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Upcoming Events

Ankara Centre Update

Training Course on 'National Accounts' in Indonesia

In accordance with the responses to the SESRTCIC questionnaire on Statistical Capacity Building in the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) of the Member Countries, the Centre organised a two-day course on “National Accounts” at the Statistics Indonesia on 9-10 July 2007. The course was provided by experts from the Department of Statistics Malaysia and attended by 25 staff members at the Statistics Indonesia.

The training course aimed at improving the Statistical Capacity of the staff of the Statistics Indonesia and increasing accessibility and raising the quality of their statistical abilities in the area of “National Accounts”. The course covered various crucial topics of pedagogical importance such as the followings:

- Introduction to the System of National Accounts: Production Accounts.
- GDP at the Production Accounts: Concepts and Methodologies.
- GDP by Sectors and by Expenditures: some Problems at Regional Level Compared to National Level.
- Data Requirements to Compile GDP at National and Regional Levels.
- Reconciliation between GDP at National and Regional Levels: by Sectors; Government's Expenditures; Inter-regional Trade.

Training Course on 'General Statistics' in Maldives

Within the framework of the Centre's Statistical Capacity Building Training Programme, a training course on “General Statistics” was organised at the Statistics Division of the Ministry of Planning and National Development of Maldives on 16-19 July 2007. The course was provided by

experts from the Department of Statistics Malaysia and attended by 20 staff members at the Division of Statistics in Maldives. The aim of the course was to improve statistical capacities of the staff and intended to complement their skills and abilities in general statistical issues.

The training course covered the following topics:

- Statistical Inference.
- Simple Linear Regression and Correlation.
- Multivariate Regression and Correlation.

SESRTCIC as the prime mover of these training courses continues to provide the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) of the Member Countries with qualified experts in order to contribute to their training needs in the best manner.

Training Course on 'Population and Demography, Census/Surveys and Sampling Techniques' in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

As another contribution of its efforts on enhancing the Statistical Capacity Building of the NSOs of the Member Countries, the Centre organised a three-day course on "Population, Demography, Census/Surveys and Sampling Techniques" at the Department of Statistics of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 19-21 August 2007. The course was provided by experts from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics of Egypt and attended by 15 Mid-level/Senior Statisticians of the Department of Statistics of Jordan. The training programme focused on the following topics:

- **Sampling Design:** Cluster sampling; Design effect; Inter-class Correlation; Sample Size Estimation

for Household and Business Surveys; Type and Features of Good Sampling Frames; Frame Updating; Design Weights.

- **Compensation Methods:** Weighting Adjustment and Imputation Methods.
- **Sample Rotation:** Panel Surveys and the Usefulness of Sample Overlap in Increasing the Precision of Sample Estimates.
- **Survey Estimation:** Mean, Proportion, Total, Ratio; Sampling Error and Variance Estimation; the Estimation of Standard Error, Coefficient of Variation, Confidence Interval Using CENVAR; the Variance Estimation Module of IMPS Package.

Training Course on 'Statistical Data Analysis' in Bangladesh

The Centre organised a training course on "Statistical Data Analysis" at the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics on 3-5 September 2007. The course was

provided by experts from the Statistic Division of the Government of Pakistan and attended by 15 staff members of the

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. The course covered the following topics:

- Use and Misuse of Statistics.
- Organizing and Analyzing Data.
- Qualitative and Quantitative Data.
- Measures of Location and Dispersion.
- Histograms and Bar Charts.

- Summary Statistics and Interpretation.

The aim of this training course was to improve the statistical capacity performance of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics on “Statistical Data Analysis”, an issue of concern to most of the NSOs of the OIC Member Countries.

Workshop on 'Micro-Credit Financing and Poverty Alleviation in OIC Member States'

The 22nd Session of the COMCEC, held in Istanbul in November 2006, designated the SESRTCIC to take full responsibility as the coordinator institution for the exchange of views sessions of the COMCEC. The Session also designated “Micro-Credit Financing and Poverty Alleviation in Member States” as the theme for the Exchange of Views at the 23rd Session of the COMCEC, which is due to take place in November 2007 in Istanbul and requested the Centre to organise a workshop on the said theme prior to the 23rd Session of the COMCEC.

In accordance with this resolution, the Centre organised a workshop on 9-11 July 2007 in Istanbul, Turkey. The workshop aimed at highlighting some successful stories and practices of micro-credit financing systems and institutions in and outside the OIC Member Countries and drawing useful lessons from their experience. It also aimed at discussing the possibility of improving networking and training in the micro-credit financing sector in the Member Countries.

The workshop also aimed at evaluating some possible concrete solutions to the problems and challenges facing the micro-credit financing sector in the Member Countries. The ultimate goal of the Workshop was to generate project ideas that could be applicable in the Member Countries. In accordance with this objective, the proposed programme of the workshop allowed extensive group discussions to evaluate possible ways and means for the implementation of some concrete micro-finance project ideas for the Member Countries.

The workshop also included two parallel sessions to elaborate on how to encourage pro-poor innovation in Micro-finance and the role of micro-credit in financing SMEs. Serious discussion also tackled the issue of training in micro-finance as well as networking of micro-finance institutions in the Member Countries. Based on the discussions on all these topics, the final session of the workshop was devoted to derive some possible project ideas to be implemented in the Member Countries.

The workshop gave an opportunity to a great number of participants from various Micro-finance institutions in the OIC Member Countries and others to share their expertise in the field of Micro-finance. These institutions were:

- OIC General Secretariat
- Islamic Development Bank (IDB)
- Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI)
- Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT)
- Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the OIC (COMCEC Coordination Office)
- Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Bahrain Development Bank (BDB)
- Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)
- Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA International)
- Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (COSIT)
- Kiva
- Shahid Beheshti University & Directorship of Research and Development (R&D)
- United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Association of National Development Finance Institutions (ADFIMI)
- SANABEL
- Grameen Trust (GT)
- Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI)
- Bank Keshavarzi (BK)
- Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED)
- Saudi Credit and Savings Bank (SCSB)
- Zakoura Foundation (ZF)
- Small and Medium Industry Development Organization (KOSGEB)
- The Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA)
- EKOTEK Foundation
- Türkiye Finans

The outcome of the workshop was documented in a final report for presentation to the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session at the 23rd Session of the COMCEC, to be held in Istanbul on 16 November 2007. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that the Centre, in collaboration with the COMCEC Coordination Office, has completed the necessary arrangements for the participation of the Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to address the said Session.

Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors of the (SESRTCIC)

The Twenty-ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre

for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC) was held in Ankara, Republic of Turkey, on 10-11 September 2007. The Meeting was

attended by delegates from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, State of Qatar, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Tunisia and Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The Director General of the Centre was present as ex officio member of the Board. The Meeting was also attended by the Senior Staff Members of the Centre.

The Director General, Dr. Savaş Alpaya, opened the Meeting and welcomed the Members of the Board to Ankara. He congratulated the new Board Members on the confidence accorded to them by their Governments. He expressed his pleasure to have the Board Members gathered in Ankara on this very occasion, which was his first Board Meeting, to evaluate the work done by the Centre during the period since the last meeting of the Board in November 2005 in Istanbul and to deliberate on the Centre's future activities.

The Board of Directors took up the Report of the Director General of the Centre who started his report by dwelling, briefly, on the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, which was adopted by the Third Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference in December 2005, only one month after the last meeting of the Board in Istanbul in November 2005. In this context, the Director General informed the Board Members that the said Programme put the OIC and its institutions, including the Centre, at the threshold of a new era of result-oriented activities and soundly coordinated actions to address the challenges facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century. He informed the Board that the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action assigned to the Centre a number of important projects

and activities in the fields of statistics, socio-economic research and technical cooperation. These activities included developing new thematic and sectoral statistical databases on fields such as environment, education and women; preparing research and studies on specific subjects such as poverty alleviation, education and the role of women; and organising training activities on capacity building in those areas and others.

Considering the new vision of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, the Director General informed the Board Members that the Centre had introduced new measures and taken new actions for the implementation of its various activities. Mentioning a few examples on the Centre's new activities in each of its three mandated areas of statistics, research and training, the Director General expressed his belief that this new approach would enable the Centre to better conceive and plan its activities and ensure a closer and more attentive follow-up of the actual implementation of these activities. The Director General concluded his presentation by inviting the Senior Staff Members in charge of the technical departments of the Centre to brief the Board Members on the activities of their respective departments.

Mr. Nabil Dabour, Acting Director of the Economic and Social Research Department presented the activities carried out by the Centre in the field of socio-economic research. He started by reporting that in the research activities, more attention had been given to the scientific and academic approach with the aim of conducting applied research projects, which led to concrete and implementable project proposals for the Member Countries. As an example of this

approach, he mentioned the SESRTCIC Cassava Initiative Project, which is an initiative for food security and poverty alleviation in the OIC Member Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this context, he informed the Board that the primary focus of the project was to increase the productivity of Cassava and the potential of Cassava post-harvest processing in some OIC Member Countries in sub-Saharan Africa. He also added that this approach had also been reflected in all the research activities of the Centre, including the selection of the research papers to be published in the Centre's Journal of Economic Cooperation where a new editorial board had been selected comprising 12 eminent scholars working in universities and research institutions in and outside the Member Countries.

Mr. Dabour also informed the Board Members that, in its capacity as the main socio-economic research organ of the OIC, the Centre has been extensively involved, since its inception, in the preparation of background reports, studies and working papers on several issues under the Economic Cooperation Agenda of various OIC meetings and conferences, particularly those related to the implementation of the ten priority sectors of the OIC Plan of Action, and recently the implementation of OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action. He, then, presented briefly the various research activities of the Centre which had been implemented since the last Meeting of the Board of Directors in November 2005. As examples of these activities, he mentioned a number of studies, prepared by the Centre and submitted to the 2nd Islamic Conference of Ministers of Environment and the 1st Islamic Conference of Ministers of Health. These are, namely, "Environmental Sustainability in the OIC

Member Countries", "Environmental Performance in the OIC Member Countries", "Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol: Implications for the OIC Member Countries" and "Tobacco Control in OIC Countries". He concluded his presentation by enumerating the research activities that were currently being carried out by the Centre.

Concerning the activities of the Centre in the area of statistics, Dr. Sıdıka Başcı, Acting Director of the Statistics and Information Department, informed the Board Members that the Centre continued to devote a large portion of its resources to providing the necessary statistical data and background information that will make the Member Countries better informed of each other's potentials and needs and, thus, facilitate their elaboration of cooperation projects and integration schemes. In this context, she reported that the Centre's statistical databases had been enriched in terms of both the coverage and content, i.e. new areas of statistics had been initiated and the number of indicators and variables had been increased. She also informed the Meeting that the rate of dissemination of these data, particularly in the electronic format, had also been greatly increased due to the successive improvements made on the technical capacities and design features of the Centre's web site.

In the same context, Dr. Başcı informed the Board that the Centre was currently in the process developing, in collaboration with the Turkish Statistical Institution, a Statistical Data Collection and Dissemination Software System, which was a new searchable and dynamic system whereby up-to-date statistical data on over 200 indicators would be electronically collected from the 57

Member Countries. This would be a very critical achievement in enhancing the Centre's cooperation with the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in the Member Countries.

Dr. Başı also reported that through the new facilities of the Centre's web site, the above-mentioned Software System would enable permitted users to perform graphics or raw data-based cross-searches on the Centre's Statistics Database and allow for enriching and frequently updating the Centre's statistical directories such as those on universities, statistical experts, research institutions, etc.

The Acting Director of the Statistics and Information Department concluded her presentation by presenting a list of the various statistical activities of the Centre which had been implemented since the last Meeting of the Board of Directors in November 2005 in terms of statistical publications and training courses in statistics-related subjects and also stated the statistical activities that were being currently carried out by the Centre.

Concerning the activities of the Centre in the field of technical cooperation and training, Mr. Süleyman İslamoğlu, Acting Director of the Training and Technical Cooperation Department informed the Meeting that the Centre enhanced its cooperation with the most relevant international and regional organisations to provide high-level training opportunities to an increasing number of staff from the Member Countries in various branches of statistics and socio-economic activities. In this connection, he mentioned that, in accordance with a resolution of the 22nd Session of the COMCEC, which was held in Istanbul in November 2006, the Centre

became a member of the organisational committee of the Second OECD World Forum, which was held in Istanbul in June 2007, where the Centre facilitated and ensured the effective participation of 16 Member Countries in the said Forum and its preparatory regional meetings.

In the same context, Mr. İslamoğlu also reported that the 22nd Session of the COMCEC, which was held in Istanbul in November 2006, designated the Centre to take full responsibility as the coordinator institution for the exchange of views sessions of the COMCEC. In this connection, he mentioned that the Centre organized a workshop on 9-11 July 2007 in Istanbul on the theme "Micro-Credit Financing and Poverty Alleviation in OIC Member States". The outcome of the workshop will be submitted to the 23rd Session of the COMCEC, which will be held in November 2007, for consideration by the Member Countries.

On the other hand, Mr. İslamoğlu informed the Board that the Centre had recently initiated a training project for Statistical Capacity Building in the Member Countries. The project aims at exploring the possibilities of matching the needs and capacities of the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) in the Member Countries and investigating the most practical ways of sharing the existing capacities among all statistical institutions in the OIC community. In this connection, and based on the assessment of the responses of the Member Countries, Mr. İslamoğlu reported that the Centre had so far organised short-term training courses in various areas of statistics in Yemen, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Morocco, Jordan, and Maldives. Such short-term training

courses are also being planned to be implemented in other Member Countries.

Mr. İslamoğlu also informed the Board that the Centre was on the process of finalizing a Proposal on Vocational Education and Training Action Programme for the OIC Member Countries. The Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC took note of the said proposal at its 23rd Meeting last May and requested the Centre to prepare a full-fledged report on the proposal for submission to the 23rd Session of the COMCEC in November.

Mr. Recep Biçer, Director of the Administration and Finance Department presented the financial position of the Centre since the last meeting of the Board. He informed the Board Members that the Centre had successfully implemented its Budget for the Financial Year 2005/2006 which ended on 30 June 2006, and that the Final Accounts were audited by the OIC Finance Control Organ in its 27th Session held in Jeddah on 30 September - 11 October 2006. He also informed the Board Members about the Financial Year 2006/2007 which ended on 30 June 2007.

Following a general discussion and deliberations on the Centre's activities, the following concluding remarks and recommendations were made by the Board Members:

After lauding the Centre for the efforts it was making towards expanding the coverage of its statistical database, the Board Members recommended the Centre to expand the national data available and create new sectoral databases such as databases on the Intellectual Propriety

Rights (IPRs) and Labour Market in the Member Countries.

The Board Members expressed their high appreciation for the training courses and seminars organised by the Centre and recommended that the Centre should intensify its training activities in the statistical field and all other related fields of particular interest to the Member Countries.

The Board Members expressed their appreciation of the fruitful contacts made by the Centre with the regional and international organisations and encouraged the Centre to maintain and strengthen these contacts. They welcomed the recent Membership of the Centre in the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) and recommended that the Centre should expand its cooperation in this domain to include other regional and sub-regional groupings.

The Board recommended that the Centre should, while designing its future training programmes, take into account the specific needs and priorities of the OIC Member Countries not only in statistics, but also in other areas of concern to the Member Countries. In this context, the Centre was recommended, if necessary, to coordinate its activities in the field of training and technical cooperation with other similar regional institutions to avoid duplication.

The Board recommended that the Centre should intensify its efforts to disseminate all its technical reports, research results, statistical publications and training activities through the internet to ensure rapid access to such information by remote users and interested parties in the

Member Countries and recommended that the Centre look into the possibility of organising seminars or training courses at the level of OIC regions such as Training programmes for the group of Arab Member Countries or African Members, etc.

The Board Members recommended that the statistical directories on experts in Member Countries compiled by the Centre and published on its web site should be expanded to cover experts in others fields related to the Centre's mandate and that, if possible, the Centre should harmonise the statistical terms and definitions used in its databases with those used in the Member Countries. In this context, the Board recommended the Centre to investigate the possibility of asking the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) of the Member Countries to have a link between the Centre's web site and that of their own.

The Board Members recommended the Centre to designate a specific theme for

each annual work programme and suggest the theme on Labour Markets in the Member Countries to be the theme of the next year Programme.

In the closing session, the Board of Directors congratulated the Director General for the excellent performance realized by the Centre during the period since their last meeting in November 2005 and lauded him for the wise and prudent manner in which he managed the Centre's affairs which greatly contributed to the improvement of the Centre's record both in terms of technical output and financial situation.

The Board Members commended the Director General and the Centre staff for the volume and quality of the work that had been accomplished and for their unrelenting efforts to conduct the activities of the Centre. They also thanked them for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to the Board Members.

OIC news

International Conference on Islamic Capital Markets

SESRTCIC co-organized "the International Conference on Islamic Capital Markets, Regulations, Products Capital Market Authorities are regulatory and supervisory institutions to organize the capital markets and develop capital market instruments and institutions. They

and Implementation", together with the IRTI-IDB and the Muamalat Institute, in Jakarta, Indonesia on August 27-29, 2007. have a wide range of responsibilities from fair and orderly functioning of the markets to protecting the rights of investors. However, due to the different

development stages of the capital markets in Islamic countries, the priorities of the Capital Market Authorities changes from one country to another. In this connection, the Centre highlighted the importance of the technical cooperation among the Capital Market Authorities of the OIC Member Countries in order to share experiences in this area.

After the opening ceremony, the Conference started with a panel discussion on the possibilities of growth of the Capital Markets in the Member Countries through enhancing cooperation among these authorities. In this panel, participants from Capital Market Authorities of Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey presented the current stance of Capital Markets in their countries as well as their future programs and expectations. Following these presentations, the participants raised many interesting questions regarding the Capital Market operations in the OIC Member Countries.

The conference also included a session on Capacity Building in the area of Capital Markets. In this session, the Director General of SESRTCIC, Dr. Savaş Alpay, briefly introduced the Centre's modalities for training programmes in different

areas. The participants of the session discussed the details of appropriate modalities of technical cooperation among the OIC Member Countries on Capacity Building regarding the operations and regulations of the capital markets.

The participants also shared their views on the details of a survey on capacity building, which would be administered by the SESRTCIC to identify the priority subjects for potential training programs among Capital Market Authorities of the OIC Member Countries.

In this connection, the participants agreed that after circulating the said survey to the member states and getting their responses, SESRTCIC will organize training programmes on issues of concern to the Capital Markets Authorities in the Member Countries. These training programmes will hopefully be useful to the member states as some of the OIC Member Countries command sufficient human and technical resources, as well as the necessary knowledge that will enable the less experienced or newly emerging member states to speed up their capital markets development.

OIC Secretary General participates in the 62nd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

The Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu participated in the 62nd Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations between 25 September and 3 October 2007. In his first day in New York, Prof. Ihsanoglu held several important meetings with the

President of Afghanistan, the President of Nigeria, the Prime Minister of Albania, the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry of Oman, and with other distinguished dignitaries. He was also interviewed by various American, Muslim and Arab media channels.

During these meetings, the Secretary General focused on the developments relating to the situation in the Middle East, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict and the current efforts to revive the peace process. In addition to these, the situation in Iraq and the developments in the Sudan and Lebanon were also taken up.

The Secretary General also reviewed the ongoing preparations for the convening of the Islamic Summit Conference in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, in March, as well as

the amendment of the OIC Charter which, in case it is accepted by the Member States, will be adopted in the forthcoming Summit Conference.

The Secretary General particularly addressed in all his meetings the defamation of Islam and its symbols. In this regard, he stressed the importance of coordination among the Member States to put an end to this phenomenon that hurts the sentiments of the Muslim world all over.

Other Meetings

SESRTCIC Participates in the 'Asia Pacific Professional Leaders in Education Conference and Exhibition'

SESRTCIC participated in the "Asia Pacific Professional Leaders in Education Conference and Exhibition" held on 11 - 13 July, 2007 in Hong Kong. The OIC core group for ranking the universities of OIC Member Countries held an exhibition during the Conference.

The Director General of SESRTCIC, Dr. Savaş Alpay, made a presentation at the Conference titled "Academic Rankings of Universities in the OIC Member Countries". Dr. Alpay mentioned that the OIC Member States had agreed to develop and implement new strategies to reposition their universities globally, and to facilitate the placement of some OIC universities among the top 500

universities in the world. He also discussed various aspects of the new methodology developed by the OIC core group for ranking the universities in the OIC countries as well as the preliminary applications of this methodology by the SESRTCIC using the available data.

The exhibition booth of the OIC core group had been visited by many participants during the Conference. Two main publications, "Academic Rankings of Universities in the OIC Member Countries" and "Science and Technology in the OIC Member Countries", prepared by SESRTCIC, were displayed and also distributed. The exhibition booth was also visited by the

Malaysian Minister of Education, Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, who expressed his thanks and appreciation to

SESRTCIC for the great work it had done to contribute to the success of this conference.

The 4th Meeting of the 2nd Round of Trade Negotiations for Establishing the Trade Preferential System among the Member Countries of the OIC

The 19th COMCEC Session, which was held on 20-23rd October, 2003, had marked the milestone meeting for officially launching the first round of trade negotiations for the establishment of an OIC trade preferential system. In that session, the Ministerial Declaration, which outlines the objectives and principles of the first round, and the Rules of Procedure of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) were adopted. The Ministerial Declaration set the date and venue for launching the first round as April 2004 in Antalya, Turkey.

The First Round of Trade Negotiations was successfully concluded in 2005, producing the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS), which was submitted to the 21st Session of COMCEC for adoption and signature. Up to now, among the member states of the TNC, 10 have signed and two of them ratified the PRETAS. The PRETAS will enter into the force with the completion of the ratification process by 10 TNC Member States.

The Second Round was launched by the Ministerial Meeting on 24th November 2006 in Istanbul. The Ministerial Declaration, adopted at the said meeting, put the target of 1st of January, 2009 for establishing the TPS-OIC and making it operational. In this respect, the second

round was devoted to the completion of the rules of origin of the TPS-OIC and other trade-related issues which will prepare the ground for the operation of the TPS-OIC. The outcome will be submitted to the 23rd Meeting of COMCEC in November 2007 for its adoption. The TNC has had three consecutive meetings in November 2006, March and June, 2007.

The 4th Meeting of the 2nd Round of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) was held on 10th of September 2007 in Ankara to continue and conclude the deliberations on the Rules of Origin and the Non-tariff Barriers of the OIC Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC). At the end of the 4th Meeting of the 2nd Round prior to the 2nd Meeting of Ministers of Commerce of the Member Countries, the TNC completed the negotiations on the Rules of Origin. The Rules of Origin of the TPS-OIC was presented for signature at the 2nd Meeting of the Ministers of Commerce of the Member Countries, held on September 12th.

Five countries, namely; Republic of Guinea, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Republic of Tunisia, Republic of Turkey and State of United Arab Emirates, signed the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin at the Signing Ceremony. It was also agreed that the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin would be

submitted to the COMCEC Ministerial Session to be held in November. Emphasis was laid on the member states to act accordingly to accomplish the goal of establishing the TPS-OIC at the specified date of January 1st 2009. The determination of the Para-Tariff and Non-Tariff Measures was decided to be considered after the entry of PRETAS into force.

In the course of the meeting, the delegates provided the TNC with information about the procedures of their countries regarding the status of signing and/or ratifying the agreements of the TPS-OIC. In this context, most countries stated that the deadline of 1st January 2009 would hopefully be reached successfully and that the TPS-OIC would be operational on time.

Centre's Activities for the Fourth Quarter of 2007

October

Symposium on 'The Labor Market in the GCC Countries', October 29 - 31, 2007, Qatar

First Forum of Tourism in Islamic Countries, October 30 - November 1, 2007, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

November

Forum on the Improvement and Encouragement of Trade and Investment in the Cotton Sector, 12-13 November 2007, Istanbul, Turkey

The 1st Arab Statistical Conference, 12-13 November 2007, Amman, Jordan

The 23rd Session of the COMCEC, 14-17 November 2007, Istanbul, Turkey

December

36th Session of the Permanent Finance Committee (PFC), 2-4 December 2007, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

The 9th Islamic Countries Conference on Statistical Sciences 2007 (ICCS-IX), 12-14 December 2007, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Editorial Office: Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC).

Address: Attar Sokak, No. 4, 06700 G.O.P., Ankara, Turkey.

Tel: (90-312) 468 61 72 **Fax:** (90-312) 467 34 58

E-mail: oi ankara@sesrtcic.org

Web site: www.sesrtcic.org

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