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ACTIVITIES****Workshop on Technical Cooperation in the Area of
Business Incubators among the OIC Countries**

The Centre, in collaboration with the Middle East Technical University, Directorate of Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (METU-KOSGEB), and with the financial support of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), organised a Training Workshop on "Technical Cooperation in the Area of Business Incubators (BIs) among the OIC Member Countries" in Ankara, Turkey, on 14-16 March 2002. The Workshop was held on the premises of METU-KOSGEB.

Participants from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Yemen and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry attended the Workshop.

Ambassador Erdinç Erdün, Director General of the SESRTCIC, delivered the inaugural speech. In his address, Ambassador Erdün stated that the results of the experiments carried out worldwide to promote and support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) through business incubators have been encouraging. The Director General of the Centre indicated that the Workshop was the second to be organised by the Centre within the framework of its efforts to contribute to the success of the COMCEC initiative which, in October 2000, had devoted a special agenda item to the vital

subject of SMEs. The Director cooperation among the OIC Member Countries was General also pointed out that needed in order to enhance the role of SMEs and to utilise their large development potential through measures at the national and regional levels.

Experts from METU, METU-KOSGEB and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) as well as successful entrepreneurs delivered lectures during the Workshop in which they presented innovative approaches to the design, establishment, management and improvement of business incubators.

More specifically, the lecturers enabled the participants to gain insights and develop ideas about the various steps to be taken in order to set up a business incubator. These steps included:

- (a) Conducting a sensitisation campaign on incubator concepts, problems and prospects;
- (b) Carrying out a feasibility study to identify the main stakeholders, entrepreneurs, purposes and costs;
- (c) Preparing a detailed business plan to elaborate the main parameters, select and/or renovate suitable vacant building space, establish criteria for selection of entrepreneurs, and prepare a detailed implementation plan;

(d) The implementation phase, during which the managing board starts its functions, an incubator management team is recruited and trained, entrepreneurs are carefully selected, operating practices are determined, building renovation and equipment procurement completed, and operations started (the above preparatory work normally requires 9 to 12 months in most developing countries; the work is best undertaken by a local working group assisted by international consultants as needed);

(e) The subsidised initial operation phase, for three to four years, until such time as the incubator income is sufficient to meet operating expenses; and

(f) Monitoring and globalisation of operations to enhance performance and link the incubator to international associations and tenants.

The participants rated the Workshop as highly successful. They recommended that follow-up workshops on business incubators be organised in their respective countries by the Centre, in collaboration with the relevant national institutions. The proceedings of the Workshop including its recommendations will be published by the Centre in due time.

OIC NEWS

25th Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs

The 25th Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 19-23 January 2002. Delegations from 35 OIC Member States attended the Meeting. The OIC General Secretariat, SESRTCIC, the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art

and Culture (IRCICA), the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT), the

Islamic University of Technology (IUT), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Islamic Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Organisation of Shipowners' Association (OISA) also attended the Meeting. Director General Ambassador Erdiñ Erdün and the Director of Economic and Social Research Department, Mr. Oker Gürler, represented SESRTCIC at the Meeting.

The Commission elected Sudan as its Chairman; Bangladesh, Mozambique and Palestine as Vice Chairmen, and Mali as Rapporteur.

After adopting its Agenda and Work Programme, the Islamic Commission met as the Joint General Assembly of the Subsidiary Organs of the OIC. In this capacity, the Commission took up the latter's activities and budgets. In this connection, the Director General Ambassador Erdiñ Erdün presented his report on the Centre's activities. The Commission expressed its appreciation of the Centre's success in realising its work programme in all fields, and commended the in-depth studies the Centre presented to the 28th ICFM, the 17th Session of the COMCEC, the Second Islamic Conference of Ministers of Tourism of the OIC Member States, the Experts Group Meeting to Explore Ways and Means of Accelerating the Implementation of the Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Co-operation and the Workshop on the Effects of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade Expansion between the OIC Member States. The Commission also commended the Centre's activities in the areas of statistics and information, and training and technical co-operation.

Following the presentation of the SESRTCIC report by the Director General, the Commission adopted the Report on the Activities of the Centre for the year 2000/2001. It then considered the Final

Accounts of the Centre for Financial Year 2000/2001 and the Budget Proposal for Financial Year 2002/2003 and recommended submitting them to the next session of the Permanent Finance Committee.

The Commission recommended that support be extended to the OIC Organs and Institutions and called on Member States to settle their mandatory contributions to the budgets of the subsidiary organs on a regular basis. In addition, it urged the Subsidiary Organs to exert further efforts to publicise their activities and called on Member States to expand the scope and prospects of their co-operation with them by intensifying their active and effective participation in the work of these institutions.

The Commission then resumed its proceedings as the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs. In this capacity, it considered a number of economic, cultural and social issues of concern to the OIC member countries. Finally, it adopted the draft recommendations on these issues for their submission to the 29th ICFM scheduled to be held in Khartoum, Sudan, on 25-27 June 2002.

In the economic field, the Commission took up a number of issues on its agenda including the international financial architecture, the multilateral trading system, implications of the establishment of regional and international economic groupings, economic problems of the least developed countries, external debt and poverty problems, and establishment of an Islamic Common Market.

The Commission took note, with appreciation, of the study prepared and submitted by the SESRTCIC on the establishment of an Islamic Stock Exchange Union and requested the SESRTCIC and the ICDT to undertake the necessary studies on creating a mechanism for cooperation among the OIC Member States in the areas of financial markets and

clearing of stocks and bonds, without such studies leading to the creation of any new bodies but the activation of existing mechanisms in such fields.

On the sidelines of the Meeting, the Third Consultative Meeting for Promoting Economic and Trade Co-operation amongst the OIC Institutions was held at IDB Headquarters on 20th January 2002. Participants discussed the preparations for the Expert Group Meeting on Private Sector Investment and the Role of the IDB and agreed that the date of the meeting would be determined later after consultations between the COMCEC Co-ordination Office and the IDB. The SESRTCIC informed the Meeting that it had already started to prepare its paper on “Promoting Private Sector Investments in OIC Member Countries”.

In another development, the participants agreed to exchange the texts of the memoranda of understanding (MOUs) concluded among them and to put the texts of these MOUs on their internet websites. They also agreed to publish the calendar of their activities on their websites. The next meeting amongst the OIC Institutions will be held concurrently with the Eighteenth Session of the COMCEC in Istanbul in October 2002.

OTHER MEETINGS

33rd Session of the UN Statistical Commission, New York, USA

The UN Statistical Commission held its 33rd Session at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 8 March 2002. The Session was attended by States members of the Commission, observers for other States, representatives of organisations of the UN system and observers for intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. The Director General of the SESRTCIC, Ambassador Erdiñç Erdün, also attended the Meeting.

The Commission discussed mainly the following topics: Demographic and social statistics; economic statistics; natural resources and environmental statistics; and statistical capacity building.

The full text of the draft report, which contains a detailed account of the actions

taken by the Commission with respect to all of the above-mentioned topics, can be downloaded from the UNSD website. The documents submitted to the Session may be found on the same site.

Over and above its intrinsic interest as a forum where vital statistical issues were discussed and important resolutions adopted, the UNSD Session gave the Director General of the SESRTCIC the opportunity to meet his counterparts and have a useful exchange of views with the members of the OIC Mission to the UN.

It was decided that the Thirty-fourth Session of the UNSD would be held on 4-7 March 2003.

CENTRE'S AGENDA FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2002

APRIL

14-17 April, 30th Session of the Permanent Finance Committee, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

MAY

10-11 May, 18th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC, Istanbul, Turkey.

13-17 May, Expert Meeting on Irrigation Advisory and Training Services, Tunis, Tunisia.

JUNE

3-5 June, First Conference of the Arab Forum on Human Development, Cairo, Egypt.

3-14 June, Training Workshop on "Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing", Ankara, Turkey.

17-27 June, Regional Training Workshop on "Multi-Sector Agriculture Policy Analysis for Central Asian Countries", Kyrgyzstan.

25-27 June, 29th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Khartoum, Sudan.

ANKARA CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

Latest Publications

Training Opportunities 2002, trilingual: English, French and Arabic.

InfoReport, vol.14, issue no.48, English, French and Arabic Editions.

Journal of Economic Cooperation among Islamic Countries, English, vol.23, issue no.1, 2002.

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Transport in the OIC Countries and Modalities for Strengthening Cooperation, report prepared for the Expert Group

Meeting on Transport, to be held in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.

Documents for the Thirtieth Session of the Permanent Finance Committee, 14-17 April 2002, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Reports for the Twenty-ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, 25-27 June 2002, Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE CENTRE LIBRARY

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