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UAE DELEGATION PAYS OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE CENTRE

H.H. Sheikh Hameed Bin Ahmed Al-Moalla, Minister of Planning in the United Arab Emirates, paid an official visit to the Centre on 19-22 June 2001 at the head of a high-level delegation which included Mr. Abdullatif Bin Hammad, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Planning, and Mr. Rashed Al-Nuaimi, Director of the Central Department of Statistics at the same Ministry.

On the first day of the visit, the UAE delegation had a meeting with the Centre's management and staff during which Ambassador Erdiñ Erdün, Director General, gave a full account of the Centre activities and programs and explained in detail the role and duties entrusted to the Ankara Centre by the OIC system and how the Centre fulfils these duties to the satisfaction of all concerned quarters.

H.H. the Minister expressed his appreciation of the valuable activities undertaken by the Centre within the general framework of the realization of the noble objectives of the OIC and paid tribute to the Director General and staff of the Centre for the volume and quality of the work performed. The Minister also expressed the

interest of the UAE authorities in benefiting from the Centre's activities and programs and in making use of the expertise and skills available to it.

During the subsequent days of the visit, the UAE delegation had extensive technical meetings with the Assistant Director General and the Directors of Department at the Centre to explore the ways and means of further enhancing the co-operation activities between

the Centre and the related institutions in the UAE. These meetings were instrumental in developing several concrete joint project proposals in the fields of Statistics, Research, Training and Technical Co-operation, and Publications. It has also been agreed that the Ministry of Planning

in the UAE would act as the focal point for future contacts with the Centre with respect to the elaboration of the modalities of implementation of the agreed projects and for any further co-operation activities between the Centre and the related institutions in the UAE.

OIC NEWS

WTO AGREEMENTS AND THE NEED FOR REFORM

A Seminar on “WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism, Anti-dumping and Safeguards Agreements” was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 23-26 April 2001. The Seminar was organised by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and attended by representatives from 17 OIC member countries. Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat and SESRTCIC as well as international consultants and panellists from the WTO, UNCTAD, IDB, Egypt and the USA also participated in the Seminar.

The programme of the Seminar covered 6 working sessions in which panellists and consultants presented 8 working papers. These dealt with issues related to the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism, Anti-dumping and Safeguards Agreements. Among the issues discussed were those of review, assessment, actual implementation experience, possibilities of reform, and impact on trading interests of the developing countries.

The participants argued that the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism, Anti-dumping and Safeguards Agreements represent an important improvement over earlier agreements of the GATT system and that they greatly contributed to the development of a rule-based multilateral trading system. Nonetheless, the experience so far suggests that these Agreements suffer from some major shortcomings and that there still remain controversial issues.

The participants also argued that some provisions of these Agreements are heavily biased against the developing and least developed countries, which, in addition, have to shoulder the very heavy costs of preparing and making technical presentations for the dispute and anti-dumping processes. Hence, there is a case for upgrading the technical assistance capabilities of the WTO to provide effective assistance to its developing member countries.

EXPERTS CONSIDER WAYS OF ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OIC PLAN OF ACTION

An Expert Group Meeting for Accelerating the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action for Economic and Commercial

Co-operation was held in İstanbul, Republic of Turkey, on 6-7 May 2001.

The Meeting was attended by representatives from twenty-four OIC member countries. It was also attended by the OIC General Secretariat, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Islamic Institute of Technology (IIT), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Organisation of Shipowners' Association (OISA). A representative from the UNIDO Centre for Regional Co-operation in Turkey was present at the Meeting as observer. Director General Ambassador Erdinç Erdün, Assistant Director General Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin, and the Director of Economic and Social Research Department Mr. Oker Gürler represented the Centre at this Meeting.

After the adoption of the Agenda, the Meeting took up the following items:

- A Background Report by the OIC General Secretariat on the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action for Economic and Commercial Co-operation;
- Problems Facing the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action and Possible Ways and Means of Accelerating its Implementation;

- Measures for Promoting and Expanding Intra-OIC Trade;
- Modalities of Active Involvement of the Private Sector in the Activities of the COMCEC;
- Speeding up the Communication and Flow of Information among Member Countries.

The Centre presented two papers during the Meeting. The first, the basic working paper of the Meeting, was a report on the *Problems Facing the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action and Possible Ways and Means of Accelerating its Implementation*. It highlights the various political, financial, human resources, and organisational problems facing the implementation of the OIC Plan of Action and formulates some proposals for overcoming them. The second examines ways of speeding up communication and the flow of information amongst the OIC Member Countries. Both papers were well received and highly commended by the delegations.

Following a detailed discussion of the various agenda items, the Meeting agreed on a set of recommendations aimed at accelerating the implementation of the OIC Plan of Action and decided to forward them to the Seventeenth Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC.

THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC AGREES ON A SET OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO SPEED UP THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OIC PLAN OF ACTION

The Seventeenth Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Co-operation of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC) was held in Istanbul on 9-10 May 2001.

The Meeting was attended by representatives from eleven member

countries of the Follow-up Committee as well as by the OIC General Secretariat, SESRTCIC, ICDT, IIT, IDB, ICCI and OISA. Representatives from the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), the Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC) and the UNIDO Centre for Regional Co-operation in Turkey were also present at the Meeting. Director

General Ambassador Erdiñç Erdün, Assistant Director General Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin, and the Director of Economic and Social Research Department Mr. Oker Gürler represented the Centre at the Meeting.

The Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Devlet Bahçeli, State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey. The working sessions of the Meeting were chaired by H.E. Dr. Akın İzmirliođlu, Undersecretary of the State Planning Organisation of the Republic of Turkey.

After the adoption of the Agenda, the Committee took up the following items:

- A Background Report by the OIC General Secretariat on the Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Resolutions of the COMCEC;
- Review of the Implementation of the Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Co-operation Among the OIC Member States;
- Report and Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting for Accelerating the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action;
- Report by the IDB on the Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade in the 21st Century;
- Matters Relating to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Activities;
- Preparations for the Exchange of Views on the “Effects of Non-Tariff Barriers on Foreign Trade of the Member Countries”, to be held during the 17th Session of the COMCEC;
- Draft Agenda of the 17th Session of the COMCEC.

After extensive deliberations, the Committee expressed its appreciation of the various reports submitted to the Meeting. It observed, however, that more up-to-date data need to be used in the preparation of these reports.

Furthermore, the Committee agreed, *inter alia*, to:

- Emphasise the importance of implementing the existing OIC Agreements and Statutes in the area of economic co-operation.
- Submit the Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting for Accelerating the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action to the 17th Session of the COMCEC.
- Request the Member States that had already offered to host Sectoral Expert Group Meetings to facilitate their early convening, and renew its appeal that offers be made to host similar meetings on the remaining sectors of the Plan of Action.
- Urge Member States to expedite action for the formation of Project Committees as envisaged in the Plan of Action and recommend that the ICCI circulates these projects to the private sector institutions with a view to implementing the projects proposed during the Sectoral Expert Group Meetings.
- Urge the OIC General Secretariat, the IDB and the ICDT to maintain their technical assistance to the Member States in matters related to the WTO.
- Call upon the ICDT and the IDB to organise an Expert Group Meeting before the WTO Ministerial Conference (to be held in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001) which could be followed by a meeting of OIC Ministers of Trade with a view to defining a common platform.
- Suggest that the General Secretariat, the ICDT and the IDB strengthen their co-ordination in the preparation of their monitoring reports on the activities of the WTO to avoid duplication.
- Express its appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and to the ICDT for offering to host and organise the Workshop on the “Effects of Non-Tariff Barriers on Foreign Trade of the Member Countries” and call upon the Member States to participate effectively in the workshop.

OTHER MEETINGS

FAO, IDB AND API ORGANISE A WORKSHOP IN KUWAIT ON AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A Workshop on “Sustainability Issues and Environmental Impact Considerations in the Planning and Analysis of Agricultural Investment Projects” was held in Kuwait on 5-16 May 2001. The Workshop was jointly organised by the FAO Regional Office for the Near East (FAO/RNE) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and hosted by the Arab Planning Institute (API) of Kuwait. Mr. Selim Ilkin, Director of the Technical Cooperation and Training Department, represented the Centre at the Workshop and delivered the inaugural speech.

Extensive training material on the topic of the Workshop was developed by the FAO and other development partners. The material included practical exercises on the application of analytical tools to data, case studies prepared for countries of the Near East Region, and computer routines on these applications.

The Workshop aimed at strengthening the capacity of national and regional training institutions and of the food and agriculture

policy analysis and planning institutions in the Near East and Islamic Countries to identify, formulate and analyse investment projects and to integrate environmental impact assessment considerations in these activities.

The Workshop consisted of three main modules. The first was devoted to project formulation starting with the diagnosis of constraints and the identification of development and investment opportunities, and ending with designing an investment project aimed at specific development objectives. The second was concerned with sustainability and environmental impact assessment (EIA) and was mainly based on the computer software “Ecozone”. The third module dealt with cost/benefit analysis. It covered the quantification and valuation of environmental impact by extending the cost/benefit analysis to sustainability consideration.

The Workshop, which was attended by 23 participants from the OIC countries, was rated among the best in its category.

THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES DISCUSSES THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Twelfth Session of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries was held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 29 May to

1 June 2001 under the auspices of the UNDP.

Ambassador Erdinç Erdün, Director General, and Mr. Selim Ilkin, Director of the Technical Cooperation and Training

Department, represented the Centre at the Meeting.

77 Members of the United Nations participating in the UNDP were represented at the Session. Representatives of regional commissions, United Nations bodies, funds and programmes, specialised agencies and related organisations, intergovernmental organisations which had received a standing invitation to participate as observers and other observer intergovernmental organisations also attended the Session. The Session was opened, on behalf of the U.N. Secretary General, by the President of the Twelfth Session, Ambassador Aloukèò Kittikhoun.

In his statement, Ambassador Erdinç Erdün, Director General of the SESRTCIC, emphasised that the Centre was a focal point for TCDC for the OIC developing countries and that all the activities of the Centre in this field were directed to the needs of the participating countries. After giving a brief perspective of the Centre's technical cooperation strategies, Ambassador Erdün continued with the main targets of TCDC and the most recent developments within this context. Ambassador Erdün concluded by

stressing the importance of technical cooperation among the OIC institutions as well as cooperation between these institutions and the UNDP.

The Meeting continued with a general debate followed by a discussion of "the Role of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries in Science and Technology for Development". After the adoption of decisions and the Provisional Agenda of the Thirteenth Session of the High-level Committee, the draft report of the Meeting was presented by the Rapporteur and adopted by the Committee. The Meeting closed with statements by the Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the President of the Session.

The Meeting provided an opportunity for a review of the progress made in implementing technical cooperation among developing countries and in the implementation of the new directions strategy for technical cooperation among them. An overall framework for the promotion and application of technical cooperation among the developing countries was also drawn in the Meeting.

THE WORKSHOP ON THE "EFFECTS OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS ON TRADE EXPANSION BETWEEN THE OIC MEMBER STATES" FORMULATES RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE 17TH SESSION OF THE COMCEC

A Workshop on the Effects of Non-Tariff Barriers on Trade Expansion between the OIC Member States was held in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, on 12-14 June 2001. It was organised by the ICDT under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Energy and Mining of the Kingdom of Morocco in anticipation of the Exchange of Views Session on the theme "Effects of Non-Tariff Barriers on Foreign Trade of the OIC Member

Countries", to be held during the 17th Session of the COMCEC on 18-21 October 2001 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Workshop was inaugurated by H.E. Mustapha Mansouri, Minister of Industry, Commerce, Energy and Mining of the Kingdom of Morocco and attended by representatives from the OIC member countries, the OIC General Secretariat, SESRTCIC, ICDT, IDB, and ICCI. It was also attended by representatives from the

WTO, UNCTAD, the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), the Arab Administrative Development Organisation (AADO) and the Economic Co-operation Organisation (ECO). Representatives from Moroccan business circles and Chambers of Commerce and Industry also participated in the Workshop. The Director of Economic and Social Research Department Mr. Oker Gürler represented the Centre at this Meeting.

Mr. Gürler presented a paper on the *WTO Agreements on Non-Tariff Barriers and Implications for the OIC Member States: Customs Valuation, Preshipment Inspection, Rules of Origin and Import Licensing* at the Second Session on the Non-Tariff Measures and the WTO Agreements.

The Workshop was organised in four Sessions as follows:

- Non-Tariff Measures and Trade Protection Measures
- Non-Tariff Measures and the WTO Agreements
- Appraisal of the Impact of Non-Tariff Barriers on intra-OIC trade
- Appraisal of the Impact of Non-Tariff Measures on Trade between OIC Member States and the Industrialised Countries

After detailed discussions, the Workshop formulated thirty Recommendations to be submitted to the 17th Session of the COMCEC. These are classified under the titles: General Recommendations on Non-Tariff Measures, Customs Procedures and Rules of Origin, Subsidies, Anti-dumping and Countervailing Duties, Training and Technical Assistance, Environment and Labour Standards, and Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

CENTRE'S AGENDA FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2001

SEPTEMBER

11-21 September 2001: Regional Workshop on "Water Policy and Management for Central Asian Countries", Almaty, Kazakhstan.

25-26 September 2001: 24th Meeting of the Board of Directors of SESRTCIC, Istanbul, Turkey.

OCTOBER

3-7 October 2001: 2nd Islamic Conference of Ministers of Tourism, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

18-21 October 2001: 17th Session of the COMCEC, Istanbul, Turkey.

ANKARA CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

Latest Publications

Statistical Yearbook of the OIC Countries 2001, English, French and Arabic.

Journal of Economic Cooperation among Islamic Countries, vol.22, no.3.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE CENTRE LIBRARY

Latest Acquisitions

Asian Development Bank. Annual Report 2000. Metro Manila, Philippines: ADB, 2001.

Belli, Pedro ... (et al). Economic Analysis of Investment Operations: Analytical Tools and Practical Applications. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2001.

Devarajan, Shantayanan, David R. Dollar and Torgny Holmgren (eds.). Aid and Reform in Africa: Lessons from Ten Case Studies. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2001.

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Granzow, Sandra. Our Dream: A World Free of Poverty. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2000.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Yearbook of Statistics: Telecommunication Services Chronological Time Series 1990-1999. Geneva, Switzerland: ITU, 2001.

UNDP, Human Development Report 2000. New York: UNDP, 2000.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Trade and Development Report, 2001. Geneva: United Nations, 2001.

White, Howard and Tony Killick; collaboration with Kayizzi-Mugerwa and Marie-Angelique Savane. African Poverty at the Millennium: Causes, Complexities, and Challenges. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2001.

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