



COMCEC

**REPORT
THIRTY NINTH MEETING
OF THE FOLLOW-UP
COMMITTEE OF
THE COMCEC**

23-24 May 2023



**COMCEC Coordination Office
Ankara, May 2023**

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

REPORT

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COMCEC Coordination Office
Ankara, May 2023

ADDRESS:

COMCEC Coordination Office

Necatibey Cad. 110/A

Ankara-TÜRKİYE

Phone : 90-312-294 57 10 – 294 57 30

90-312-294 57 16

Fax : 90-312-294 57 77 – 294 57 79

Website: www.comcec.org

e-mail : comcec@comcec.org

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R E P O R T

THIRTY NINTH MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC COOPERATION

(Ankara, 23-24 May 2023)

Original: English

REPORT
THIRTY NINTH MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (COMCEC)
(23-24 May 2023)

1. The Thirty Ninth Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) was held on 23-24 May 2023 in Ankara, the Republic of Türkiye.

2. The representatives of the following Member States of the Committee attended the Meeting:

- Republic of Türkiye : (Chairman, Permanent)
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member)
- State of Palestine : (Vice-Chairman, Permanent Member)
- State of Qatar : (Vice-Chairman, Representing the Arab Region)
- Brunei Darussalam : (Vice-Chairman Representing the Asian Region)
- Senegal : (Vice-Chairman Representing the African Region)
- Islamic Republic of Pakistan : (Rapporteur),
- State of Kuwait : (Member of the Previous Bureau)
- Republic of Indonesia : (Member of the Previous Bureau)
- Republic of Nigeria : (Member of the Previous Bureau)

3. The Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), The Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), 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 Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC) attended the Meeting.

(The list of participants is attached as Annex I)

Agenda Item 1: Opening Session

4. Following recitation from the Holy Qur'an, H.E. Abdullah Rıdvān AĞAOĞLU, Vice-President of Strategy Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, inaugurated the Meeting.

5. At the outset, H.E. AĖAOĖLU touched upon some economic trends in the world economy including high inflation and low growth rates and potential advantages of the OIC Member Countries spreading over wide geography with their young population and workforce, dynamic national markets, and underground sources all of which could be transformed to concrete achievements with strong partnerships.

6. Drawing attention to declining trade among the member countries in recent years and reminding the 2025 target of 25 percent intra-OIC trade H.E. AĖAOĖLU underlined the importance of the TPS-OIC system which has been operational since July 1st, 2022. He stressed the necessity of completion of legal obligations and technical issues by the Participating States and invited the other OIC Member States to become a part of this System. He also expressed his expectation with regard to active attendance of the Participating Member States to the Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting to be held virtually on 6-7 June 2023, at expert level to discuss technical issues pertaining functionality of the System.

7. H.E. AĖAOĖLU expressed his wishes for success to recently assigned Secretary General of the OIC Arbitration Centre and invited the entire OIC family to actively participate in and contribute to the activities of the Centre in the period ahead.

8. H.E. AĖAOĖLU touched upon the cooperation efforts on digital cooperation and informed the Committee that the Digital Transformation Forum will convene for the first time after the 39th Ministerial Session.

9. Regarding the establishment of an SME Program under the COMCEC, H.E. AĖAOĖLU underlined the importance of SMEs in the OIC economies and called upon all Member Countries to strongly support the efforts regarding the preparations for the Program.

10. H.E. AĖAOĖLU also expressed his belief in the concrete policy recommendations and roadmaps to be developed at the Working Group meetings held this year to contribute significantly to the cooperation efforts in the relevant fields in the coming period.

11. H.E. AĖAOĖLU lastly touched upon the projects implemented in 2022 and the ones being implemented in 2023, under the COMCEC project support programs and expressed his appreciations for the efforts exerted by all the project owners and partners.

12. H.E. AĖAOĖLU concluded his remarks by wishing every success for all the deliberations to be made during the 39th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee.

(The text of the Statement of H.E. A. Rıdvan AĖAOĖLU is attached as Annex II.)

13. The message of H.E. Hissein Brahim TAHA the Secretary General of the OIC, was read out by Mr. Naghi JABBAROV, Director General of Department of Economic Affairs of the OIC. In his message, H.E. TAHA expressed his deepest appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Trkiye for the hospitality and the CCO for arrangements made for this meeting.

14. H.E. TAHA renewed his sincere condolences and expressed firm solidarity with the Republic of Türkiye for the devastating earthquake happened in several provinces of Türkiye in February 2023 and called upon all Member States to provide more financial and humanitarian assistance as well as investments directed to recover the affected areas.

15. H.E. TAHA mentioned about the adverse effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine on the global economic growth and the spillover effects as well as disruptions caused by aforementioned developments in global food supply security. In this respect, H.E. TAHA underlined that food prices in international market increased by 3.2 % in 2020 and %38 in 2022 respectively.

16. H.E. TAHA also expressed that several sectoral Ministerial level meetings are planned to be held in 2023 as part of the efforts to boost economic recovery and foster economic cooperation among Member States in particular the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, to be held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 1-2 October, 2023, the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers, to be held in the fourth quarter of 2023.

17. Lastly, H.E. TAHA invited the OIC Member States to attend the trade promotion activities including 18th OIC Trade Fair to be held in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 16-18 June 2023 and 3rd OIC Tourism Fair to be held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 20-22 November 2023.

(A copy of the text of the message of H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim TAHA is attached as Annex III.)

18. On behalf of all members of the Committee, the meeting was also addressed by the Head of Delegation of State of Qatar, H.E. Saeed ALBRAIDI, Head of Regional and International Organizations of Ministry of Commerce and Industry. H.E ALBRAIDI, expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Türkiye for hosting and CCO for organizing the Meeting. He also extended his condolences to the earthquake victims and their families in Türkiye and wished a quick recovery for the injured ones.

19. H.E. ALBRAIDI also underscored the necessity to improve the e-commerce capacities of the OIC Member States through digital transformation techniques and their optimal usage. He also underlined the crucial role of digitalization in opening horizons to new opportunities for cooperation within the scope of the COMCEC.

Sideline Event

20. The 42nd Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held virtually on May 17th, 2023.

(Report of the 42nd Meeting of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex IV.)

Working Sessions

21. The working sessions of the Meeting were chaired by H.E. A. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU,

Vice President of Strategy Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye.

- The agenda of the Meeting was adopted by the Committee.

(A copy of the Agenda is attached as Annex V.)

- The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of the programs and projects of the COMCEC and made recommendations thereon as well as prepared the draft Agenda of the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

(The Recommendations and the supplementary recommendations of the Committee are attached as Annex VI and Annex VII)

(The Draft Agenda of the 39th Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex VIII)

Closing Session

22. At its Closing Session Chaired by H.E. Abdullah Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice-President of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of Republic of Türkiye, the Committee adopted its Report together with its Annexes.

23. Afterwards, Mr. Talal AL-NAMASH, Acting Undersecretary for Economic Affairs of Ministry of Finance of the State of Kuwait, extended his condolences to the government and the people of Türkiye due to the earthquakes occurred in February 2023 and hit several cities of the Republic of Türkiye and his prayers for the forgiveness to the ones who have lost their lives. He also thanked the Republic of Türkiye for the warm hospitality provided to all delegations and the COMCEC Coordination Office for the excellent arrangements made for this Meeting.

24. Underlining the global challenges including political uncertainties, adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and increasing interest rates, Mr. AL-NAMASH stressed the importance of cooperation efforts under the COMCEC, particularly the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and Ministerial resolutions as well as recommendations.

25. Mr. AL-NAMASH also pointed out that the theme of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session titled “Improving E-commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries” is quite pertinent. He stressed that the subject bears utmost importance for enhancing trade among the OIC Member Countries.

26. Afterwards, the message of H.E. Hissein Brahim TAHA, the Secretary General of the OIC, was read out by Mr. Naghi JABBAROV, Director General of Department of Economic Affairs of the OIC. In his message, H.E. TAHA congratulated all delegations for their active participation and successful conclusion of the 39th Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC. H.E. TAHA also extended his profound thanks to the Republic of Türkiye and the COMCEC Coordination Office for excellent preparations and to all OIC Institutions for their contributions to the success of the Meeting. Highlighting the concise and action oriented format of the recommendations of the Follow-up Committee, H.E. TAHA also thanked the COMCEC Coordination Office in their endeavors towards the implementation of the relevant resolution of 38th Ministerial

Session of the COMCEC.

27. Finally, H.E. TAHA invited all Member States and relevant OIC institutions to actively participate in the 18th OIC Trade Fair, to be held in Lahore, Pakistan, on 16-18 June 2023, the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development to be held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 1-2 October, 2023, and the 5th Islamic Conference of Labor Ministers to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2023.

28. Finally, H.E. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU made his closing statement. At the outset, H.E. AĞAOĞLU condemned in the strongest terms, Israeli security forces' recent raid on Al-Aqsa Mosque violating the sanctity of al-Haram al-Sharif and the subsequent bombing of Gaza. H.E. AĞAOĞLU stated that these brutal attacks against the worshippers in al-Aqsa Mosque are not acceptable. H.E. AĞAOĞLU expressed that the OIC family has stood by the Palestinian brothers and sisters, and continue to do so concerning the Palestinian cause.

29. Then H.E. AĞAOĞLU also expressed his heartfelt thanks to all the delegates for their active participation and valuable contributions.

30. H.E. AĞAOĞLU underlined the significance of the cooperation efforts among the Islamic countries under the COMCEC especially considering the difficulties faced due to global uncertainties. He highlighted the progress in the flagship programs and projects of the COMCEC including Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member Countries (TPS-OIC), the OIC Arbitration Center, and COMCEC Project Support Programs.

31. Regarding the TPS-OIC, expressing its potential to increase the trade volume among the Member Countries, H.E. AĞAOĞLU welcomed the Member Countries' views on broadening and deepening the framework of the System in the upcoming years.

32. H.E. AĞAOĞLU stated that valuable support of all Member Countries and the OIC Institutions bears great importance for raising awareness about the efforts of the OIC Arbitration Centre both at OIC and global levels.

33. H.E. AĞAOĞLU finally highlighted the significance of the projects implemented under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC COVID Response (CCR), and the COMCEC Al- Quds Program, and he conveyed his wishes for every success to all the project owners and implementation partners.

34. H.E. AĞAOĞLU concluded his speech by reiterating his thanks and appreciations to all the Members of the Follow-Up Committee for their active participation and precious contributions. He also expressed his thanks to the representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, Rapporteur, the COMCEC Coordination Office, representatives of the OIC Institutions namely, SESRIC, IOFS, IsDB, ICIEC, ICDT, ITFC, ICD, ISFD, ICCIA, SMIC, interpreters, translators and other staff taking part in organization of the Meeting for their valuable contributions and efforts which helped rendering this meeting a success.

(A copy of the text of the Closing Statement by H.E. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU is attached as Annex IX.)

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
39TH COMCEC FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE**

1. **Commending** the endeavors towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and The Ministerial Policy Recommendations by the member countries and the relevant OIC Institutions, the Committee **invited** 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/mechanisms, in particular the COMCEC Working Groups and COMCEC Project Support Programs, and **requested** the OIC Institutions to support the Member Countries to this end.
2. The Committee **called 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 **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office 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.
3. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the OIC General Secretariat, CCO, SESRIC, IOFS, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, ISFD, SMIIC, and ICCIA for their efforts towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.
4. **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 **requested** the OIC General Secretariat to regularly submit comprehensive progress reports on the implementation of the Programme to the COMCEC Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.
5. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Member States, 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 States.
6. **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 States of the OIC to the Non-Participating States for their accession efforts to the WTO, the Committee **called upon** IsDB and ICDT to keep on extending their technical assistance to the Member States 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 13th WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.

7. **Welcoming** that the TPS-OIC has been effectuated as of July 1st, 2022 in line with relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the decisions of the TPS-OIC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC), the Committee **requested** the Participating States, which have not done so yet, to complete their internal procedures and **called upon** the Member Countries, which have not yet signed or ratified the TPS-OIC Agreements to do so at their earliest convenience and complete other procedures for joining the System.

8. **Underlining** the significant role of TNC in considering the issues experienced in the implementation of the TPS-OIC as well as discussing the road-map for the period ahead, the Committee **commended** the convening of the TNC Meeting virtually on 6-7 June 2023 and **called upon** the TPS-OIC Participating States to actively participate in this meeting and report the status of implementation in their respective countries thereon.

9. **Commending** the efforts of the ITFC in financing SMEs, OIC LDCs, and intra-OIC trade through diversifying its portfolio and extending more financing for the food and agriculture sector that has a direct and prominent impact on improving productivity, job creation, increasing export revenues, and alleviating poverty, the Committee **requested** ITFC to report its operations on the intra-OIC trade to COMCEC Sessions and Follow-Up Committee Meetings.

10. **Also recalling** the relevant resolution of the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session on developing a well-designed MSME Program, the Committee **requested** the CCO, in collaboration with the interested Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions, to finalize the technical preparations through, among others, conducting a survey to get insights about the needs and expectations of the Member Countries and organizing technical meetings (when needed) with a view to launch the programme during the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session.

11. **Taking note** of the progress in the efforts towards the OIC Business Intelligence Programme, the Committee **requested** the ICIEC, in cooperation with SESRIC, to complete necessary technical preparations for launching the Programme.

12. **Commending** the efforts of SMIIC in the area of standardization, metrology and accreditation and their impact on trade facilitation and capacity building, the Committee **invited** the Member Countries to adopt and use the OIC/SMIIC Standards as their national standards with a view to contributing to the harmonization of standards and alleviating technical barriers to trade among the Member Countries and **called upon** the relevant Member Countries, which use OIC/SMIIC Standards, to officially adopt the standards according to SMIIC adoption guidelines.

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

14. **Taking note with appreciation** the proposal made by the representative of Palestine on the need for a regular network for the experience sharing in the field of green economy among the relevant Institutions of Member Countries, the Committee **invited** the Member States to encourage their relevant institutions to benefit from experiences of the Palestinian National Platform called “Taqat” which promotes networking and capacity-building to address the growing need in this important field.

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

16. **Acknowledging** the important role of the OIC Arbitration Center for the settlement of commercial and investment disputes and **commending** the efforts resulted in the effectuation of the Center, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to encourage their relevant institutions to actively participate in the activities of the OIC Arbitration Center with a view to making use of services provided by the Centre.

17. **Taking into consideration** to the crucial role of private sector financing in mobilizing private investments and ensuring sustainable economic growth of the Member States, the Committee **invited** the Member States to better utilize the facilities of the ICD through the solid projects aimed at creating competition, entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities.

18. The Committee **called upon** the Member States to support active promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Shariah International Fund, which includes shares from the OIC COMCEC 50 Shariah Index, launched under the coordination of OIC Exchanges Forum to the investors and the finance community in their respective countries.

19. The Committee **requested** the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum to complete the technical preparations on the OIC Gold Project, based on block-chain model, in cooperation with central banks of the interested Member States.

20. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Secretariat of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum to expedite the necessary legal, administrative and technological preparations for the establishment of the COMCEC Real Estate Electronic Platform/COMCEC Real Estate

Exchange and **invited** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to identify their authorized bodies as well as notify them to the Forum's Secretariat for enhancing coordination.

21. **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 States, the Committee **requested** the General Secretariat, in cooperation with the IDB Group, to expedite their communications with volunteering Member States for holding 2nd OIC Transport Ministerial Meeting as soon as possible with a specific agenda on the project mentioned above.

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

23. **Also recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the Committee **called upon** the Member States 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.

24. **Considering** the strategic importance of increasing coordination and coherence of policy actions on food security and nutrition at the OIC-level, the Committee **called upon** the Member States to actively participate in the Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development to be held in Doha/State of Qatar on 1-2 October 2023

25. **Underlining** the importance of "IOFS Strategic Vision 2031" for scaling-up agriculture, rural development and food security in the OIC geography, the Committee **invited** the Member States to support to the extent possible the efforts of IOFS in the following areas within the framework of the Strategy pillars, including i) Governance Enablement, ii) Food Crisis Response, iii) Capacity building, iv) agri-food industry development, and v) resource mobilizations, and requests relevant OIC Institutions to accordingly assist in that process.

26. **Recognizing** the heavy burden of high unemployment rates of the youth in the OIC Member Countries and their vital role of their high employability for reducing poverty and increasing economic growth, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to actively involved in the efforts of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, focusing on the issue of youth unemployment to develop sound policy options for the

equitable access of the youth to employment services and equipping training and education institutions as well as their personnel with the newest infrastructure and **called upon** the Member Countries and concerned OIC Institutions to actively participate in the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers (ICLM) to be held in the fourth quarter of 2023.

27. **Recognizing** the efforts of SESRIC in the execution of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020-2025, the Committee **requested** SESRIC to continue providing regular progress updates to both COMCEC Sessions and Follow-up Committee Meetings and **also requested** SESRIC to identify potential challenges and propose strategic responses to ensure the continued successful implementation of the Road Map.

28. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the CCO to carry on compiling the relevant OIC Institutions' activities aligned with the prioritized SDG areas for submission to the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

29. **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, the Committee **requested** SESRIC to continue to carry out statistical training activities with a focus on prioritized SDGs for the benefit of National Statistical Offices of the Member States within the framework of its Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.

30. **Commending** the efforts of the COMCEC High Level Digital Transformation Forum for the exchange of experiences among the Member Countries in digital transformation area in particular through training programs, and **welcoming** the offer of the Digital Transformation Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, as the Secretariat of the Forum, to host the 1st Meeting of the Forum in the last quarter of 2023, the Committee **requested** the Member States and relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate in this important high-level event.

31. **Highlighting** the importance of thorough examination of the impacts of e-commerce on the member countries due to its complex, dynamic, multi-faceted and rapidly evolving nature, the Committee **commended** the endeavors of the COMCEC Trade Working Group, which will undertake the necessary preparations, including, among others, formulation of a set of policy recommendations for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 39th COMCEC Meeting and **called upon** the Member States to actively participate in the 21st Meeting of the Trade Working Group to be held in October, 2023.

32. The Committee **requested** the CCO to circulate a questionnaire including following themes among the Member States to explore their views on the possible themes of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the COMCEC.

Theme 1: Improving Quality Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries
Theme 2: Digital Transformation in Payment Systems in the OIC Member Countries
Theme 3: Sustainable Livestock Production for Ensuring Food Security in the OIC Member Countries
Theme 4: Developing Intelligent Transportation Systems in the OIC Member Countries
Theme 5: Developing and Branding Gastronomy Tourism Destinations within OIC
Theme 6: Alleviating Adverse Effects of Natural Disasters on Poor Segments of Society in the OIC Member Countries

33. The Committee **prepared** and **decided** to submit the Draft Agenda to the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

ANNEX VII

SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 39TH COMCEC FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE MEETING

1. The Committee **welcomed** the Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy submitted by the CCO highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy and **commended** the Member States and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to the implementation of the Strategy.
2. The Committee **welcomed** the significant increase in the number of activities conducted by the OIC institutions for the realization of the COMCEC Strategy.
3. The Committee **welcomed** the initiation of nineteen projects to be implemented in 2023 under the COMCEC Project Funding and invited the Member Countries to intensify their efforts to harness the benefits of COMCEC Project Funding, particularly with a view to materialize the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.
4. The Committee **also welcomed** the enlargement of the scope of the COMCEC Al Quds Programme with new thematic areas such as entrepreneurship, job creation, and youth empowerment, e-commerce and SME development, and the initiation of five projects to be implemented by the Ministry of National Economy of Palestine under the Program in 2023.
5. The Committee **took 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.
6. The Committee **welcomed** the convening of the Sixth Annual Coordination Meeting of OIC Institutions (ACMOI) on 14-15 December 2022, in Jeddah, OIC Headquarters.
7. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group on 1 May 2023, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Improving E-Commerce Capacities of the OIC Member Countries, the

Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Trade Working Group to actively participate in its 21st Meeting to be organized with the same theme in October 2023.

8. The Committee **welcomed** the activities conducted by the CCO, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, IOFS, ICCIA, and SMIIC in the area of trade aligned with the COMCEC Strategy since the 38th Session of the COMCEC.

9. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Palestine, Lebanon, Morocco, and SMIIC for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2022 under the 9th project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Enhancing Palestinian Limestone-SMEs Internationalization” implemented by Palestine with Saudi Arabia and Jordan as beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Developing a Roadmap for Establishing National Trade Facilitation Body in Lebanon” implemented by Lebanon with Malaysia and Türkiye as beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Accelerating customs clearance of goods between OIC Member countries through the exchange of Electronic Certificate of Origin” implemented by Morocco with Türkiye, Malaysia and Indonesia as beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Promotion of OIC/SMIIC Halal Standards use in the Asian and Arab Region” to be implemented by SMIIC with 17 beneficiary countries.

10. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Bangladesh, Cameroon, Iran, Suriname, Türkiye and SMIIC for the following projects to be implemented in 2023 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Developing Export Competitiveness of Potential Halal Products of Bangladesh ” to be implemented by Bangladesh in partnership with Türkiye,
- The project entitled “OIC/SMIIC Halal Auditor and foundation Training for Cameroon ” to be implemented by Cameroon,
- The project entitled “Capacity-building and Institutional Strengthening for Rules of Origin in OIC Member States” to be implemented by Iran in partnership with Türkiye,
- The project entitled “Supporting and Ensuring SMEs in Suriname and Guyana to Continue Business during Crisis” to be implemented by Suriname with Guyana and Türkiye,
- The project entitled “Raising Awareness for Multilateral/Mutual Recognition According to the OIC/SMIIC Halal Standards” to be implemented by Türkiye with six beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Halal food and meat Detection Methods Training and Inter-laboratory Comparison for OIC Countries” to be implemented by SMIIC with ten beneficiary countries.

11. The Committee **further commended** the efforts of Senegal for the successful implementation of the project titled “Resilience Program against Covid-19 for the Digital Management of Agricultural Markets” in 2022 within the scope of 2nd Call for COMCEC COVID Response.

12. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to ICDT for the following studies and the activities in trade domain;

- The organization of a workshop on TIR/eTIR and CMR/eCMR of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region in Djibouti on 13th and 14th December 2022 in collaboration with the IsDB, UNECE and the IRU.
- The national workshop on customs procedures for the benefit of Gabon in partnership with the Customs Administration of the Kingdom of Morocco (March 13th - 17th, 2023 in Libreville),
- The national workshop on the notification of TFA category C procedures for the benefit of Guinea in collaboration with UNCTAD and the World Bank (June 7th - 9th, 2023 in Conakry).
- The launch of technical assistance for the digitization of customs procedures (e-Phyto, e-vet), in collaboration with the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation (GATF), for the benefit of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (May 24th, 2023, in Lagos), Togo (June 17th, 2023) and Indonesia.

13. The Committee **appreciated** the role played by the CCO and ICDT as the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) in supervising trade negotiations and building capacity related to the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among OIC Member States.

14. The Committee also **welcomed** the readiness of the ICDT and CCO to organize awareness-raising workshops on the TPS-OIC and its impact on the private sector in Nigeria, the Arab region, and at the level of ECOWAS and CEMAC in the year of 2023.

15. Considering the importance of enhancing business relations among the OIC Member States, the Committee **invited** the Member States to actively participate in the following fairs, exhibitions, and forums organized by the ICDT:

- 18th OIC Trade Fair, "18th TFOIC", June 16th -18th, 2023, in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan,
- Pakistan-Africa Business Forum, June 17th, 2023,
- 5th OIC Health Expo, June 22nd - 25th, 2023, Dakar - Republic of Senegal,
- 2nd Cotton, Textile, and Clothing Exhibition of the OIC Member States, November 9th – 12th 2023 Abidjan - Republic of Cote d'Ivoire,
- ICDT-Côte d'Ivoire Investment Forum (ICDT INVEST DAYS), November 11th -12th, 2023, Abidjan - Republic of Côte d'Ivoire,
- 3rd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States, from 20th to 22nd November 2023 at Doha - State of Qatar,
- OIC Coffee Meet Cameroon, 28th -29th November 2023, Yaoundé – Republic of Cameroon,
- 9th Exhibition of Halal Products in the OIC Member States, in the second half of 2023 in Tunis - Republic of Tunisia.

16. The Committee **requested** ICDT to continue holding sector specific fairs in cooperation with the Member Countries and submit on regular basis, progress reports on trade fairs and other specialized fairs as well as exhibitions to the COMCEC Sessions

and to organize investment promotion activities such as high-level forums and capacity building programs at national and regional level in order to enhance intra-OIC Investment.

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

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

19. The Committee **called upon** the WTO members of the OIC to assist non-WTO Members of the OIC in their accession process to the WTO.

20. The Committee **also called 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.

21. The Committee **appreciated** the trade finance, promotion and development, and capacity-building activities of ITFC and the mobilization of funds from the international market and development partners for funding trade finance operations in the Member States, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent.

22. The Committee **took note with appreciation** that ITFC's cumulative approvals and disbursements in trade financing reached, since its inception in 2008 until the end of 2022, USD 69.9 billion and USD 58.4 billion, respectively as well as **took note with appreciation** that ITFCs cumulative funds mobilized from partner banks and financial institutions, since its inception reached USD 43 billion.

23. The Committee **took note of** the trade promotion and capacity development initiatives being implemented by ITFC under its various flagship programs including Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States (AFTIAS), CIS Region Trade Development Program, Arab Africa Trade Bridge Program (AATB), KSA SME Export Empowerment Programme, West Africa SMEs Program.

24. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ITFC in implementing Integrated Trade Solution Programs in favor of OIC Member Countries such as Indonesia, Egypt, Bangladesh, Maldives, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

25. The Committee **also took note of** ITFC's efforts for the diversification of Islamic Financial Instruments, supporting training programs on Islamic finance and promoting Islamic Finance solutions at international fora.

26. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ICIEC as the only multilateral export credit and investment insurance Corporation in the world that provides shariah-compliant insurance and reinsurance solutions.

27. The Committee **took note with appreciation** of the ICIEC's contribution to IsDB Group's Food Security Response Program (FSRP) through a pledge of USD 500 million in insurance capacity over three and a half years (July 2022 to End-2025).

28. The Committee **also took note with appreciation** of the ICIEC's volume of business insured in 2022, which stood at USD 11.6 billion to bring its cumulative amount of business insured since inception to USD 95 billion.

29. The Committee **commended** ICIEC for its contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Preparedness and Response Program (SPRP), in cooperation with the IsDB Group, providing cover amounting to USD 1.4 billion to support efforts of MSs in the COVID-19 pandemic, including USD 528 million for the healthcare sector, USD 824 million towards Supporting imports of essential commodities, and USD 62 million to Support recovery of SMEs from the economic impacts of the pandemic.

30. **Taking note of** the efforts exerted by ICIEC in partnership with SESRIC, ICDT, and ICCIA for organizing the 1st Capacity Building Programme in March 2023 for the potential users of the Programme, the Committee **requested** the ICIEC in cooperation with SESRIC, ICDT, and ICCIA to conduct the 2nd Capacity Building Programme in the 3rd Quarter 2023.

31. The Committee **commended** the efforts of SMIIIC for conducting following activities in its field of competence;

- The 5th meeting of the SMIIIC AC on 08-09 May 2023 in Istanbul,
- Awareness seminar on SMIIIC and Halal Supply Management System Standards for Industrial Engineering University Islam Indonesia on 21 February 2023,
- Training on "SMIIIC Procedures for the Technical Work and SMIIIC Information System (IS) for TAJIKSTANDARD, AZSTAND, SON, BSTI, YSMO, SOBS, UNBS, and UZSTANDARD Staff, virtually on 27 February 2023,
- OIC/SMIIIC 6 Foundation Training on 13-24 March 2023, virtually,
- OIC/SMIIIC 9:2019 Halal Tourism Services foundation training from 15-16 March 2023 virtually,
- OIC SMIIIC 1:2019- General Requirement for Halal Food Foundation Training was conducted virtually on 06-08 March 2023,
- OIC/SMIIIC 1, 2, and 24- Foundation Training was virtually organized for Japan Halal Association staff on 03-05 April 2023.

32. The Committee **commended** the Capacity Building activities of SMIIIC for OIC Member States in the fields of quality infrastructure.

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, the Committee **welcomed** 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 **invited** 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. The Committee **took 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.

- ICCIA's Regional Forum "Microfinance in Africa: Promising Opportunities and an Innovative Model" Nouakchott, December, 19-20th 2022,
- Green Entrepreneurship in Pakistan: Opportunities & Challenges held on 8th December 2022 at Karachi School of Business & Leadership (KSBL)
- Culture & Creative Economy: "Unlocking the Creative Economy" 28th February 2023, Federation House, Karachi,
- Angel Investors Summit ICCIA Headquarters Karachi-Pakistan, 18th March 2023
- Manafea Forum- The Way to a Promising Future Makkah Chamber Headquarters, 10th April 2023

35. The Committee also **took note of** following activities of the ICCIA to be conducted in 2023 and **encouraged** the Member States to actively participate in these activities;

- Sustainable Agriculture Forum, Azerbaijan, 1st-2nd June 2023,
- OIC Food Festival, Lahore, Pakistan, 16-18th June 2023 (during the 18th OIC Trade Fair),
- Third Microfinance Forum, Chad, June/July 2023,
- Sustainable Tourism Forum, Pakistan, October 2023,
- Microfinance and Transition to Sustainability Regional Workshops, 2023,
- Entrepreneurship for MSMEs Leaders - Finance, 2023,
- Workshop on Digital Transformation for SMEs, Mauritania, 2023,
- Workshop on Digital Transformation for SMEs, Chad, 2023,
- Best of Entrepreneurship Series, Pakistan 2023,
- Regional Best of Entrepreneurship Asia, Pakistan 2023.

36. **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, the Committee **invited** the OIC Member Countries to encourage their member chambers to actively participate in the series of events and forums conducted under the tripartite MANAFEFA.

37. **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, the

Committee **requested** 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.

38. The Committee **took note** that as of end of first quarter of 2023, ICD's gross cumulative approvals stand at \$6.5 billion, and cumulative disbursements totals \$ 4.3 billion.

39. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the dedicated cooperation efforts of ICD to develop more than 5 joint transactions worth over \$100Million where ICD partnered with ITFC and ICIEC during last year to capture synergies across Islamic Development Bank Group Entities.

40. The Committee **took note** contribution of ICD to address the food security challenges facing OIC member countries through its \$270 million allocation, and takes note with appreciation its already approved more than \$50 million worth of transactions.

41. The Committee **took note with appreciation the conduct of** training workshop by SESRIC on "Promoting Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship in OIC Africa French-Speaking Member Countries", on 14-16 March 2023, and Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme by SESRIC on "Entrepreneurship Skills Development" for the benefit of TVET teachers and trainers on 08-19 May 2023.

42. The Committee **took note with appreciation** of the convening of the 19th Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group on May 2022, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of "Improving Cooperation among Central Banks in terms of Digital Currencies: Challenges and Prospects for OIC Member Countries".

43. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group to actively participate in its 20th Meeting to be organized with the same theme of the 19th Meeting in October 2023.

44. The Committee **commended** the efforts of SESRIC for the successful implementation of the project entitled "Strengthening Financial Literacy and Promoting Islamic Finance in the OIC Member Countries" with 30 beneficiary countries in 2022 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

45. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of SESRIC for the project entitled "Improving the Role of Islamic Finance in Supporting Microenterprises and SMEs in Post Pandemic Period " to be implemented in 2023 for the benefit of 40 Member Countries within the framework of the 10th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding.

46. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following training courses in the field of financial cooperation:

- Online Statistical Training Course on "Government Finance, Fiscal and Public Sector Statistics" on 10-12 January 2023,
- Training Course on "Islamic Banking and Finance for Central Banks and Monetary Authorities" on 06-08 March 2023,

- Webinar on “Reporting Data on Islamic Financial Services Sector” on 14 March 2023,
- Training Course on “Islamic Debt and Equity Markets” on 16-18 May 2023.

47. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the OIC Exchanges Forum and its Task Forces and **invited** the Member States to actively participate in the activities organized under this Forum.

48. The Committee also **welcomed** the efforts carried out by the Task Forces of COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum namely capacity building, market development, Islamic finance and financial literacy and **called upon** the Member States to support the efforts of the Forum through participating in its meetings and contributing to the accomplishment of the mandates of the Task Forces.

49. **Welcoming** the training and capacity-building programs organized by the SESRIC towards the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of Member States, the Committee **requested** the SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the benefit of the relevant national institutions of the Member States within the framework of its Central Banks Capacity Building Programme (CB-CaB).

50. The Committee **took note with appreciation of** the convening of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group on 3 May 2023, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of "Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries".

51. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to actively participate in its 21st Meeting to be organized with the same theme of the 20th Meeting in October, 2023.

52. The Committee **commended** the efforts of The Gambia and SESRIC for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2022 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of Key Performance Indicators in the Transport Sector of the OIC Countries ” implemented by the Gambia with Senegal and Nigeria as beneficiary countries
- The project entitled “Improving the Regulatory Framework for PPPs in Transport Sector in the OIC Member Countries ” implemented by SESRIC with 29 beneficiary countries.

53. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Benin, the Gambia, Jordan and SESRIC for the following projects to be implemented 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” to be 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” to be implemented by Benin with Burkina Faso as the beneficiary country,

- The project entitled “ Detailed Feasibility Study for Passenger Transport at specific portions of Hejaz Railway Alignment” to be implemented by Jordan with the partnership of Türkiye,
- The project entitled “ Increasing the Utilization of Innovative Financing Tools to Maintain Transport Infrastructure and the Services of Transportation Service Providers (TSPs) in the OIC Member Countries” to be implemented by SESRIC with 20 beneficiary countries.

54. The Committee **further commended** the efforts of The Gambia for the successful implementation of the project titled “Alleviating the Negative Impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Air Transportation Sub-Sector of the Gambia and OIC Countries” in 2022 in partnership with Türkiye within the scope of 2nd Call for COMCEC COVID Response.

55. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to SESRIC for the conduct of the report entitled “Transportation for Development in OIC Member Countries: Implications for Trade and Tourism & Challenges for Landlocked Countries” and the Statistical Training Course on “Transport Statistics” on 03-04 May 2023 within the framework of SESRIC’s Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.

56. **Considering** the vital role that tourism plays in the economic and social development of OIC Member States, the Committee **commended** the organization of the following activities conducted by SESRIC and ICDT:

- Training webinar on Digitalization of Tourism services in OIC countries on May 24th – 25th, 2023,
- Training Webinar on Gastronomy Tourism in September 2023,

57. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the convening of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group on 4 May, 2022, in a virtual-only format with the theme of “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness in the OIC Countries.”

58. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group to actively participate in its 21st Meeting to be organized with the same theme of the 20th Meeting in October 2023.

59. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Nigeria and Uganda for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2022 within the framework of the 9th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “A Two-Day Training on Human Resource Management in Tourism Sector” implemented by Nigeria with the Gambia as the beneficiary country,
- The project entitled “Risk Analysis and Crisis Planning and Management for Community Based Tourism” implemented by Uganda with Sudan, Nigeria and Mozambique as the beneficiary countries.

60. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Uganda and Mali for the following projects to be implemented in 2023 within the framework of the 10th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Enhancing the Capacity of Tour and Travel Personnel for Adapting to Changing Trends in Tourism Sector” to be implemented by Uganda,
- The project entitled “Accommodation Establishments Quality Improvement Program in Tourism Sector in 4 OIC Member Countries” to be implemented by Mali with Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger as the beneficiary countries.

61. The Committee **further commended** the efforts of Sierra Leone for the successful implementation of the project titled “Preparation of COVID-19 Hygiene Protocol and Training of Employees within the Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Sector” in 2022 within the framework of the 2nd Call for COMCEC COVID Response.

62. The Committee **took note with appreciation of** the efforts of the SESRIC for organizing training courses and seminars in tourism sector, particularly on halal tourism and tourism statistics within the framework of the SESRIC Capacity Building Programmes.

63. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Republic of Türkiye to host the 11th Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum to be held in 3rd quarter of 2023 and **called upon** the Member States to actively participate in this event.

64. **Took note with appreciation of** the convening of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group on 11 May, 2023, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Ensuring the Sustainability of Agricultural Inputs to Combat Food Insecurity in OIC Member Countries ”.

65. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to actively participate in its 21st Meeting to be organized with the same theme of the 20th Meeting in October, 2023.

66. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Benin, Türkiye, ICCIA and IOFS for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2022 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Promote Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture to Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition in West Africa” implemented by Benin with five beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Capacity Building on New Technologies to Reduce Post-Harvest Losses” implemented by Türkiye with six beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Creating Awareness on the Importance of Agriculture Commodity Exchange Markets” implemented by ICCIA in partnership with 7 Member Countries,
- The project entitled “Building the Capacity of OIC Member States in Food Security Governance” implemented by IOFS in partnership with 20 beneficiary countries.

67. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Benin, the Gambia, Malaysia and Türkiye for the following projects to be implemented in 2023 within the framework of the 10th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Increasing Agricultural Productivity in West Africa through

Promoting Village Beekeeping” to be implemented by Benin in partnership with Uganda,

- The project entitled “Capacity Building on Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting in the Agriculture Sector” to be implemented by the Gambia,
- The project entitled “Needs Assessment on the Adoption of Sustainable Approaches for Rice Cultivation in Facing Climate Change” to be implemented by Malaysia,
- The project entitled “Capacity Building on Using Remote Sensing Systems in Agriculture” to be implemented by Türkiye in partnership with Malaysia.

68. The Committee **further commended** the efforts of Azerbaijan, Benin and Türkiye for the successful implementation of the following projects to implemented in 2022 within the framework of the 2nd Call for COMCEC COVID Response:

- The project entitled “Reduction of Food Loss and Waste (FLOW) during COVID-19 Pandemic through Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Socially Responsible Practices” implemented by Azerbaijan,
- The project entitled “Increase Rice Productivity to Ensure Food Security and Sovereignty in Benin” implemented by Benin,
- The project entitled “Resilience in the Seed Sector with the Rising of Risks after Covid-19” implemented by Türkiye with four beneficiary countries.

69. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following reports and trainings in the field of agriculture :

- Outlook report titled “ State of Food Security in the Least Developed OIC Member Countries”,
- Report entitled “Agricultural Production and Trade Complementarities among OIC Member Countries” by SESRIC in collaboration with the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) to be submitted to the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development (MCF SAD), which is scheduled to be held in 2023,
- Online Training Workshop on “Water Governance and Integrated Water Resources Management in the OIC Member Countries within the framework of SESRIC’s Water Resources Management Capacity Building Programme (Water-CaB) on 24-26 January 2023,
- Online training Course on “Productivity Enhancement of Cotton by Using Modern Agronomic Practices” within the framework of SESRIC’s Cotton Capacity Building Programme (Cotton-CaB) on 14-16 February 2023.

70. The Committee **took note with appreciation of** the convening of the 20th Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group on 10 May, 2023, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Effective Vocational Education and Training Strategies to Reduce Youth Unemployment in the OIC Member Countries.”

71. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group to actively participate in its 21st Meeting to be organized with the same theme of the 20th Meeting in October, 2023.

72. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Türkiye and SESRIC for the successful implementation of the following projects in 2022 within the framework of the 9th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Impacts of Digitalization in Social Assistance Program for Forced Migration” implemented by Türkiye with Oman and Cameroon as beneficiary countries,
- The project entitled “Fostering Information Technology (IT) Solutions to Improve the Effectiveness of Public Employment Services (PES) in the OIC Member Countries” implemented by SESRIC with 12 beneficiary countries.

73. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Benin and SESRIC for the following projects to be implemented in 2023 within the framework of the 10th Call of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project entitled “Improving interoperability between information systems of social assistance programs” to be 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” to be implemented by SESRIC with 15 beneficiary countries.

74. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for preparing the following reports and organizing training courses/workshops and webinars under the agenda item on alleviating poverty:

- Reports entitled “People with Disabilities and Special Needs in OIC Countries” and “Safeguarding Family Values and the Institution of Marriage in OIC Countries” and “State of Elderly in OIC Member Countries”,
- Online Training of Trainers (ToT) Course on “Graphic Design and Photo Print Techniques” Within the framework of the OIC-VET Programme on 13-15 December 2022,
- Online Statistical Training Course on “SDG 1 (No Poverty) Indicators”: Within the framework of SESRIC’s Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme on 17-18 January 2023 on 21-22 February 2023,
- Webinar on “Transforming Administrative Registers for Statistical Data Production” on 14 February 2023 within the framework of the Programme of Action for 2021-2025 set under the OIC-StatCom Strategic Vision for 2030,
- Online Training Course on “Social Insurance Database Management” on 01-02 March 2023,
- Training Course on “Optimal Design of Unemployment Insurance and Employment Protection” on 07-09 March 2023,
- Statistical Training Course on “SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) Indicators on 02-04 May 2023,
- Training Workshop on “Developing Effective, Reliable, and Affordable Social Protection Services for Vulnerable Groups”: on 02-04 May 2023,
- Orientation Workshop on “Tobacco Questions for Surveys of Youth (TQS-Youth) on 09-10 May 2023.

75. **Taking note with appreciation** of the efforts of SESRIC for the implementation of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020-2025.

76. **Taking note with appreciation** of the efforts of the ISFD for mobilizing resources, the Committee **reiterated** 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.

77. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for conducting the project titled “Promoting Digital Technologies for an Integrated and Efficient Social Protection Systems in the OIC Member Countries”.

A N N E X E S

ANNEX

I

Original: English

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
39TH FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE MEETING
(MAY 23rd-24th, 2023 ANKARA)

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

- Ms. AMALINA MURAD
Assistance Director, Ministry of Finance and Economy

- Ms. AINI YASIN
Finance Officer, Ministry of Finance and Economy

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Mr. ARIANTO CHRISTIAN HARTONO
Coordinator of International Economic Cooperation, Ministry of National
Development

Planning/National Development Planning Agency

- Ms. HILLARY TANIDA STEPHANY SITOMPUL
Staff of International Economic Cooperation, Ministry of National Development
Planning/National Development Planning Agency

- Mr. DWI SUPRAYITNO
Act. Head Of Planning Division, Ministry of Transportation

- Ms. SENDY TWIN SITORESMI
Trade Negotiator, Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia

THE STATE OF KUWAIT

- Mr. TALAL ALNAMASH
Acting Undersecretary for Economic Affairs, Ministry Of Finance

- Mr. SAAD ALRASHIDI
Director of International Economic Co-Operation Department, Ministry Of Finance

- Mr. MOHAMMAD ALSHEETAN
Counsellor, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Kuwait

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

- Mr. ZAYYAD ABDUSSALAM

Minister, Embassy of Nigeria Ankara

- Mr. AMĪNU AHMAD

Counsellor, Embassy of Nigeria Ankara

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

- Mr. SYED ATĪF RAZA RAZA

Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan

THE STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. ISRAA MILHEM

Director of International Organizations, Ministry Of National Economy

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. SAEED ALBRAIDI

Head of Regional and International Organizations, Ministry Of Commerce And Industry

- Ms. SALMA ABDULLA ALDOSARI

International Cooperation Researcher, Ministry Of Commerce and Industry

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. ABDULLAH ALTHUMAYRI

Commercial Attaché of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Trade

- Mr. ALĪ FATEEL

Director of Services, Investment and Electronic Commerce Department, General Authority of

Foreign Trade

- Ms. NADA ALHATHLOL

Saudi Delegation - Director of Regional Organizations Dept., Saudi General Authority of Foreign Trade

- Mr. QASIM ALALAWI

Senior Specialist, General Authority of Foreign Trade

REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

- Mr. MOUHAMADOUL AMINE MBENGUE

Counselor, Embassy of Senegal in Ankara

TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ

- Mr. A. RIDVAN AĞAOĞLU

Vice president of Strategy and Budget Department

Strategy and Budget Department of Republic of Türkiye

- Mr. DR SAFA USLU

Head of International Relations Department, Digital Transformation Office (DTO) of the

Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye

- Ms. NESLİHAN DİNİZ

Manager, TURK EXIMBANK

- Mr. MEHMET ALİ ÖZDEM

EU Expert, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

- Mr. NURULLAH ASIM AKBULUT

Trade expert, Ministry of Trade

- Ms. DAMLA TUFAN

Manager, TOBB

- Mr. MAHMUT VARLI

Manager, BORSA İSTANBUL

- Mr. MUSTAFA BAYBURTLU

Head of Department, TOBB

- Mr. HALİL KALAYCI

Senior EU Expert, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure

- Mr. MURAT ŞÜKRÜ SOYKAN

Director of International Relations, KOSGEB

- Mr. BURAK ERCAN ERDOĞAN

Expert, TOBB

- Mr. ERCAN DANSUK

Family and Social Services Specialist, Ministry of Family and Social Services,

- Ms. ESMA DİLİK
Expert, Digital Transformation Office (DTO) of the presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
- Ms. ÖZGE DEMİR
Analyst, Digital Transformation Office (DTO) of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye
- Mr. EMRE GÜRLEYİK
SME Expert, KOSGEB
- Mr. EREN OZTURK
Associate Expert, TOBB
- Mr. İBRAHİM KÜÇÜKİKİZ
Specialist, OIC COMCEC Central Banks Forum
- Mr. MUSTAFA DENİZ
SME Expert, KOSGEB
- Ms. AYSEGUL DEMİR
Trade Expert, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. BAŞAK KARAHANLI
Expert, TSE
- Ms. GÜLŞEN ALPER
SME Expert, KOSGEB
- Mr. HASAN FURKAN CELİL
Assistant Specialist, Ministry of Family and Social Services
- Ms. EZGİ ASLAN
Assistant Specialist, OIC COMCEC Central Banks Forum
- Ms. SILA KOZANLI
Assistant Expert, TOBB

B. THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

OIC

- Mr. NAGHI JABBAROV
Director General of the Department of Economic Affairs, Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- Dr. HASAN BASRI ARSLAN

Advisor, Organization of Islamic Cooperation

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC TRADE FINANCE CORPORATION (ITFC)

- Mr. HOJAMUROD HOJAEV

Relationship Manager, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)

C. THE OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

ISLAMIC CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)

- Mr. TAQUI MOULAYISMAIL

Expert, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade

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

ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Mr. ABU NASER HUDA

Director of Publication and IT Department, SESRIC

- Mr. ONUR ÇAĞLAR

Director of Training and Technical Cooperation, SESRIC

- Mr. FADI ABDULLAH FARASIN

Assistant Director General, SESRIC

- Mr. THIerno ALIOU BALDE

Project Officer, SESRIC

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

- Mr. OSMAN BUYUKMUTLU

Director, Strategy Department, ICD

- Mr. ALİ CAMLIOĞLU

Senior Investment Associate, ICD

ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION FOR FOOD SECURITY

- H.E. Prof. Dr. YERLAN BAİDAULET

Director General, Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS)

- Mr. ABDULA MANAFI MUTUALO

Advisor at Coordination & Cooperation Department, Islamic Organization for Food Security

(IOFS)

D. SPECIALIZED ORGANS OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IsDB)

- Mr. MURAD YANDIEV

Senior Executive Coordinator (Partnerships), Islamic Development Bank

E. AFFILIATED ORGANS OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE (ICCIA)

- Ms. AALIA JAFAR

Director, International Relations/Head of Delegation, Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture

- Ms. SAFINA SHEHZAD

International Relations Associate, Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture

STANDARDS AND METROLOGY INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SMIIC)

- Ms. EMEL GÖNÇ

Expert, SMIIC

F. OIC STANDING COMMITTEES

THE ISLAMIC CORPORATION FOR THE INSURANCE OF INVESTMENT AND

EXPORT CREDIT (ICIEC)

- Mr. ALTAYEB FADLALLAH

Senior Specialist, Strategic Planning & Communications, ICIEC/IsDB

- Mr. MOHAMAD ELSAYED

Manager, Information Technology Management Division, the Islamic Corporation for the

Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC)

ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Mr. OULDEMEH MOHAMEDEN

Senior Program Management Specialist, Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD)

G. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ

Deputy Director General, COMCEC

- Mr. CAN AYGÜL

Head of Department, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Mr. MEHMET ASLAN

Head of Department, COMCEC

- Mr. MEHMET CELALETTİN AKTAŞ

Head of Department, COMCEC

- Mr. GOKTEN DAMAR

Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Ms. AYTEN AKMANKACAR

Expert, COMCEC

- Mr. MEHMET AKİF ALANBAY

Senior Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR

Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Mr. NİHAT AKBALIK

Expert, COMCEC

- Ms. DİLEK DEMİRHAN

Assistant Expert, Presidency Strategy and Budget

- Ms. MİNE DEMİR

Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Ms. SEYYİDE RAVZA ÇOKSÖYLER

Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office

- Mr. MUHAMMED ZİYA SARI

Assistant Specialist, COMCEC

- Mr. KADİR ALTINTOP
Assistant Expert, COMCEC
- Mr. YUNUS KAYIŞ
Assistant Expert, COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. ÖZGÜL YÜKSEL
Coordinator, COMCEC
- Ms. HANDE ÖZDEMİR
Translator, COMCEC
- Mr. HAKAN USLU
Translator, COMCEC
- Mr. OZAN LİF
Civil Servant, COMCEC
- Ms. HAVVA YILMAZ
Registration and Accommodation, COMCEC
- Mr. OĞUZHAN HALİM SAY
Executive Assistant, COMCEC
- Mr. SELİM UYAR
Translator, COMCEC

ANNEX

II

Original: Turkish

**INAUGURAL SPEECH BY H.E. MR. RIDVAN AĞAOĞLU, VICE-
PRESIDENT OF STRATEGY AND BUDGET, PRESIDENCY OF REPUBLIC
OF TÜRKİYE**

**THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE
COMCEC**

(Ankara, 23 May 2023)

Es-Selamu Aleyküm ve Rahmetullahi ve Berekatuhu,
(Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His Blessings),
Bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most
Merciful).

Honourable Members of the Follow-Up Committee,
Dear Guests,

Firstly, I would like to express my great pleasure in meeting you today on the occasion of the 39th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC and in welcoming you to Ankara. I greet you all with my deepest respects and greetings from Allah.

As you know, the work of the Follow-up Committee has great importance for all of us, which reviews and tracks down the implementation of the decisions taken at the COMCEC Ministerial Session, the programmes and projects implemented within the OIC on economic issues, and determines the agenda of the next COMCEC Ministerial Meeting.

Monitoring and supervision of the implementation phases of a project, programme or initiative has crucial importance for its success. That is why we are gathered here to perform this important task. I would like to thank you all in advance for your participation and for the valuable insights you will share during the meeting.

Honourable Participants,

The process of recovery of the global economy is gradually continuing after the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war. While the disruptions to supply chains have been partially resolved, the tremors caused by the war in the energy and food markets are relatively subsiding. Indeed, the IMF's latest World Economic Outlook Report predicts that global growth will bottom out at 2.8% in 2023 and recover to 3% next year. On the other hand, the risk of sticky inflation persists which reached a 30-year high worldwide last year. Indeed, it is claimed that core inflation levels excluding energy and food have not yet peaked in many countries.

As you know, restrictive monetary policies and interest rate hikes are the main interventions to combat high inflation. Although they offer a solution to reduce the inflation flame in a short period of time, these policies have important costs for our countries. The financing costs that rise with higher interest rates lead to lower investment, production output and employment and thus to significant restrictions in growth.

The cost of living, which is mainly due to rising energy and food prices, is a serious threat to our economies. Rising production costs reduce the competitiveness of our countries and have a negative impact on their exports. Consequently, falling export rates are a major obstacle to our countries' growth objectives.

In the face of these global economic difficulties, increasing trade among Islamic countries has great importance for the dynamism of our economies. As OIC countries spread over many regions of the world, many factors such as our young population structure and our underground resources offer us great opportunities. However, we need to strengthen our cooperation in order to convert this potential into tangible benefits.

Dear Guests,

As you know, the target of intra-OIC trade is 25 percent which target set under the OIC 2025 Programme adopted at the 13rd Islamic Summit held in Istanbul in 2016. According to the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the volume of intra-OIC trade increased from nearly 19 percent in 2016 to nearly 20 percent in 2017

and reached 21 percent in 2018. However, in the following three years, intra-OIC trade was around 19%. Along with two years left to reach the target set in the programme, the decline in the rate over the last few years indicates that we need to work with a more result-oriented vision.

As you know, petroleum products occupy an important place in the volume of intra-OIC trade. Prices that change from year to year have a significant impact on intra-OIC trade indicators. In this regard, increasing the diversity of products in our trade and establishing a high value-added production infrastructure have a great importance for the achievement of our objectives.

In this context, it is necessary to further strengthen economic and commercial cooperation among the member countries by implementing the instruments established after years of efforts under the roof of the COMCEC and by implementing the necessary amendments and improvements in due course in the best possible way.

The TPS-OIC preferential trade system is at the top of the list of these instruments. As you know, the TPS-OIC Agreement entered into force on 1 July 2022. The success of the implementation depends on the fulfilment of the necessary obligations by all the countries which are parties to the System and the smooth functioning of the System through the completion of the internal technical procedures related to the implementation as soon as possible. Only then can the System make a significant contribution to our trade volume.

As you may recall, the decisions of the Trade Negotiations Committee were welcomed at the last Ministerial Meeting. In this context, it was decided to establish a meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) to discuss technical issues. In this context, I consider the meeting to be held next month, on 6-7 June, at the technical level to be important and I invite all country Parties to actively participate in this meeting.

As you know, in the scope of the COMCEC session, the Ministers of Trade, Economy and Finance of our countries met and declared their commitment to the effective implementation of TPS-OIC in all its aspects and by all stakeholders. In this context, it is very crucial that the System can be successfully implemented with the contributions of all participating countries. With the achievement of this common

objective, the issue of broadening the scope of the agreement could also be include into the agenda in the coming period.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite the OIC member countries that are not yet party to the System to join the TPS-OIC in order to take this significant initiative to a higher level.

Dear Guests,

The operationalisation of the OIC Arbitration Centre, another important project of the COMCEC, is a pleasing development. I am confident that the Centre will carry out important activities to become a recognised and respected arbitration institution worldwide. In this context, I invite the entire OIC family to support the Centre and to participate and contribute to the activities that the Centre will carry out in the coming period.

Last year, the "International Investment Fund" was established within the framework of the OIC/COMCEC 50 Islamic Index, which is another important initiative under the COMCEC. I would like to appeal to all our countries to recognize the Fund in our countries and encourage potential investors.

As you know, Digital Transformation has been included in the COMCEC agenda as a new area of cooperation. In this context, two technical meetings were held prior to the 38th COMCEC Meeting and a High Level Meeting on Digital Cooperation was held within range of the Ministerial Meeting. In accordance with the decisions taken at the meeting, the first meeting of the "COMCEC High Level Forum on Digital Transformation", whose secretariat services are provided by the Digital Transformation Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, will be held before the next COMCEC Ministerial Meeting.

Dear Guests,

At the last COMCEC Ministerial Session, it was also decided to establish an SME Programme with the participation of our member countries and relevant OIC institutions. As you know, SMEs constitute a large part of the enterprises and employment in many countries. Therefore, it is important to improve our cooperation

efforts in order to increase the share of SMEs in international trade, which unfortunately do not have the desired share in exports, although they occupy an important place in the economy. In this context, I attach great importance to the work carried out in the framework of the preparations for the COMCEC SME Programme and I am confident that our countries will make the necessary contribution in this respect.

Honourable Members of the Monitoring Committee,

The COMCEC Working Groups have successfully held the first round of the 2023 Meetings with the active participation of the Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions as well as other international organizations and NGOs. The second Working Group Meeting of this year will be held in October. I believe that the concrete policy recommendations and roadmaps that will be developed in these meetings will significantly contribute to the cooperation efforts in the relevant areas in the coming period.

The projects carried out by our member countries and concerned institutions within the framework of the COMCEC Project Support Programmes also occupy an important place among the efforts made. In this context, 15 projects were completed last year thanks to the valuable contributions of our countries and the related OIC organisations. This year, new types of projects, such as needs analysis and peer-to-peer experience sharing, have been included in the Programme. In addition to the multilateral projects, our countries have also had the opportunity to submit projects addressing their own development issues. Within this framework, nineteen projects will be supported by the Programme this year, *Inch Allah (Along with Allah willing)*.

Within the framework of the Jerusalem Programme, which was launched in 2020 to increase the economic well-being of our brothers and sisters in Jerusalem, five projects were successfully implemented last year. This year, within the framework of the Programme, support will be provided to five (5) projects focusing in particular on youth employment issues.

I consider that our efforts and support have contributed significantly to the cooperation and solidarity within the OIC. On this occasion, I would like to thank the OIC member countries and organisations that have actively contributed to all these

cooperation efforts and shared their experiences, and I wish them success in their future work.

In concluding my speech, I would like to thank you all for your valuable participation and I wish you a fruitful negotiations.

Peace, Mercy and Blessings of Allah be upon you.

ANNEX

III

Original: Arabic

**MESSAGE OF H.E. MR. HISSEIN BRAHIM TAHA
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANISATION
OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)**

**THIRTY NINTH MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP
COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 23-24 May 2023)**

**H.E. Mr. Ridvan Agaoglu, Vice President of the Strategy and Budget of the
Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye,**

Your Excellencies, Heads of Delegations,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Aleykum wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Barakatuhu.

It is indeed a great pleasure, for me to address the 39th Follow-up Committee Meeting of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC). Allow me to, first and foremost, express my deepest appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Türkiye and the COMCEC Coordination Office for the excellent arrangements made for the success of our today's meeting.

I renew our sincere condolences and solidarity with the Republic of Türkiye following the devastating earthquake that struck several areas of Türkiye in February 2023, calling upon all Member States to provide more financial and humanitarian assistance as well as investments to recover the affected areas.

As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated containment measures resulted in an unprecedented slowdown of economic activities all over the world in 2020. As of mid-2022, the world was slowly bringing the pandemic under control and the global economy continued to recover from Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the sanctions on Russia are anticipated to weaken global economic growth through direct impacts on the two countries and global spillovers, particularly hitting countries with close economic ties with them. In addition, the disruptions in the food supply system caused by the Russia-Ukraine

conflict has hurt the food security of many OIC Member States. The Food Price Index of the FAO indicated that food prices in international markets increased by 3.2% in 2020 and 38% in 2022. The World Bank estimates that the current crises will lead to an additional 75 to 95 million people living in extreme poverty, compared to pre-pandemic projections. In this regard, the governments of our Member States can mitigate such impacts through social protection policies. In addition, close collaborations and exchange of experiences are also significant in this process.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As part of the efforts to boost economic recovery and foster economic cooperation among Member States, several sectoral Ministerial level meetings are planned in this year as enumerated in my Report. The first meeting is the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, to be held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 1st-2nd October, 2023. This meeting will discuss the current food security situation and agricultural development programmes in our Member States. The second meeting is the 5th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers, to be held in the fourth quarter of 2023, which will review the current OIC relevant programmes and adopt concrete decisions on labour, unemployment, skill development and protection of workers' rights. These ministerial level meetings are also important for sharing the experiences of the OIC countries to mitigate the impact of the Pandemic and come-up with the recommendations to speed-up the recovery process of the agriculture and food security and labour sectors during the post-pandemic era.

Member States are encourage to also attend the following trade promotion activities:

- 18th OIC Trade Fair, to be held in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 16th -18 June 2023;
- 3rd OIC Tourism Fair, to be held in Doha, State of Qatar, on 20th -22nd November 2023.

In addition, I wish to mention that the relevant OIC institutions namely, COMCEC Coordination Office, IsDB Group, SESRIC, ICDT, ISF, IOFS, SMIIC and ICCIA have implemented several development and promotional projects, training and capacity building programmes on various economic aspects for the benefit of our countries.

Accordingly, the OIC General Secretariat and its above-mentioned relevant institutions will continue to work closely with its Member States to further a collaborative response to facilitate economic recovery in our countries. I wish therefore to express my sincere appreciation to the relevant OIC institutions, which have continued to collaborate with the General Secretariat for the execution of the various projects under the socio-economic agenda of the OIC.

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

Wassalamu Alaykum wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Barakatihu

ANNEX

IV

Original: English

**REPORT OF
THE 42nd MEETING OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE
(May 17th, 2023, Virtual Meeting)**

- The 42nd Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held virtually on May 17th, 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)
 - 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 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 the 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
 - The Proposal on the “OIC 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

Underlining the great endeavours 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 (reported through the COMCEC Policy Follow-up System) and activities serving to the objectives of COMCEC Strategy (reported through the COMCEC Activities Follow-up System) 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 by the CCO in terms of activities of the OIC institutions related to the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations and to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.

Concerning the activities related to the Policy Recommendations adopted by the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session, the CCO representative informed the Committee that 13 activities of SESRIC in the areas of poverty, finance, and transport and one activity of IOFS in the area of poverty have been reported so far. The Committee requested the OIC Institutions to make use of online Follow-Up System established by CCO to report the activities on the implementation of COMCEC Policy Recommendation by September 30, 2023.

Concerning the activities related to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy, it was noted that 65 activities of the OIC Institutions have been completed so far and 147 activities were scheduled 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 promotion and poverty related monitoring and aid effectiveness.

Afterwards, the OIC Institutions have informed the Committee about their activities aligned with the COMCEC Strategy and the COMCEC Ministerial Recommendations. 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 will be implemented by OIC Institutions under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2023. Within this context, SESRIC will implement three projects in the areas of finance, poverty alleviation, transport and communication and SMIC will implement one project in the area of trade.

The Committee was also briefed on the novelties brought (CPF) through the 10th Call for Project Proposals within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding. It was highlighted that Member Countries would have the opportunity to focus on addressing their own challenges and the OIC Institutions might assist the Member Countries in their endeavours through implementing projects 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

The Committee was also informed by SESRIC regarding the preparations for the annual report on progress regarding the implementation 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 progress covering the progress in all SDGs.

Furthermore, the Committee informed by COMCEC Coordination Office about the SDGs-related activities of the relevant OIC institutions and noted that 53 activities related to the prioritized SDGs have been completed and 68 activities have been planned to be held in 2023. The Committee requested OIC Institutions to communicate the list of SDGs-related activities to the CCO for their submission to the upcoming COMCEC Ministerial Session.

The Proposal on the “OIC Business Intelligence Programme”

The Committee was also 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 progress therein and requested the ICIEC, in cooperation with SESRIC, ICDT and ICCIA, to implement the 2nd Capacity Building Programme for the potential Users of the Center during the 3rd quarter of 2023 and finalize the technical preparations and requirements for the operationalization of the Programme at the earliest.

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.

SESRIC representative informed the Committee that they have organized 13 activities in which Palestinian officials participated since the 38th COMCEC Ministerial Session. He added that Suriname and Guyana participated in 5 and 4 activities of SESRIC respectively.

IOFS representative mentioned about their efforts towards inclusion of Palestine, Suriname, and Guyana in their activities.

ICDT representative pointed out that they give importance to participation of operators from al-Quds al-Sharif to several fairs and forums and thus cooperate with Bayt Mal Alqods Acharief Agency. He also indicated that ICDT has contributed to the promotion of a website platform which operates for electronical sales of Palestinian products.

ICCIA representative mentioned about their efforts to contact relevant authorities in Guyana and Suriname. Regarding the Palestinian private sector she informed that they are planning to have a separate and special space for Palestinian SMEs in sector specific forums and exhibitions.

SMIIC representative mentioned that Guyana is not a member of the SMIIC and they try to contact relevant authorities. Regarding Palestine and Suriname, she mentioned that these two countries are active in the activities of SMIIC.

Afterwards, the CCO informed the Committee that the scope of the COMCEC Al-Quds Program was enriched in line with the consultations with the Ministry of National Economy of Palestine. Accordingly, it was noted that besides tourism, new thematic areas such as entrepreneurship, creating job opportunities and empowerment of youth, e-commerce and SME development in Al-Quds Economy have been included in the Programme. Moreover, regarding the projects to be implemented for the benefit of geographically distant countries, CCO informed the Committee that a trade project of Suriname will implement a project in the area of trade COMCEC Project Funding and Guyana will also benefit from the project as the beneficiary country.

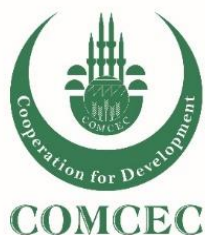
Any Other Business

The Committee Meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

ANNEX

V

Original: English



**AGENDA OF THE 39th MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(May 23rd-24th, 2023, Ankara)**

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. Intra-OIC Trade
5. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
6. Deepening Financial Cooperation
7. Improving Transport and Communications
8. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
9. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
10. Alleviating Poverty
11. Cooperation on Digital Transformation
12. Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Improving E-Commerce Capacities of OIC Member Countries”
13. Draft Agenda of the 39th Session of the COMCEC
14. Any Other Business
15. Adoption of the Report

ANNEX

VI

Original: English



**DRAFT AGENDA
OF THE 39th 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 40th Session of the COMCEC

15. Any Other Business

16. Adoption of the Resolutions

ANNEX

VII

Original : English

**CLOSING SPEECH OF MR. RIDVAN AĞAOĞLU, VICE-CHAIRMAN OF
STRATEGY AND BUDGET OF THE PRESIDENCY
COMCEC MONITORING COMMITTEE 39th MEETING
(Ankara, 24 May 2023)**

Dear Members of the Monitoring Committee,

Dear Delegates,

Dear Attendants,

Before I begin my words, I condemn the State of Israel's recent intervention against Moslems at the Al-Aqsa Mosque using disproportionate force and subsequent bombing of Gaza on 7 April 2023, and I call on Israel to immediately end such actions that are in accord with humanity. Once again, I wish to express that we are always on the side of the Palestinian people on the Palestine issue, which has become a common problem of Islamic countries, and that we, as Islamic countries, are in solidarity with them in their rightful cause.

Dear Guests,

We have successfully completed the COMCEC 39th Monitoring Committee Meeting. I would like to thank all country delegations participating in the meeting and express my heartfelt gratitude to them for their active, constructive contributions to the negotiations held throughout the assembly. Within the framework of the task spelled out in the COMCEC Statute, our Monitoring Committee reviewed developments regarding the areas of cooperation deemed important for our countries within the scope of COMCEC and created the agenda of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session.

Dear Guests,

Before moving on to the issues we discussed at the meeting, I would like to share with you my ideas on a particular matter.

As you know, the whole world is going through crucial tests today. While countries' efforts to revive their economies after COVID-19 continue, price shocks, especially in

the agriculture and energy sectors, deeply affect many countries. While this impact is felt relatively less in some parts of the world, serious problems in access to food and energy have been experienced and continue to be experienced in other parts. The hot crisis occurring between Ukraine and Russia, as well as the COVID epidemic, are shown as the primary reasons for these problems. Thanks to our country's diplomatic initiatives, the introduction of Ukrainian grain, which is of critical importance in the global food supply, to the world markets has alleviated the imbalances in food prices. This leadership role and diplomatic success undertaken by Türkiye in the establishment of the grain corridor were appreciated by the whole world, especially the UN. Nevertheless, while the supply of Ukrainian grain to the world via Türkiye has had a positive impact on global food prices, it is basically in our hands to alleviate or even prevent the impact of food and energy crises, which sometimes reach global dimensions, in our geography. Such crises strongly demonstrate that we, as Islamic Countries, need to produce more and cooperate more. In this context, we have once again realized that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts and that our common problems can be overcome with common understanding, common belief and common solutions.

At this point, I think we should make maximum use of the advantages provided by cooperation platforms such as COMCEC in order to develop tools against such negativities. We can develop mechanisms that can produce concrete benefits for our countries to address the challenges experienced in many sectors on a global scale. Moreover, with intense sharing of experiences amongst our member countries, we can take steps to prevent the emergence of potential problem areas more easily in almost every sector. In order to achieve this, it's vital we improve our skills in doing business together and implement capacity building programs.

Esteemed Guests,

I would like to focus on a few important issues discussed during the meeting.

As stated in the meetings, we welcome the fact that our Preferential Trade System, one of the flagship projects of COMCEC, has been implemented de facto and legally since 1 July 2022. Our countries believe that this project, which has been on the agenda of COMCEC for a long time, will lead to a further increase in intra-OIC trade; I find their calls for expanding this system in terms of member countries and

deepening its scope valuable. Allah willing, I believe that more positive steps will be taken towards the expansion and deepening of our Preferential Trade System in the coming period.

Furthermore, we are very pleased that the OIC Arbitration Center, another flag project of COMCEC, has already started its activities. In order to increase its recognition and become a widely preferred arbitration center, I think all stakeholders of the OIC family should wholeheartedly support this Center, which is very useful for our member countries in resolving commercial and investment disputes.

On the other hand, I hope that the COMCEC SME Program, proposed by the Republic of Türkiye and accepted at the 38th COMCEC Council Meeting, will attract interest from member countries, and I believe that the program will contribute to production, investment, employment and growth in our countries.

On the other hand, I would also like to emphasize the importance of the projects implemented within the scope of COMCEC Project Financing, COMCEC COVID Response and COMCEC Al-Qods Programs. While these COMCEC project financing mechanisms meet the needs of member countries, they also serve capacity building efforts and experience sharing in our countries. Therefore, I see these mechanisms as important cooperation tools that contribute to the development of human capital and institutional capacities. I wish success to all partners with the implementation of the projects within the framework of these programs.

Dear Guests,

Before ending my remarks, I would like to thank all Monitoring Committee Members, OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, ICDT, ICCIA, SMIIC, ITFC, ICIEC and ICD for their participation in the meeting and valuable contributions. I would also like to thank our colleagues at the COMCEC Coordination Office and all the technical and administrative staff, translators and translators for their intense efforts in helping us in the successful organization of this meeting.

Allah willing, I hope to see you at the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Meeting, which will be held in November, and I wish you a healthy, peaceful and successful life from our Almighty Allah.

Thank you.

Assalamu alaykum and Rahmatullah.

ANNEX

VIII

Original: English

**LIST OF BASIC DOCUMENTS
CONSIDERED AND/OR PRESENTED AT
THE THIRTY NINTH MEETING OF
THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 23-24 May 2023)**

1.	Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy - Progress Report
2.	Report of the OIC General Secretariat on the Implementation of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action
3.	Brief on Trade
4.	Reports of ICDT on the OIC Fairs and Exhibitions
5.	Executive Summary: Annual Report on Trade Between the OIC Member States
6.	Report of the ICDT on the Issues Relating to the Activities of the WTO
7.	ITFC Progress Report on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade
8.	Report on the Activities of SMIIC
9.	Report on the Activities of ICCIA
10.	Brief on Transport and Communications
11.	Brief on Tourism
12.	Brief on Agricultural Cooperation
13.	Brief on Poverty Alleviation
14.	Brief on Financial Cooperation
15.	SESRIC Activity Report Towards the Implementation of COMCEC Strategy
16.	PROGRESS REPORT Towards the Implementation of the OIC-TVET Strategic Roadmap 2020-2025

Reports are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)