship for competition in tourism.’

I find it quite significant that our countries benefit more from COMCEC Project Support Programs in order to implement policy recommendations.

Islamic countries account for 25% of the world's population and approximately 9% of the global economy.

The total share of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation countries in world trade corresponds to approximately 11.2% of world trade.

As stated by Secretary General Mr. Hüseyin İbrahim Taha in his speech yesterday morning, trade volume between member countries as of the end of calendar year 2023 constitutes around 19% of our total trade.

As you know, we aim to the intra-OIC trade volume reach 25% by the end of 2025.

In order for us to make more efforts to get closer to this goal in the last two years, we need to take concrete steps to facilitate and encourage trade.

As underlined by our President, it is vitally important for member countries to contribute and participate in the Preferential Trade System, one of the most important initiatives developed within COMCEC.

I would like to share with you a recent development regarding this subject.

The Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat forwarded the updated concession lists to the Trade Negotiations Committee Secretariat on behalf of its six member countries.

In terms of activating the potential of the System, I consider it crucial that the Gulf Cooperation Council Member Countries implement the system effectively.

In addition, I think we should make efforts to add new countries to the System and expand the scope of the System with elements such as services trade and investment.

**Honorable Ministers,**

**Esteemed Delegates,**

Developing our own opportunities and vehicles in resolving disputes that may arise in the field of commerce and investment is a very vital issue.

We are extremely pleased that the OIC Arbitration Center, established to resolve international trade and investment disputes between our countries, has commenced activities in Istanbul.

With your valuable support, we will hopefully make the Center one of the most distinguished arbitration centers.

We discussed issues in this field in the panel on arbitration that occurred on the margins of our meeting.

I believe that with our joint efforts, the visibility of the Istanbul Arbitration Center will increase as time goes by.

**Esteemed Delegates,**

On the other hand, it was decided to launch the SME Program last year in order to support our SMEs that are the impetus of innovative initiatives and economic transformations in all sectors.

The heads of the institutions responsible for SMEs of the member countries came together for the first time on the COMCEC margin.

This program will provide an important opportunity for SMEs to open up to the world and contribute to boosting the intra-OIC trade volume.

Halal investment alternatives, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation - COMCEC International Investment Fund and the Gold Exchange both support financial diversification and hold significant potential for our economies.

Moreover, we have accelerated our efforts to take a more active part in the halal product and service industry.

Fortunately, we are beginning to reap the fruits of the long-term efforts in the field of accreditation.

Established to accredit halal certified products according to the standards of the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC), the Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB) becoming operational was a significant step.

**Dear Ministers,**

**Dear Participants,**

Digital transformation has led to a rise in the share of e-commerce in global trade, whereas E-commerce and E-export have reached their highest levels with the Covid-19 epidemic.

Global B2C (Business to Consumer) trade volume has reached \$5.7 trillion dollars by 2022.

It was extremely beneficial for member countries to share their experiences on E-commerce and E-export at yesterday's meeting.

We support the private sector to further our country's potential in E-commerce and E-export and its position in the world market.

We prioritize E-export so that E-commerce becomes a power not only in the domestic market but also in the international arena.

Compared to conventional exports, it is possible for our e-commerce companies;

To acquire partners from all over the world with greater purchasing power,

To test their products in target markets and develop new ones or add innovation to existing products with customer experiences,

To perform relatively low-risk transactions in the production and payment processes.

We are pleased with the interest in the High-Level Digital Transformation Forum, which was founded last year within the scope of COMCEC.

We will also support the implementation of Policy Recommendations for the Development of E-Commerce in OIC Member Countries.

As you know, the topic of next year's Ministerial Exchange of Views Session has been ascertained to be **Islamic Financial Technologies: Digital Transformation in Payment Systems in the Member Countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.**

Islamic financial technologies stand out as a field that aims to provide financial services within the framework of Islamic finance principles such as reliability, security and confidentiality.

In this regard, I would like to emphasize that we find next year's Ministerial Exchange of Views to be very accurate and useful, and I hope that the preparations will be beneficial in advance. In celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of COMCEC next year, we will take this occasion to organize different and more comprehensive events.

**Dear Delegates,**

In addition to the painful economic processes the world is experiencing, the situation of the Islamic world breaks our hearts.

Lest we forget that the founding purpose of the OIC, under whose umbrella we hold these meetings, is the al-Quds cause. Today, more than ever, the Islamic world must be united and support the oppressed Palestinian people.

Particularly what has happened in the occupied Palestinian lands since 7 October has now exceeded the limits of humanity's tolerance.

Can the brutal bombing of hospitals, schools, and places of worship where innocent civilians take shelter with a last hope to escape death be explained by the right to self-defense?

Will those who openly threaten societies with the use of nuclear weapons not be held accountable before international law?

Aren't we the ones who should first touch their conscience when crimes against humanity are clearly being committed?

I invite all participants here to react equally to civilian deaths, regardless of whether they are Muslims, Christians or Jews.

We in Türkiye, will continue to provide uninterrupted humanitarian and medical aid and continue to shout out the truth on all platforms.

Through our efforts, the Islamic world will continue to stand tall despite all the problems imposed from outside.

**Dear Guests,**

We were very pleased to host you in Istanbul during the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our Republic.

With the vision of the Türkiye Century, we will continue our efforts to make the coming period the century of stability, peace, compassion and righteousness in the region and at the global level.

Before concluding my words, I would like to thank all member country delegations, the OIC General Secretariat, OIC Institutions and other international organizations for their valuable contributions.

I hope that our discussions and decisions taken at the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session will lead to decent results for the Islamic World and deepen our cooperation.

I wish you all a safe, auspicious journey and healthy days, with the hope that you shall return to your countries with good memories and friendships.

May Allah be with you. Assalamu Aleykum ve Rahmetullahi ve Berekatuh.

# **ANNEX**

***7***

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS**

### **Policy Recommendations for the Exchange of Views Session of the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session on “Improving E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries”**

The 38<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session decided on “Improving E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries” as the theme for the Exchange of Views Session at the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the COMCEC and requested COMCEC Trade Working Group (TWG) to come up with concrete policy recommendations on this topic and report them to the 39<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Ministerial Session.

Along with the issues related to e-commerce, the draft policy recommendations document includes the challenges and possible policy options for improving e-commerce capacities in the Member Countries. In this framework, the following challenges and problems as well as recommendations have been formulated in light of the research conducted on the subject.

#### **A- Challenges for Improving E-Commerce Capacities of The OIC Member Countries**

While e-commerce provides significant opportunities for the countries having necessary infrastructure in this field, it also bears risks for the countries, which need to take further steps for the improvement of this industry. Although some OIC Member Countries have made significant progress in the field of e-commerce, a great majority of the OIC Member Countries face various challenges in developing their e-commerce capacity. Main challenges faced by the member countries are highlighted as follows:

- Difficulties in adapting to the rapidly developing digital transformation.
- Poor legal and regulatory framework as well as inadequate digital infrastructure in the field of e-commerce.
- Insufficient quality and brand problems, tax losses, and increased informality due to the rapid spread of social media and the increase in trade through social media.
- Low competitive advantage of local companies in their home countries due to rapid development of international e-market places and digital arena.
- Poor legislation and practices on issues including e-payments, consumer protection, intellectual property, cyber security, personal privacy, and data protection.
- Limited institutional capacity regarding the preparation, implementation and monitoring of laws, strategies and programs related to e-commerce.

- Inadequate telecommunication infrastructure, such as poor network quality, internet speed quality and the cost of internet and bandwidth.
- Lack of qualified human resources and know-how to be utilized in the e-commerce sector.
- Majority of the OIC Member Countries lag behind in trade facilitation and logistical rankings.
- Insufficient data pools regarding e-commerce and of limited analyzed and shared information.
- Limited awareness and poor vision on e-commerce among potential entrepreneurs.
- Lack of trust on digital money and e-commerce in terms of consumer protection, intermediary liability, privacy and data protection.

## **B-Policy Recommendations for Increasing E-commerce Capacities in the OIC Member Countries**

### ***Enhancing Digitalization***

- 1- Establishing an OIC E-commerce information portal where companies in OIC Member Countries will be able to receive information on markets in other countries.
- 2- Providing E-commerce companies with physical and online opportunities, where they can receive information on, among others, incentives, markets, taxes, consumer rights, and data security.
- 3- Improving e-commerce environment through effective monitoring and licensing of e-commerce platforms as well as accrediting e-commerce companies on these platforms.
- 4- Promoting effective provision of the public services to collect governmental services effectively on e-government platforms.

### ***Sound Legal and Regulatory Framework***

- 1- Developing enabling legal and regulatory e-commerce/digital trade environment through the legal and regulatory measures in the areas of consumer protection, intermediary liability, privacy and data protection etc.
- 2- Considering compliance with international regulations to facilitate international commercial transactions, such as MLETR (The Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records).

- 3- Defining and classifying of e-commerce with a view to developing common understanding on the subject in the OIC Member Countries.
- 4- Encouraging technical knowledge transfer through direct information/document sharing, trainings, workshops, personnel exchange programs in the field of e-commerce among the Member Countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.
- 5- Encouraging OIC Member Countries to develop a feasible and time-scaled multi-annual national e-commerce strategy.
- 6- Encouraging OIC Member Countries to determine the competent institutions responsible for the development of the e-commerce ecosystem and to establish effective coordination mechanisms.

#### ***Promotion Activities and Incentives***

- 1- Promoting online payment systems among the public and entrepreneurs in order to develop an e-commerce ecosystem with the usage of protection guarantees, tax deductions, and advantages over cash payments such as discounts and installments.
- 2- Providing government supports and incentives to encourage existing E-Commerce Entrepreneurship and prevent unregistered economy (e.g, preventing e-commerce businesses from selling goods without invoices).
- 3- Making legislative regulations and providing government support and incentives to people who have reached a certain level in e-commerce (e.g, those who sell more than 20 units per month or over 5000 local currency units) to become registered businesses.
- 4- Promoting development of business-to-business e-commerce (B2B)/digital trade (e.g. organizing fairs, forums, training for B2B companies, supporting participation in fairs and of country businesses in international B2B platforms, providing support for logistics.
- 5- Initiating support and incentive programs for raising awareness and improving skills of e-commerce entrepreneurship, especially in the underdeveloped segments of society.
- 6- Developing business skills in order to improve the competitiveness of e-commerce/digital trade companies through trainings on branding and institutionalization, business skills on social media, product display on global e-commerce platforms, and successful sales.



### ***Supporting Infrastructural Development***

- 1- Providing quality infrastructure (i.e. internet, mobile access etc.) with an affordable price with a view to enhancing e-commerce/digital trade ecosystem.
- 2- Supporting e-commerce/digital payment, purchasing, and tracking modules with modern and secure IT infrastructure.
- 3- Improving the investment environment in the country and implementing large projects with different financing models in order to strengthen the ICT sector, which is the fundamental element of the development of e-commerce.
- 4- Developing/Enhancing human resources/capacities e-commerce ecosystem through, among others, business formal education and vocational training, with a view to equipping the employees in the sector with the necessary skills.

## **THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 21st MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP**

The COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) successfully held its 21st Meeting on October 12-13, 2023, in Ankara, with the theme of "Measuring Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries". In the Policy Debate Session titled "*Formulation of Policy Recommendations for the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session on Measuring Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries*", on October 13th, 2023, TCWG made deliberations on the policy recommendations related to the environmental impact of transport infrastructure. The policy recommendations were formulated by taking into consideration the research report entitled with the same theme of the above-mentioned meeting. The policy recommendations are as follows:

***Policy Recommendation I: Developing/Improving a comprehensive system and institutional structure through a sound legal and regulatory framework as well as guidelines for better measurement and assessment of environmental implications of transport infrastructure.***

### **Rationale:**

The connection between transportation and the environment is complex and intertwined. The factors that drive transportation, the actions involved, the outcomes produced, and the ultimate consequences are all interconnected with the environmental effects they create. The environmental impact, including but not limited to GHG emissions, noise, and water pollution, should be quantified resulting from different transportation modes.

Within this framework, it is essential to design standards for transportation infrastructure that prioritize the reduction of negative environmental impacts and the preservation of ecosystems. To achieve this overarching goal, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of the environmental effects associated with transport infrastructure. Therefore, all phases of the infrastructure's life cycle, including construction, operation, and end-of-life, should be thoroughly analyzed in terms of their environmental implications.

To that end, a robust systematic and institutional structure as well as deliberative legal and regulatory framework, and guidelines are needed for effective environmental impact assessment of transport infrastructure, beginning from

transport planning, project identification and preparation, ex-ante evaluation, procurement, supervision, and monitoring, to ex-post evaluation. Various tools and methodologies can be applied in this process. Transport modeling and simulation using advanced tools, cost-benefit analysis, stakeholder engagement, and public participation, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and monitoring and measurement techniques are among the important tools and methods being used for that purpose.

***Policy Recommendation II: Improving costs-benefit analyses through among others incorporating environmental costs and benefits during the planning phase of transport infrastructure.***

**Rationale:**

Any transport investment project brings costs and benefits to a country. In the planning phase, it is vital to predict the cost and benefit of a transport infrastructure project so as to reveal the feasibility of the project. In this respect, incorporating environmental costs and benefits into cost-benefit analysis (CBAs) is of particular importance during the planning phase of the infrastructure projects. The systematic process of calculating the benefits and costs of transport projects is widely regarded as an essential step in the policy process. It helps decision makers to have a clear picture of how society and the environment would be affected. Monetizing environmental impacts and incorporating the results into the cost-benefit analysis of a transport infrastructure would provide a clearer picture about the feasibility of the project. In this regard, incorporating environmental costs and benefits into the costs-benefit analyses is a vital and useful tool for the efficient use of resources.

***Policy Recommendation III: Improving the quality of transport infrastructure projects' data and statistics for measuring the environmental impacts***

**Rationale:**

Reliable, continuous, and accurate data and statistics are key not only for the development of transport infrastructures but also for measuring and predicting their effects on the environment. Transportation infrastructures have environmental impacts ranging from climate change, air quality, and biodiversity to water resources. Environmental impacts incurred by transport infrastructures are basically measured through indicators, but not limited to, greenhouse gas and carbon emissions, energy use and intensity, the share of renewable energy sources in the supply mix, emissions of air pollutants (sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)), human exposure to fine particulates in the air and related mortality rates and costs, freshwater abstractions, water stress levels, the use of materials, the

generation of waste and its recovery, protected areas, forest resources and changes in land cover.

Data and statistics on these parameters shall be regularly produced, updated, and published in terms of domestic, international, and transit transportation separately to make a concrete evaluation of how to minimize the negative environmental impact of the existing systems. In this regard, the implementation of a robust information system including a set of environmental indicators related to transport infrastructure and services is essential. Moreover, the publicity of these data and information is essential for the public to change its demand behavior as well as to open a new path for new investment opportunities from the private sector.

***Policy Recommendation IV: Making use of ex-post analysis through statistical comparisons and qualitative assessments for mitigating environmental impacts of transport infrastructure.***

**Rationale:**

To determine whether transport infrastructure projects have affected the region/country as a whole in economic, social, and environmental terms, as was intended before realizing the project, the impacts of the projects should be measured and analyzed meticulously. The forecasts made for a project in the feasibility study could regularly be compared to the realized period after the project is put into operation to determine to what extent forecasts deviated from actual numbers. In this respect, ex-post evaluation is an important tool for determining the deviation and providing insights into the decision-making process, performance, and outcomes of transport infrastructure projects and for informing the public. Systematic ex-post evaluation of large transport projects including updated environmental impact assessments bears great importance for feeding the process for new environment-friendly transport projects. In this respect, having an identified, simple, and systematic ex-post-analysis process is significant for revealing the burden of transport infrastructure projects on the environment after their realization.

***Policy Recommendation V: Enhancing institutional and human capacity through improved regulatory policies and special training with a view to improving the quality of measurement and assessment of transport infrastructure projects***

### **Rationale:**

Transportation infrastructure has an enormous impact on sustainable development. However, poor planning of transportation infrastructure generates negative effects, such as ecological destruction, increased traffic accidents, climate change, increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and lower transport efficiency. Within this context, measuring the environmental impacts of transport infrastructure, as a complex horizontal issue, is of utmost importance for effective planning of transport infrastructure. It requires, in particular, sufficient human resources with the appropriate level of skills, as well as adequate institutional capacity. These skills may be significant, especially in environmental impact assessments, strategy formulation, and goal setting. On the other hand, the environmental impact assessment itself requires sufficient human resources in many areas of technical expertise, environmental science, economics, modeling, etc.

Furthermore, skills in strategic planning –the ability to identify objectives and prepare action plans- are particularly needed, when it comes to minimizing the environmental impacts of transport infrastructure or distributing the efforts over a long period of time. However, a sufficient number of individuals and the required expertise and knowledge shall exist not only in one organization but distributed to many different organizations engaging in this measuring and assessment process. In this respect, having competent institutional and human resources is of vital importance for enhancing the quality of measurement and assessment of environmental impacts of transport infrastructure projects.

### ***Policy Recommendation VI: Promoting more environmentally friendly transport modes and technologies with a view to reducing their negative effects on the environment***

#### **Rationale:**

To reduce the environmental impacts, there is a global tendency to shift the traffic from road transport to rail transport and private vehicle use to public transportation. Likewise, efforts have been exerted on technological advancements in alternative energy technologies, light but durable vehicle materials, and intelligent transport applications. Therefore, governments should encourage the use of more environmentally friendly transport modes and support the respective R&D efforts towards new technologies.

***Instruments to Realize the Policy Advice:***

**COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

**COMCEC Project Support Programs:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit projects to be financed by the COMCEC. For the above-mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office can support financing the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include training programs, study visits, workshops, organizing seminars, peer-to-peer experience sharing, needs assessments, and producing promotional materials/documents.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP**

A moderation session under the working group agenda titled “Formulation of Policy Recommendations for the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session on “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness in The OIC Countries” was conducted during the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group. This document has been prepared to enrich the discussions during the said session to come up with concrete policy recommendations for policy approximation among the Member Countries. It has been drafted in accordance with the main findings of the research report conducted for this meeting.

***Policy Advice 1. Encouraging transformation from informal economy in tourism industry to certified tourism products and services through designing regulations aiming to improve the entrepreneurial status and protect entrepreneurs.***

Creating a business-friendly regulatory environment to make tourism investments more attractive largely depends on the legislative framework in countries, which can offer a wide range of opportunities. Informal sectors are generally associated with low productivity, reduced tax revenues, poor governance, excessive regulations, and poverty and income inequality. The informal economy poses a serious threat not only to the functioning of the labor market and the competitiveness of the tourism sector but also for the productivity of tourism entrepreneurs. The informal economy in tourism sector deteriorates the market relations and development of human capital. At the same time, burdensome bureaucratic procedures and taxation regulations are the key challenges hindering entrepreneurial activities especially at the initial stage of the starting a business. Hence, regulations should be designed by taking into consideration the balance between formality and burdensome bureaucracy so that the legislative process makes it easier to increase certified tourism products and services for member countries. Handling the reasons that lead to the informal activities in terms of the existing entry barriers is necessary to make them adhere to the regulations. Therefore, designing regulations is vital to improve transformation from informal economy to certification. Giving support to entrepreneurs in their early stage could help them to stay away from informal economy. In this regard, tourism licensing focuses on customer satisfaction and competitiveness of the related country as a tourist destination. While licensing ensures to follow standards and meet the customer satisfaction for governments, it helps the entrepreneurs to access trainings and capacity building programs. This would also help businesses to get start and flourish.

***Policy Advice 2. Developing/Improving sound public and private incentive mechanisms for facilitating tourism entrepreneurship, innovation, and job creation in tourism and hospitality industry.***

Creating a sustainable entrepreneurial culture, reducing regulatory burdens to access national and international markets, providing a second chance for failed tourism entrepreneurs, enabling tourism entrepreneurs to use digitalization in their services, and focusing on resilience during difficult times are the key issues affecting tourism entrepreneurship. A successful entrepreneurial eco system also involves a variety of stakeholders, including public institutions, financial agencies, regional development agencies and training institutions and a continuous dialogue and cooperation among them. Incentive mechanisms, such as tax reduction, investment place allocation, VAT<sup>1</sup> exemption, customs and tax exemptions and assistance by renting land for a short time to the entrepreneurs are pertinent and major measures to motivate and encourage entrepreneurs in the tourism sector. In addition, strategies to support entrepreneurship in their early stages through providing the in-kind support, establishing incubators, and facilitating access to finance (e.g. angel capital) is crucial in promoting entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, creating jobs in tourism sector by employee incentive programs allows companies to improve productivity, reduce employee retention, and lower production costs. This encourages teamwork and boosts motivation. Both the employees and employers benefit from the incentive programs.

***Policy Advice 3. Promoting investments in niche tourism areas (i.e. cultural and heritage tourism, religious tourism, adventure tourism, gastronomy and ecotourism) and maintaining their sustainability through encouraging local entrepreneurship.***

Along with mass tourism, niche tourism is also an important tool for destinations seeking to create, diversify or extend the market appeal of particular places. Niche tourism areas may also provide various benefits for the host communities, such as economic development, social cohesion, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation.

Cultural and heritage tourism enhances the competitiveness of destinations, as heritage resources are usually unique to the destination and can not be found elsewhere as well as appeal a more desirable profile of tourists. To ensure long-term and sustainable competitiveness in this area, positive discrimination towards local entrepreneurship should be made to support the tourism investments. This could be possible through introducing special incentives customized to encourage niche tourism.

Actually, OIC Member Countries have a rich cultural and heritage tourism opportunities. Improving the utilization, quality and sustainability of cultural and



heritage tourism in the OIC destinations by linking people with history and by investing in niche tourism types such as adventure tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism, gastronomy tourism, health and wellness tourism. This can also provide sustainable tourism in the long term in terms of accommodation establishments, developing niche tours and activities as well as promoting sustainable and responsible tourism practices and local job opportunities.

***Policy Advice 4. Raising awareness of entrepreneurs on tourism assets, facilities and attractions and their potential.***

Among the most important needs of entrepreneurs who want to be involved in the tourism sector is the lack of sufficient awareness of the assets and potential of the sector. This process is also related with public awareness of their tourism assets, including attractions, resources, and facilities. Those two variables affect and feed each other's. Hence, raising public awareness on tourism assets, including attractions, resources, and facilities, and providing detailed information on tourism values to attract potential visitors are necessary steps to be taken for enhancing the value added of this sector.

In this regard, several strategies might be developed for raising the awareness of the public and supporting entrepreneurial activities especially for the young segment of the population. At the same time, seminars and short-term special education programs can be designed for raising awareness of tourism entrepreneurs and developing their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

***Policy Advice 5. Investing in Destination Promotion and Marketing (i.e. digital content, branding) by utilizing digital contents (i.e. social media, bloggers) on tourism attractions for enabling entrepreneurs to market their services toward potential tourists.***

Product and service promotion through digital marketing channels continues to improve consumers' awareness. Social media and digital marketing for travel destinations in accessible and understandable content on touristic places is beneficial for tourists to prefer products and services. Use of social media, websites, travel bloggers and bloggers, user generated content and influencer marketing may yield fruitful results for tourism entrepreneurs. Therefore, tourism entrepreneurs may be equipped with necessary skills for the better utilization of digital platforms to market their services to potential tourists. These initiatives would effectively contribute to enhancing tourist inflow to the member countries.<sup>2</sup>

***Policy Advice 6. Developing entrepreneurial training (especially for first time entrepreneurs) and certification programs aiming to enhance human capital.***

Developing capacity building and training programs to enhance human capital required by potential entrepreneurs at the destination. Governments should implement several programs that encourage and promote young entrepreneurs. For example, developing an effective entrepreneurship education and training program can boost potential young business owners' knowledge of sustainable practices, digital technology, and marketing, as well as their grasp of tourism management.

Therefore, the government should formulate policies to encourage youth entrepreneurship in tourism sector. Policies may be devised to enhance this groups entrepreneurial orientation, arrange awareness seminars, organize trainings, and initiate educational programs to develop their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

***Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:***

***COMCEC Tourism Working Group:***

In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

***COMCEC Project Funding:***

Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups and OIC Institutions operating in the field of economic and commercial cooperation can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above-mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries and OIC Institutions can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organizing seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, and needs assessments.

***OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum:***

The OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas and the sub-areas from the private sector perspective in its future meetings.

1Value Added Tax

2 Nowadays tourists watch digital content before they decide to visit a particular destination. The content on social media platforms like YouTube, TikTok and Instagram as well as websites plays a significant role in attracting tourists.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**TO BE DISCUSSED BY THE COMCEC AGRICULTURE WORKING**  
**GROUP, IN ITS 21ST MEETING**

**(12<sup>TH</sup> -13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023)**

***“Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries.”***

The COMCEC Agriculture Working Group (AWG) has successfully held its 21st Meeting on 12th-13th October , 2023 in Ankara, Türkiye with the theme of “Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries.” During the Meeting, Agriculture Working Group, made deliberations on sustainability of agricultural inputs. Accordingly, the participants has come up with some policy recommendations.

The policy recommendations are as follows:

- ***Policy Recommendation 1: Promoting conservation agriculture practices with a view to managing agricultural ecosystems for sustainable productivity, increased profitability and food security that protects natural resources and the environment.***

**Rationale:** Soil management practices in sustainable agriculture are designed to make soils used in farming more productive, healthy and sustainable, to conserve natural resources, to increase soil fertility and to improve the quality of life of farmers. Conservation Agriculture mainly aims to increase productivity on arable land while at the same time rehabilitating degraded land.

The three principles of Conservation Agriculture are;

- Minimization of soil disturbance : Reducing mechanical interventions to the soil and switching to direct sowing without soil disturbance,
- Providing permanent organic cover on the soil surface: Ensuring permanent soil organic cover with crop residues and/or cover crops,
- Ensuring crop diversity: It is the realization of diversity in the crop pattern included in the crop rotation.

- ***Policy Recommendation 2: Encouraging drip irrigation, water harvesting, drought tolerant crops, non conventional water management and dry farming practices that support effective use of water resources and water saving, and the participation of agricultural producers in the application processes.***

**Rationale:** Water is one of the main inputs for agricultural activities, and productivity can be enhanced with the right irrigation methods. In many cases,

water resources, which are vital for the agricultural sector, are not used properly in agricultural activities, over-consumed and polluted with harmful chemicals in high doses, and many wrong practices threaten the ecosystem. Sustainable agriculture aims to use water efficiently and irrigation methods and water saving technologies are used to reduce the impact of agricultural activities on water resources. An appropriate irrigation method needs to be selected by considering factors such as soil characteristics of the land, quantity and quality of irrigation water, topographic situation, land shape and size, plant type, climate characteristics, irrigation costs and social and cultural characteristics of the region. Countries experiencing water scarcity will also turn to the use of non-traditional water resources to partially alleviate water scarcity. Non-conventional water resources are either produced as a product of specialized processes such as desalination or, when used for irrigation, require appropriate pre-use treatment and/or appropriate soil-water-plant management strategies. In water-scarce environments, such water resources are accessed through desalination of seawater and highly brackish groundwater, collection of rainwater, and use of marginal quality water resources for irrigation. Marginal quality water used for irrigation consists of wastewater, agricultural drainage water and groundwater containing different types of salts. In addition, drought has become endemic worldwide due to climate change. This situation raises serious concerns, and important work is being done on developing "drought-tolerant crops" through molecular breeding and genetically modified approaches. On the one hand, there is an increasing demand to produce enough staple food crops (wheat, rice and corn) to meet the growing population, and on the other hand, it is necessary to optimize the yield stability for main crops or locally important crops. Therefore, the production of drought-tolerance crops is becoming increasingly important.

***Policy Recommendation 3: Supporting effectively use of organomineral fertilizers and organic pesticides, which provide greater productivity and production increases compared to the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and also contribute to the improvement of plant health and soil.***

**Rationale:** Organomineral fertilizers contain plant nutrients and organic matter together, which are found in chemical fertilizers, so that the nutrient content can be presented in a more standardized form. In organomineral fertilizers, plant nutrient minerals such as Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potassium (K), Sulphur (S), Zinc (Zn) and organic matter from humic-fulvic acid and compost are combined together and used as base fertilizer. Organomineral fertilizers produced in the form of "organic matter + mineral fertilizer" by taking advantage of the positive effects of organic materials on soil fertility, on the one hand, reduce the loss of nutrients by washing and on the other hand, increase the effectiveness of the minerals used by improving the fertility elements of the soil. In addition, organic pesticides are considered important for plant and soil health. Generally derived from natural sources and minimally processed, organic pesticides are derived from plants such

as neem, pyrethrum (pyrethrums), rotenone or ryania (botanical insecticides), or minerals such as boric acid, cryolite or diatomaceous earth.

***Policy Recommendation 4: Developing a smart agriculture system for effective monitoring and evaluation to better understand the impact of productivity increases and reducing cost as well as environmental compatibility***

**Rationale:** Smart Agriculture Technologies, which are used in planting, irrigation, agricultural spraying, making various measurements, and harvesting of lands, and which are used to operate many separate units such as drones, robots, sensors, data analysis systems, cloud systems, and Internet of Things as an integrated system, play a very important role for the sustainability of the agricultural sector. All innovative practices are within the scope of smart agriculture practices or agriculture 4.0. With the developing agricultural technologies, productivity increases while costs decrease. Through these technologies, it will be possible to make progress in terms of both the sustainability of the agricultural sector and the overcome climate change in countries where smart agricultural practices have become widespread.

***Policy Recommendation 5: Improving circular agriculture practices through using a minimum amount of external input or reusing agricultural wastes to ensure fertilizer and renewable energy production.***

**Rationale:** Circular agriculture means keeping agricultural biomass and the wastes and residues generated by food processing processes within the food system as reusable resources. Circular agriculture includes practices that ensure the future of food supply and access to safe food. The basic principle of circular agriculture is the optimal use of land or resources to meet the need. In order to make the best use of the fields to be planted, diversity is increased by planting successive crops and adding mixed crops to the rotation. The residues (leaves and stems) of the crops produced in these fields are used as feed for livestock and bio-fertilizer for the soil. In this sense, circular agriculture practices presents a wide range of benefits such as recycling and waste reduction, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, etc.

***Policy Recommendation 6: Encouraging the use of closed farming methods and technologies by private sector enterprises with a view to ensuring better control of environmental factors, increased productivity and continuous production in the off-season.***

**Rationale:** Closed farming is a method of agriculture in which plants are grown in a controlled environment. When growing plants in controlled environments such as greenhouses, vertical farms, soil less farming systems, etc., the use of land, water, pesticides and other chemicals required to grow the plants is reduced. Closed

farming technologies offer advantages such as better control of environmental factors, increased productivity and continuous production in the off-season.

***Policy Recommendation 7: Strengthening the coordination and sustainability of initiatives among public institutions and organizations by taking into account the data and evidence-based risk predictions developed by the initiatives at the beginning of the implementation processes***

**Rationale:** Different approaches among authorities and regulations regarding land use plans and sustainability of the ecosystem lead to the priority targets determined within the framework of water resources management, sustainable agricultural input use, natural disaster risk management, and biodiversity protection. Therefore, foresight-based approaches focusing on the development of the legal and institutional structure and the provision of needed financial resources need to be developed. Taking into account the data and evidence-based risk predictions developed by the initiatives at the beginning of the implementation processes will strengthen the effectiveness of institutional and technical capacity.

***Policy Recommendation 8: Supporting small-scale farmers, peasants and households in effective management their agricultural activities by capacity building, training, access to market information and customised financial products to optimize their decision-making process also disseminating technology and facilitating eco-friendly but relatively costly solutions.***

**Rationale:** Small-scale farmers, peasants, and households, as a separate segment of any national economy include for significant number of contributors to food production in most of the OIC regions. Although majority of the smallholders are aware about the technological advances either in irrigation, organic practices, they are financially marginalized to access these tools on the grassroots level. Supporting them in effective agricultural management ensures a more consistent food supply, increasing rural development, health and nutrition, and improving overall national food security. This issue is not related only to the improvement of local agriculture but also addresses broader issues of economic development, sustainability and regional resilience. It is an investment in the well-being of communities and contributes to global efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty. Creating accessible financial tools and incentives could create diffusion of these practices also help financial inclusivity.

***Policy Recommendation 9: Increasing to use Certified Seed Production and Improved Seeds in Agricultural Production in order to enhance productivity and to support food security.***

**Rationale:** Certified seed production is a process that guarantees quality and genetic integrity. These seeds are typically certified and made available for sale by

an official authority. Certified seeds are produced, stored, and marketed in compliance with established standards. This process ensures that agricultural products are more reliable in terms of consistency, productivity, and quality. Additionally, Improved seeds are the seeds of plants developed using genetic engineering and traditional selection methods. These seeds are developed to increase crop productivity, enhance disease resistance, and adapt to climatic conditions. Improved seeds contribute significantly to increasing food production, helping to feed the growing population. Certified seed production and improved seeds are integral components of sustainable agricultural practices. These seeds require less water, fertilizers, and chemical pesticides, reducing environmental impacts. Furthermore, the increase in productivity necessitates less land use, thus contributing to forest conservation.

### **Instruments to Realize the Policy Recommendations:**

**COMCEC Agriculture Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner. Working Group may work on a prioritization and sequencing of the policy areas.

**COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit projects to be financed by the COMCEC. For the above-mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office can support financing the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include training programs, study visits, workshops, organizing seminars, peer-to-peer experience sharing, needs assessments and producing promotional materials/documents.



## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC POVERTY ALLEVIATION WORKING GROUP**

A policy debate session was held during the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group (PAWG). The Working Group agreed on the policy recommendations below for reducing youth unemployment through improving the vocational education and training programs in the OIC Member Countries.

### **Policy Recommendation 1: Conducting a needs assessment to identify areas of improvement for addressing youth unemployment and crafting effective policies**

#### **Rationale:**

Addressing the challenges of youth unemployment, informal youth employment, and NEET status demands a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach that takes into account various interconnected factors. Firstly, it's crucial to recognize the need for job creation through supportive macroeconomic and developmental policies that promote economic growth and entrepreneurship. This entails addressing macroeconomic stability and fostering an environment for formalizing informal economies. These factors significantly affect young individuals' access to decent work opportunities. Secondly, investing in education and skills development is paramount, addressing barriers like poor education quality, knowledge and skills mismatches, and inadequate infrastructure. Enhancing vocational training, technical education, and apprenticeships is essential to bridge the gap between youth skills and labor market demands. Moreover, a focus on improving education quality and ensuring equitable access is key, particularly for young girls and women facing high dropout rates and early marriages.

The OIC Member Countries vary in vulnerability to these challenges. Some face weak macroeconomic outlooks while others contend with climate change, environmental degradation, and water scarcity. Recognizing these regional differences is essential for crafting effective policies. Moreover, international cooperation is important to address complex issues like illegal migration and tap into the potential of skilled migrants. Collaboration on global initiatives, including debt relief and social protection, is essential for achieving sustainable development goals and extending support to vulnerable populations, including young individuals.

### **Policy Recommendation 2: Developing effective active labour market policies to reduce youth unemployment and create opportunities for decent work**

### **Rationale:**

Through education and training initiatives, active labour market policies (ALMP) help individuals acquire new skills or upgrade existing ones. This makes the workforce more adaptable to changing labour market demands, increasing their employability. In this respect, devoting a sufficient budget to developing active labour policies and programs to increase youth employment is a strategic investment that can yield significant economic, social, and political benefits in the short and long term.

ALMPs which mainly include job search assistance, labour market training, incentives for private sector employment, and public sector job creation are interventions in labour market policies that aim to increase employment opportunities and thus are essential for bolstering economic recovery by assisting jobseekers in securing employment, offering necessary training to individuals facing the greatest challenges, and providing robust support to those facing significant difficulties.

Meeting financing gaps and addressing youth unemployment, inactivity, and precarious work requires a comprehensive approach. International cooperation is vital to support developing countries, mobilizing domestic resources, strengthening social protection systems, and implementing financial reforms.

### **Policy Recommendation 3: Developing/improving well-designed monitoring and evaluation systems with key indicators for the effective implementation of vocational education programs**

#### **Rationale:**

Monitoring and evaluation systems are essential in assessing the success of any policy/ program and identifying any potential shortcomings and challenges as well tracking improvements. Developing and improving monitoring and evaluation systems provide an opportunity to have insights about the implementation and to follow the progress; to show their areas of improvement; and to ensure that they meet with their targets and objectives.

Regularly collecting and analysing data on these indicators can help educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders make informed decisions to improve the quality and effectiveness of vocational education and training programs.

In this context, simple data collection methods that require minimal infrastructure and limited resources may be utilized. Moreover, real-time data collection and machine learning for trend analysis related to skills shortages can also be benefitted in a rapidly changing job market.

**Policy Recommendation 4: Upgrading workforce skills and increasing employability through promoting digital skills development and digital transformation of national VET systems as well as by creating the public-private partnership**

**Rationale:**

Digitalization is crucial in vocational education in three distinct ways. First, schools play a crucial role in equipping citizens with new skills to navigate a rapidly changing world. Second, it introduces innovative resources like computers and interactive whiteboards, used in flipped classrooms or blended learning. Third, digital competencies, tools, and content are readily accessible not just within vocational schools but also at apprentices' workplaces. Widespread adoption necessitates digitizing both VET and national skills frameworks, ensuring rapid alignment with the dynamic labor market.

Developing guidelines for national VET systems' digital transformation is crucial. Digitalization has a profound impact on the workplace and alignment of training with evolving job market skills. Digitalization plays a pivotal role in enabling individuals to acquire new skills in the constantly changing world. It introduces innovative teaching resources and approaches while also enabling rapid adaptation to labour market transformations. Furthermore, a digitalized system is essential to ensure that education processes remain resilient, and skills acquisition continues uninterrupted, even in crises such as a pandemic.

The advantages of digitalization in VET systems encompass several key aspects: data-driven decision-making, enhanced quality and efficiency broadened learning horizons, increased employability, and unrestricted communication through digital technologies. While there are potential risks, such as job displacement and the digital divide, it is crucial to convince society about comprehensive systemic digital transformation and address challenges like limited internet access and digital skill disparities.

While creating and implementing vocational training programs, involving the private sector in the studies and receiving its support enable both the training of personnel needed in the sector, that is, the preparation of the expected qualified workforce, and the implementation of faster and result-oriented programs by easing the financial burden on the public budget.

**Policy Recommendation 5: Initiating full-fledged incentive schemes in order to encourage entrepreneurship and business management, employment assistance, and on job training**

### **Rationale:**

Incentivizing entrepreneurship and business management, employment assistance, and on-the-job training is essential for addressing youth unemployment and improving labour market outcomes. Job search assistance programs play a pivotal role by enhancing job seekers' search efforts, streamlining the job matching process, and ultimately leading to higher-quality job placements.

Incentivizing private sector employment through initiatives such as wage subsidies and entrepreneurship programs can provide youth with the skills, resources, and support needed to start and run their own businesses. Public sector employment programs are another avenue to consider, especially for disadvantaged individuals, as they offer a source of income and help maintain labour market connections, while also mitigating high unemployment rates.

### **Policy Recommendation 6: Developing policies and initiating labour market reforms to reduce informal employment**

#### **Rationale:**

Addressing informal employment is essential for a country's economic development and the well-being of its youth. Policies and initiatives that promote formalization, improve labour market conditions, provide access to education and skills training, and create opportunities for decent work are crucial for reducing the negative impact of informal employment, especially among young people.

On the other hand, informal workers typically lack the legal protections and benefits afforded to formal workers. This includes minimum wage guarantees, overtime pay, paid leave, social security, and health and safety regulations. As a result, informal workers are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, informal workers often lack access to social safety nets, such as unemployment insurance and retirement benefits. This leaves them financially exposed to unexpected events like job loss, illness, or retirement, leading to increased economic insecurity.

Even in many developing countries, a significant portion of employment opportunities is in the informal economy, which may not provide stable income, social protection, or job security. Informal workers may not fully understand the advantages of formalization, so educational campaigns can play a crucial role.

Simplifying labour regulations, reducing the cost and administrative burden of hiring formal workers, and streamlining employment contracts can create a more conducive environment for formal employment. Moreover, providing incentives for informal businesses to formalize their operations including tax breaks,

subsidies, or access to financial services for businesses can facilitate transition to the formal sector.

Facilitating access to formal markets for informal businesses, including supply chain integration and market linkages can help informal producers and service providers reach a wider customer base and increase their revenues. Investing in vocational training and skill development programs can enhance the employability of informal workers. Equipping them with valuable skills can help them transition to formal employment or improve their productivity as entrepreneurs. Developing and expanding social protection programs, such as unemployment insurance, health insurance, and retirement benefits, to cover informal worker can reduce the economic vulnerability of informal workers and encourage formalization.

**Policy Recommendation 7: Developing sound policies with comprehensive strategies aiming to reduce NEET rate**

**Rationale:**

Decreasing youth NEET rates is a very important issue for governments as NEET leads to prolonged periods of economic inactivity and unemployment. Ensuring the active engagement of young individuals in either gainful employment or educational pursuits holds paramount significance, as inactive youth are susceptible to various social risks and adverse outcomes.

While the global youth NEET rate is at 23.5% as of 2022, the youth NEET rate is particularly higher in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region where most OIC Member Countries are located. Moreover, there is significant variation among OIC member countries in terms of the youth NEET rates. Some member countries have youth NEET rates as high as 40-50%.

Addressing high NEET rates requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving education and training systems, creating job opportunities, reducing economic and social inequalities, and implementing supportive policies and programs that target young people who are at risk of becoming NEET. Collaboration between government agencies, employers, educational institutions, civil society organizations, and youth representatives is crucial for the successful implementation of such policies. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation help governments refine and improve their NEET reduction strategies over time.

**Policy Recommendation 8: Promoting effective coordination of all the stakeholders and creating synergy for the realization of inclusive youth employment policies.**

**Rationale:**

Collaborative efforts among the relevant stakeholders (Public Institutions, NGOs, International Organizations and Donors) are very instrumental in realizing inclusive youth employment policies. Pooling resources knowledge and expertise contribute to the efforts towards equipping young people with relevant and market oriented skills.

Effective partnerships among the relevant stakeholders are very crucial for inclusive policies and social inclusion. The partnerships also facilitate the exchange of good practices, innovative methodologies and a more inclusive working environment.

In this respect, it would be beneficial to establish a single guidance mechanism including relevant stakeholders, to facilitate the entry of new graduates into the employment market and to ensure the employment of suitably qualified personnel in jobs related to their fields.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC FINANCIAL COOPERATION WORKING GROUP**

There will be a moderation session during the Working Group Meeting under the title of “*Formulation of Policy Recommendations for the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session on Improving Cooperation Among Central Banks in Terms of Digital Currencies: Challenges and Prospects for OIC Member Countries*” on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This document was prepared to enrich the discussions during the said session to come up with concrete policy recommendations for policy approximation among the Member Countries. It was drafted in accordance with the main findings of the research report conducted for this meeting.

**POLICY ADVICE 1: Establishing a project management/steering committee and identifying the objectives and use cases for CBDCs in consultation with a wide range of relevant stakeholders (government bodies, financial institutions, universities, think tanks, civil society organizations etc.) to build a digital ecosystem that is interoperable with existing payment system(s), increase financial inclusion and improve monetary policy transmission**

### ***Rationale / Explanation:***

It is crucial to have a robust Project Management/Steering Committee comprising of members with diverse expertise that will continuously provide executive support and to ensure the project meets its goals and objectives. The Committee will provide and develop Central Bank digital Currencies (CBDCs) with a clear vision and objectives adapted to meet the needs, which is what to be achieved with CBDC, e.g. improving financial inclusion or making it easier for businesses to pay. Clearly defining objectives and use cases (such as retail payments, wholesale settlements, cross-border transactions, or government disbursements) is critical because it lays the foundation for the entire CBDC projects. Without a clear understanding of what the CBDC aims to achieve and how it will be used, it is challenging to make informed decisions about its design, technical requirements, and supporting infrastructure. Additionally, having well-defined objectives helps communicate the benefits of CBDC adoption to the public and relevant stakeholders, fostering support and collaboration.

**POLICY ADVICE 2: Developing legal framework and regulatory compliance/ regulatory approval and oversight for ensuring legal clarity, risk management, consumer protection and Central Bank’s role**

### ***Rationale / Explanation:***

It is crucial to develop a comprehensive and robust legal and regulatory framework that addresses legal, financial, and security aspects and the specific characteristics of CBDCs, ensuring compliance with existing laws and regulations. The legal framework and regulatory compliance steps are essential in terms of legal clarity,

risk mitigation, consumer protection and Central Bank's role. Seeking regulatory approval within a well-defined framework ensures that the CBDC operates within the legal framework, preventing potential regulatory hurdles or legal challenges after launch. Regulatory compliance however is an ongoing responsibility. Financial and legal standards can change due to evolving technologies and emerging risks. Maintaining regulatory oversight ensures that the CBDC operates within the boundaries of the law and remains secure for users. Such a perspective should meet shari'ah compliance criteria and promote the role of Islamic finance hubs/centers among the OIC member states as well.

**POLICY ADVICE 3: Setting-up a dedicated task force including Central Bank specialists to identify the right technology stack for the CBDCs (i.e. for providing security, efficiency, scalability, interoperability etc.)**

*Rationale / Explanation:*

It is necessary to implement emerging technologies such as the AI, which ensure the integrity, confidentiality, interoperability, scalability and efficiency of CBDC transactions. The choice of the appropriate Technology stack for the CBDC, considering factors such as distributed ledger technology (DLT), distributed databases or centralized databases, is crucial as it affects the CBDC's technical capabilities, security, and efficiency. Whether to use block chain or another technology depends on factors like the desired level of decentralization or distributedness along with specific use cases of the CBDC. Therefore, it might be pertinent to establish a dedicated task force consisting of qualified experts to elaborate on the subject.

**POLICY ADVICE 4: Designing and developing of CBDCs with extensive testing and pilot studies by Central Banks in consultation with technology experts and relevant stakeholders**

*Rationale / Explanation:*

It is important to create CBDC systems that are adaptable to future technological developments and changing economic conditions. Collaboration with technology experts ensures that the CBDC infrastructure is robust, user-friendly, secure, and resilient. Furthermore, creating intuitive and friendly interfaces for CBDC wallets and applications will encourage adoption among a wide range of users. Rigorous testing is essential to identify and resolve any technical issues before the CBDC's launch. Comprehensive testing and pilot programs help identify and address any technical or operational issues early in the development process. This proactive approach improves the overall functionality and reliability of the CBDC system.

**POLICY ADVICE 5: Developing policies/strategies/programs for ensuring security and privacy in order to protect user data and transactions, and to balance privacy and legal requirements**



***Rationale / Explanation:***

It is crucial to implement strong security measures to protect user data and transactions, and to balance privacy and legal requirements. Security is paramount in the world of digital currencies. Robust security measures protect the CBDC system from threats such as cyber threats and hacking attempts, bolster user confidence, and prevent unauthorized access to funds. Compliance with data protection regulations is essential to respect user privacy.

**POLICY ADVICE 6: Facilitating the access of the public to the CBDCs through user-friendly distribution channels in collaboration with financial institutions**

***Rationale / Explanation:***

Establishing necessary distribution channels and user-friendly wallets ensures that CBDCs are accessible to the public. Collaboration with financial institutions where is needed and/or relevant, can extend the reach of CBDC services, making them widely available.

**POLICY ADVICE 7: Enhancing monetary transmission mechanism, and improving monetary policy effectiveness and financial stability through the CBDCs**

***Rationale / Explanation:***

Integrating CBDCs with monetary policy is fundamental for central banks. It allows them to achieve their economic objectives such as price stability while leveraging the benefits of digital currency. Certain governance rules are necessary to maintain trust and stability in the CBDCs as many of the ongoing projects consider the CBDCs as complementary to cash. Digitalization of goods and services and the related economic activity may enable monitoring prices instantly, thus lead to better assessment of the impacts of monetary policies.

**POLICY ADVICE 8: Developing a comprehensive public relations and communication strategy (i.e. mobile applications) to enhance user capacities and raise awareness about CBDC usage, benefits, and security**

***Rationale / Explanation:***

CBDCs are a new and unfamiliar technology for many people. It is important to communicate effectively with the public about CBDCs and how they will work. Increasing financial literacy on the CBDCs is therefore a must, given the potentially widespread usage such digital platforms and interfaces. Awareness campaigns and educational programs are vital to inform the public, businesses, universities and financial institutions etc. about the benefits of CBDCs, how to use them safely, best security practices and what precautions to take. These campaigns aim to raise awareness and build trust in the CBDC system, contributing to the successful adoption of CBDCs.

**POLICY ADVICE 9: Developing/improving sound monitoring and maintenance mechanisms for gathering insights about the CBDC's performance**

***Rationale / Explanation:***

The official launch of the CBDC marks a critical milestone, but it should be executed seamlessly to build trust among users and stakeholders. Ensuring that all necessary infrastructure and support systems are in place minimizes disruptions during the transition. On the other hand, continuous monitoring and regular maintenance are essential to uphold the CBDC's performance and security standards. In this context, gathering feedback and iteratively improving CBDC based on user experiences are crucial to its long-term success. By adapting to changing needs and addressing user concerns, in addition to increasing the adoption and utility of CBDC in the financial ecosystem, CBDC remains reliable and secure for users.

**POLICY ADVICE 10: Promoting cross-border CBDC utilization by enhancing international cooperation between central banks and international organizations through standards and protocols**

***Rationale / Explanation:***

Exploring cross-border opportunities and interoperability by entering into agreements with other countries to facilitate international use is crucial for enhancing the utility of CBDCs on a global scale. It facilitates international trade, remittances, and financial transactions, promoting economic cooperation between countries. International standards and protocols promote trust and interoperability, allowing CBDCs to function seamlessly across borders. Cross-border CBDC integration should also be weighed against the potential destabilizing effects of increased volume of cross border capital flows as well as the potential for a CBDC of home country to displace another one if used extensively in a host country.

Collaboration with other central banks and international organizations is essential to create a standardized and interconnected ecosystem for CBDCs. The OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum provides a regular platform for the relevant authorities of the Member Countries. Therefore, this forum in cooperation with relevant OIC institutions such as SESRIC or SMIIC when needed, might be utilized for the realization of this recommendation. SESRIC's training programs on central banking to enhance capacity building in terms of human resources with respect to CBCDs should also be utilized effectively.

**Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:**

**COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

**OIC-COMCEC Central Banks Forum:** This special platform provides an interactive and open environment to discuss monetary, banking and financial issues, along with strengthening efforts aimed at deepening the cooperation and coordination by bringing Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC countries together.

**COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Support Programs, the COMCEC Coordination Office issues a call for project proposals each year. With the COMCEC Project Support Programs, the member countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. To realize the above-mentioned policy recommendations, the member countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Support Programs facility. These projects may include the organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparation of analytical studies, needs assessments, and training materials/documents, etc.

# **ANNEX**

**8**

Original: English

**LIST OF BASIC DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED AND/OR  
PRESENTED AT THE THIRTY NINTH SESSION OF THE COMCEC  
(İstanbul, 2-5 December 2023)**

1.	COMCEC Annual Progress Report 2023.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(1)-CCO
2.	Making Cooperation Work: COMCEC Strategy for Building an Interdependent Islamic World.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(2)-CCO
3.	Report of the OIC General Secretariat .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(3)-OIC
4.	OIC Economic Outlook 2023: The Rise of the Digital Economy and Bridging the Digital Divide	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(4)-SESRIC
5.	Brief on Trade Cooperation/TPS-OIC.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(5)-CCO
6.	Proceedings of the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(6)-CCO
7.	Policy Recommendations of the 21st COMCEC Trade Working Group Meeting .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(7)-CCO
8.	Executive Summary-Annual Report on intra-OIC Trade.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(8) -ICDT
9.	Report on OIC Trade Fairs and Exhibitions.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(9)-ICDT
10.	Report on the Issues Relating to the Activities of the World Trade Organization (WTO).....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(10)-ICDT
11.	ITFC Progress Report on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade ...	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(11)-IsDB-ITFC
12.	The IsDB Technical Assistance Program (TAP) for Regional and Global Integration in Trade.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(12)-IsDB
13.	Progress Report on the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD).....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(13)-IsDB
14.	Special Program for the Development of Africa(SPDA)	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(14)-IsDB
15.	OIC Business Intelligence Center Program	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(15)-IsDB
16.	Report of the SMIIC .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(16)-SMIIC
17.	Report on the Activities of the ICCIA.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(17)-ICCIA
18.	Brief on Financial Cooperation.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(18)-CCO
19.	Proceedings of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(19)-CCO
20.	Policy Recommendations of the 20th COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group Meeting.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(20)-CCO
21.	Brief on Transportation and Communications .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(21)-CCO
22.	Proceedings of the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Transportation and Communications Working Group .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(22)-CCO
23.	Policy Recommendations of the 21st COMCEC Transportation and Communications Working Group Meeting .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(23)-CCO
24.	Brief on Tourism.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(24)-CCO
25.	Proceedings of the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group Meeting.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(25)-CCO
26.	Policy Recommendations of the 21st Meeting of the Tourism Working Group .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(26)-CCO
27.	Brief on Agricultural Cooperation.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(27)-CCO
28.	Proceedings of the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(28)-CCO
29.	Brief on Poverty Alleviation .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(29)-SESRIC
30.	Proceedings of the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(30)-SESRIC
31.	Policy Recommendations of the 21st COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group Meeting.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(31)-CCO

32.	OIC-TVET Strategic Roadmap (2020-2025).....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(32)-CCO
33.	Towards the Achievement of Prioritized Sustainable Development Goals in OIC Countries-Progress Report..	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(33)-CCO
34.	List of the OIC Institutions' Activities on the Implementation of SGDs .....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(34)-CCO
35.	Policy Recommendations for the Exchange of Views Session.....	OIC/COMCEC/38-22/D(35)-CCO

Reports are available on the COMCEC website. ([www.comcec.org](http://www.comcec.org))

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