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# info REPORT

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## ANKARA CENTRE UPDATE

### Director General of SESRIC Received a Delegation from World Health Organisation (WHO)

Dr. Savaş Alpay, Director General of SESRIC, received a delegation from the World Health Organisation (WHO) in his Office on Wednesday 18 February 2009. The delegation comprised of Dr. Armando Peruga, Coordinator of the Tobacco Free Initiative of the WHO, Dr. Toker Ergüder, National Tobacco Control Programme Officer (Bloomberg Initiative) of the WHO Regional Office in Ankara, and Dr. Nazmi Bilir, Head of Department of Public Health at Hacettepe University, Turkey.

At the outset, the Director General of SESRIC, Dr. Savaş Alpay expressed his thanks and welcome to the delegates and briefed them on the activities of the Centre in the three areas of mandate: research, statistics and training. In particular, he highlighted the research and statistics activities of SESRIC in health - related areas in general and tobacco control in particular. In this context, the Director General briefed the delegation on the report prepared by the Centre on "Tobacco Control in OIC Member Countries", which has been submitted and presented at the 1st Islamic Conference of Ministers of Health held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in June 2007. In the light of the results of the said report, the Conference adopted, said the Director General, a Resolution on Tobacco Control in the OIC Member States and requested the Centre to continue following up this issue in the member states.

Dr. Alpay also informed the delegation that the Centre has actively participated in the 3rd Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC), which was held in Durban, Republic of South Africa, in November 2008. The Centre participated in the Conference representing the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), as an observer to the WHO-FCTC. During the Conference, SESRIC exchanged views with the delegates of the OIC Member States as well as the representatives of the WHO, COP Secretariat and NGOs, on further enhancing and strengthening the Tobacco Control activities and the implementation of the WHO-FCTC in the OIC Member States.

The Director General also mentioned that, in its capacity as a member of the Interim Steering Committee of the Islamic Conference of the Ministers of Health, the Centre has recently actively participated in the 1st Meeting of the said Committee, which was held in Kuala Lumpur in January 2009. The Centre shared the discussion and exchanged its views with the representatives of the other members of the Committee on the preparation for the 2nd Islamic Conference of Ministers of Health, which will be held in Tehran in the first week of March 2009.

On the other hand, Dr. Alpay informed the delegation that, in its efforts for developing a special database on the main indicators on health and health-related fields, the Centre has already identified and collected the relevant data on the OIC member states on a set of 37 indicators now available at the Centre's main database "BASEIND".

On his part, the Head of the WHO delegation Dr. Armando Peruga, Coordinator of the Tobacco Free Initiative (FTI) of the WHO, expressed his thanks for the Director General of the Centre for his warm receiving of the delegation and informed him that the WHO is ready to cooperate with the Centre in the field of health and tobacco control through exchanging technical expertise in research and statistics as well as in technical training for the benefit of the OIC member states.

During the discussion, the two parties elaborated on areas of possible cooperation between SESRIC and WHO. These included the possibility of organizing joint training, workshops and programs on issues related to tobacco control in OIC member states such as legislations on tobacco control, public awareness, tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, e-health application in OIC member states, etc., providing the center with experts to participate in the training workshop organized by the Center on health - related issues, and the possibility of regularly providing the Center with the publications of the WHO and free access to the statistical database (global database) of the WHO.

## SESRIC Participates in OIC Mission to the Republic of Iraq

SESRIC has participated in the official visit to the Republic of Iraq headed by Professor Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, the Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on 21 - 25 February 2009. The delegation was comprised of high-level officials from the OIC General Secretariat, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the Islamic Bank for Development (IDB), the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), the Islamic Fiqh Academy (IFA), and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT).

The main purpose of the official visit was to work out the best ways and means to bolster joint cooperation between the Republic of Iraq and the OIC alongside its subsidiary organs and specialized institutions, given the positive security and stabilization developments and the reconstruction unfolding in Iraq, in light of the resolutions issued by the Islamic Summit held in March 2008 in Dakar, Senegal, and resolutions put out by the Conference of the Council of OIC Foreign Ministers convened in June 2008 in Kampala, Uganda.

Various consultation meetings were conducted by the participation of the technical delegations of experts from both sides. Discussions revolved around cooperation in the fields of labour, social affairs, agriculture, and religious affairs, as well as technical support to build the capacities of Iraqis in various sectors, particularly health, education and culture by cooperating with relevant OIC institutions. The two delegations agreed in principle on a slew of economic development projects, in particular trade development, investment projects, the preservation of heritage and archaeological sites in Iraq, and the development of tourism and agriculture, health and education.

In this regard, the SESRIC representative Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, underlined the vital role of reliable statistical data and information in any kind of socio-economic planning and development, and elucidated the Centre's endeavour in collating, processing and disseminating socio-economic statistics and information for the utilisation of Iraq in their effort

of reconstruction, which needs a close collaboration between the Centre and the relevant Iraqi Authority. During the expanded session of bilateral talks carried out with the representatives of the Iraqi government, Mr. Serenli also highlighted the significant contribution that SESRIC Capacity Building Programme (CBP), which aims at matching the needs and capacities of OIC Member Countries in various fields of socio-economic development, would add to the specialization efforts of professionals and play an important part in the improvement of human capital in Iraq.

At the end of profound discussions, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by the OIC and the Iraqi government. The two parties emphasized in the MoU the core values of the Islamic civilization as embedded in Makkah Declaration issued by the 2005 Extraordinary Islamic Summit, notably dialogue, moderation, justice, tolerance and rejection of bigotry, close-mindedness, authoritarianism, and exclusion. They reiterated their belief that reform and development in any society should be driven by the principles of justice, consultation and equality in order to enlist political participation and ensure the implementation of the rule of law, human rights, and dignity, and to ensure that social justice is responsibly upheld and society is built on a solid and firm foundation.

The two sides agreed to set up a follow-up mechanism that would comprise officials from relevant Iraqi ministries and the OIC General Secretariat together with its subsidiary and specialized organs. The follow-up committee will meet on a regular basis every last quarter of the year to gauge and follow up the progress of projects and identify future ones.

On another level, the Secretary General officially inaugurated the OIC Office in Baghdad, which commenced its operation since last July. The opening ceremony was attended by some Iraqi cabinet members, including Minister of Foreign Affairs, together with the heads of the Sunni and Shiite Waqfs as well as the head of Haj Authority and the accredited ambassadors of the OIC Member States in Baghdad. During the visit, the Secretary General was also invited to attend the reopening of Iraq's National Museum under Nouri al-Maliki's patronage.

**SESRIC's Meeting with Delegates of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of OIC Member States to the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of UN Statistical Commission**

SESRIC organized a sideline meeting on February 26, 2009 with the delegates of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of the Member States of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) during the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Statistical Commission.

The representatives of the NSOs of 31 OIC Member States as well as the representatives of the international organizations, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) and Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PARIS21) participated in the meeting. Dr. Savas Alpaly, Director General of the SESRIC, made a presentation and briefed the delegates on the statistical activities of SESRIC.

The delegates were informed on SESRIC BASEIND, the database of basic social and economic indicators of the member states, as well as on the current level of data availability in the BASEIND database for each country. An online data submission interface for the NSOs was introduced. The online interface application will allow the users from NSOs to submit new or complete missing data for the previous years or update the present data electronically. The system will be operational through a country specific username-password pair. The username and password of their countries have been distributed to the delegates. SESRIC kindly requested the contact information of the focal points for data submission from each NSO.

The SESRIC's motion chart generator, a cutting-edge technology for visual presentation of the country data in a comparative manner across years was also introduced to the delegates, and they were informed that they could make use of this tool through SESRIC website. The delegates were also informed on the SESRIC thematic maps and publications.

The delegates were informed on the Statistical Capacity Building Programme of SESRIC, the training activities realized in 2007 and 2008 and to be realized in 2009. The importance of the timely response to the Questionnaire on Statistical Capacity Building and the contribution of the NSOs in providing trainers as part of their commitment for technical cooperation were highlighted.

Recent initiatives towards coordinating statistical activities at the OIC level were introduced, and the

delegates were informed about the Statistical Working Group, recently established by the joint effort of SESRIC and IDB.

Finally the representative of IDB made a presentation on the Statistical Capacity Building initiative of IDB.

After the presentations, the delegates expressed their strong appreciation and support for SESRIC for organizing this meeting.

A very lively discussion session followed and the delegates agreed on the following main recommendations:

- The proposal of organizing annual regular meetings for NSOs of OIC Member States, raised by the delegate of the United Arab Emirates was unanimously supported. It was agreed that the first meeting of the NSOs should be organized either in the last quarter of 2009 or first quarter of 2010 by SESRIC and IDB. The representative of IDB expressed their support to the recommendation on regular meeting.
- The NSOs also recommended that SESRIC continue to organize a half-day meeting of the NSOs of the OIC Member States as a side event during the annual sessions of the UN Statistical Commission.
- All delegates agreed on a proposal by the delegate of Lebanon, that SESRIC should directly communicate with the NSOs, besides communicating via the diplomatic channels.

The delegates expressed their support to the Statistical Capacity Building Programme of SESRIC and mentioned that they are ready to provide experts as trainers for training activities to be organized by the SESRIC.

The representatives of the international organizations, IDB, UNSD, EUROSTAT and PARIS21 expressed their support to joint statistical activities and cooperation with the NSOs of OIC member states and SESRIC.

## SESRIC Annual Bulletin on Training Opportunities in OIC Member Countries (TROP)

The SESRIC (Ankara Centre) has been publishing, since 1986, an annual bulletin on the "Training Opportunities in the Member Countries of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference – (TROP)". The bulletin is based on the realisation that a more efficient and wider use of training facilities existing in the OIC Member States could be brought about by enabling individuals from certain Member States to participate in the training programmes conducted by peer institutions in the other ones. Thus, the primary objective of the bulletin is to provide detailed and timely information on training programmes scheduled to be organised and conducted by various training institutions in the OIC Member States.

Furthermore, the Ankara Centre has recently decided to take this highly valued project (TROP) a step further by fully automating the process of information in the digital environment with the participation of the training institutions in the OIC Member States. All related training institutions are given online access, by assigning them usernames & passwords to TROP system so that they are themselves be enabled to maintain, monitor and enhance information of their institutions and available training programmes.

The Ankara Centre is interested in gathering information on short-term courses, workshops and/or seminars which are open to participants from the OIC Member States and designed for experienced staffs who aim at increasing their skills/knowledge in their areas of expertise.

The Ankara Centre highly appreciates your valued cooperation and urges all training institutions in the OIC Member States to participate in TROP in order to ensure a more efficient and wider use of training facilities existing in the Member States, which will, no doubt, add to the specialisation efforts of experts in the Member States in general and play an important role in the improvement of human capital in these states.

The Ankara Centre highly welcomes the involvement of the relevant institutions in the exerted efforts towards the realisation of the high level cooperation and collaboration among the OIC Member States and advises them to visit its web site at the address given hereinafter for more information and the instructions necessary for TROP membership and usage:

[http://www.sesric.org/train\\_trop.php](http://www.sesric.org/train_trop.php)

## O I C N E W S

### 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM)

Following the Kuala Lumpur Declaration 2007 of the First Islamic Conference of Health Ministers of the OIC and Resolution No.4/11-ST (IS) of the Eleventh Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, the Government of Malaysia hosted the First Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers in Kuala Lumpur on 19-20 January 2009.

The Meeting was attended by the delegations from OIC Member States, namely Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and

Uganda. Also present were representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, COMSTECH, IDB and ISESCO. The representatives of WHO, the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Malaysian Pilgrimage Board and the Embassy of the United States of America in Kuala Lumpur (on behalf of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta were also present.

The meeting formally established the Steering Committee under the authority and guidance of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers and

considered the draft composition and terms of reference of the Steering Committee. Participants agreed that in order to be effective and efficient the Committee should be able to tap into available expertise and resources and explore other avenues. To that end, participants emphasized, among others, to equip the Committee with strong secretarial support and sound scientific and technical advice; to enable it to facilitate exchange of data and information; and to allow it to prepare a provisional agenda for the Ministerial Conference.

The Steering Committee invited Health Ministers from the OIC Member States and their delegations to actively participate in the Second Islamic Conference of Health Ministers to be held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 1 – 4 March 2009 and urged Member States to focus their plenary statements and national reports in line with the theme of the Second Conference and in the light of the Declaration and Resolutions of the First Conference. The Meeting decided to submit a progress report and recommendations of the Steering Committee to the Second Conference for approval.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM)**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM) was convened in two parts, Part 1 on 28 February 2009 and Part 2 on 5 March 2009 in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran. The objective of Part 1 of the Second Meeting of Steering Committee was to review the preparation of the Second Islamic Conference of Health Ministers held in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran on 1 – 4 March. The objectives of the Part 2 of the Second Meeting of the Steering Committee were to finalize the Rules of Procedures of the Steering Committee and to discuss

the follow up actions on the decisions and recommendations adopted by the same Islamic Conference.

The Meeting was attended by the delegations from OIC Member States, namely Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Syria and Uganda. Also present were representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, COMSTECH, IDB and ISESCO. The representatives of WHO, United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria were also present.

### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers (ICHM) was held on 1 - 4 March 2009 in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran, under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and hosted by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education. Forty-five OIC Member States were present and twenty-two of the delegations were led by their respective Ministers of Health. The OIC General Secretariat and the related OIC institutions such as SESRIC, COMSTECH, IDB, ISESCO and health related international organisations such as WHO, UNICEF, UNAID, UNFPA, and the Global Fund were represented in the Conference.

The theme of the Conference was “Health Equity in Islamic Ummah” and the objectives were:

- to formulate concrete proposals in addressing health issues through initiating an OIC Health Vision;
- to review the implementation and progress made on the decisions and recommendations of the First Islamic Conference of Health Ministers held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2007;
- to discuss health issues of high importance facing the Ummah;
- to address the theme of the Conference of "Health Equity in the Islamic Ummah"; and
- to look into ways and means of effective follow up mechanisms in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations made by the Ministers.

Having reviewed the priority health issues facing the Muslim Ummah, different aspects of the status of health programs, developments and concerns, the Conference adopted **Six Resolutions** on the following subjects:

1. Health equity in the Islamic Ummah;
2. Islamic solidarity with Palestinians in the occupied Palestine territories in the aftermath of the Israeli Regime atrocities in Gaza Strip and Syrian Arab inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan: health aspects;
3. Ways and means of strengthening health cooperation among the OIC Member States;
4. Combating communicable diseases;
5. Combating non-communicable diseases;
6. Emergency preparedness and response: common Islamic approach.

The Tehran Declaration adopted at the 2nd ICHM stresses on equity in health meaning people having access to the resources, capacities and capabilities they need to act upon the circumstances of their lives. Likewise, observance of principles of integrity, transparency, accountability and inclusion is of significant importance in realization of health equity and recognizes that international cooperation in health is not an option, but a must, since in the increasingly interconnected world, communicable diseases can spread much faster than in the past and the threat of newly emerging diseases is growing. Therefore, unimpeded access to health technologies, vaccines, materials and knowledge at the international level is an integral part of the health equity. In this regard, Tehran Declaration calls for expeditious implementation of health-related part of the OIC 10-Year Program of Action (TYPOA) to draw up a program for combating diseases and epidemics.

The Conference welcomed the recent SESRIC initiative on Health Capacity Building Programme which aims at enhancing cooperation between the relevant health authorities in OIC Member States, and encouraged SESRIC in collaboration with IDB to conduct full-fledged surveys in order to identify the needs and capacities of Member States, and organise short training programmes. Furthermore, the Conference invited SESRIC to collaborate and coordinate with WHO and participate in WSIS follow-up activities in the area of ICT applications, to conduct e-health assessments in the Member States, to share best practices in this areas. The Conference also invited OIC Member States to cooperate with SESRIC to strengthen their national database to consolidate disaggregated data related to

health inequalities and their related social determinants.

The Conference urged the OIC Member States to consider being self - reliant and self - sufficient in their immunization programs, inter alia, by ensuring the production of good quality, safe, effective and affordable vaccines and investment in advanced biotechnology to develop good quality and effective vaccines. It called upon the international organizations such as the WHO and UNICEF to assist the OIC Member States to expand their national immunization programmes to reach all unvaccinated children and requested the OIC, WHO and other relevant international organizations to cooperate to foster health capacity building programmes in the OIC Member States to promote health equity. The Conference also recognized the role of media, educational centres, religious leaders and institutions and the civil society in raising awareness about different aspects of health.

The Conference expressed its deep concern on the deteriorating health and environmental degradation in the Palestinian territory, in particular in Gaza Strip and in the Syrian Occupied Golan due to the Israeli occupation. Referring to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, the Conference condemned strongly the Occupying Forces for the grave violations of Palestinians rights to health, particularly, their arrests, collective punishments, blockade and access to clean water, electricity, medication, food and vaccines delivery to cities, towns and refugee camps, the obstruction and prevention of movement of health staff and ambulances from transporting the injured to hospitals and the inability of patients specially pregnant women to access health centres and facilities. The Conference urged all the OIC Member States and international organizations including WHO to provide and mobilize adequate resources and support to protect public health and strengthen the healthcare delivery system in Palestine in general and Gaza in particular, Syrian Occupied Golan and other conflict affected areas.

The Conference has also endorsed the Terms of Reference of a Steering Committee and requested the Steering Committee to continue monitoring implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the ICHM. The Conference also mandated the Steering Committee, in collaboration with Member States, to develop a draft of a Strategic and Health Programme of Action of the OIC Member States for 2012 - 2022 for its submission and adoption at the Third Session of the ICHM.

## 5<sup>th</sup> World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF)

The 5<sup>th</sup> World Islamic Economic Forum on “Global Food and Energy Security” was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on, on March 1-4, 2009. The Forum, which brought together 1557 participants including corporate leaders, speakers and head of governments from 38 countries, was officially opened on March 2, 2009 by Mr. Sofyan A. Djalil, Co-chairman of the Indonesia National Organising Committee. Dr. Savaş Alpay Director General, represented the SESRIC thereat.

The Forum discussed many themes and issues under the following titles:

- Innovative Solutions to Global Challenges
- Global Economic and Business Scenario for the Next Decade
- Role of Business in Ensuring a Sustainable Environment for Future Generation
- Beyond Scarcity: Overcoming the Global Food Crisis
- Paving a Greener World: Creating a Future for Alternative Energy
- Stemming the Tide of the Global Financial Crisis
- Transforming Mediocrity into International Success
- Global SMEs: Business Beyond Boundaries

The 5<sup>th</sup> World Islamic Economic Forum has adopted the “Jakarta Declaration” with its following categorized recommendations:

### **Overcoming Global Financial Crisis:**

1. Support the efforts of the OIC to accelerate greater regional economic cooperation through the effective implementation of its 10 year Plan of Action.
2. Support the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Task Force for Islamic Finance and Global Financial Stability to promote Islamic Finance and Banking as a viable alternative to the conventional financial system.
3. Call upon Governments and Islamic banks to expand Shariah compliant micro-credits.

4. Support the call for effective regulations in the global financial industry to mitigate risk and failure.
5. Support the establishment of Islamic Banking Training centres with harmonised standards.

### **Food Security:**

1. Support greater public-private sector collaboration in increased agricultural productivity both within the OIC countries and the rest of the world.
2. Promote joint venture initiatives and the use of state of the art technology in the agro industry to increase efficient food production.
3. Call for the reduction of regulatory barriers, including food subsidies, hindering sustainable food production and trade.
4. Recommend a proper balance between food production for human consumption and energy usage.

### **Energy Security:**

1. Reinforce efforts for research and development of non-carbon fuels and other alternative energy sources.
2. Support energy conservation and carbon emission reduction programmes.

### **Global SMEs:**

1. Promote the development of SME’s as the engine of growth in OIC countries through the programs of the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and specialised forums of the WIEF.
2. Support the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) in its efforts to reduce barriers to intra-OIC trade.
3. Support liberalisation of Visa procedures to facilitate travel by businesspersons throughout the OIC countries.

Moreover, the Forum has re-emphasized its commitment on:



**WIEF Businesswomen Network (WBN):**

- a) The 'Training Program for Women Entrepreneurs
- b) The furtherance of the ongoing 'Nurses Training Program' and the introduction of "The Midwifery Training Program"

**WIEF Young Leaders Network (WYN):**

Furthering the aims of the WYN by expanding the WYN Scholarship, Mentorship and Internship Programs to assist young leaders to grow into entrepreneurship positions.

**Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa**

The meeting of the Steering Committee of the Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa was held on 6 February 2009 in Madrid, Spain, at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The representatives of UNWTO, the research firm Secheresse Consultants, the countries included in the project and the Organisation

of the Islamic Conference (OIC), participated in the meeting. The OIC have been represented by its General Secretariat, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT).

The research firm presented the report regarding phase 1 of the study pertaining to the diagnostic assessment. Following this presentation, remarks, observations and suggestions were made by the participants.

Besides congratulating the research firm "Sécheresse Consultants" on the quality of the study and of the documents presented, it was observed that some available data and also the work on some potential parks and protected areas are missed within the report.

The meeting participants raised their own recommendations on the subject. Some of these recommendations are:

The research firm should organize three sub regional meetings in March 2009, with the participation of all project's national focal points.

The study should include hunting tourism, community-based tourism, solidarity tourism, mountain tourism, sport fishing, etc.

The countries in collaboration with the stakeholders and media (print media, radio, television) may organize, seminars, conferences, awareness-raising workshops regarding the project, targeting decision makers, administrations in charge of tourism and the environment, academic circles, operators and funding institutions and participate on 15-19 April 2009 in the forum on Tourism Development in Islamic countries, which will be held in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), at the invitation of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Burkina Faso may be included in the group of beneficiary countries of the project. This country shares the W Park with Benin and Niger, and has been visited in on - site inspection visit made by Secheresse team.

**Consultative Meeting of the OIC Institutions on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade**

Within the framework of the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action, which has been adopted by the 3rd Extraordinary Islamic Summit in December 2005, particularly in the context of the implementation of the "Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade", which has been

adopted by the Expert Group Meeting on "enhancing intra-OIC trade" held in Ankara in July 2008, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized the Consultative Meeting of the OIC Institutions on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade.

The Meeting was held at the ICDT's Headquarters in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco on 11-12 February 2009 and attended by representatives of the following OIC institutions: the General Secretariat of the OIC, the COMCEC Coordination Office, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Cooperation Office, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investments and Export Credit (ICIEC), the Islamic centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Organisation of Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA) and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). The Meeting was also attended by the Saudi Fund for Development, the International Trade Centre and the Regional Office of IDB in Rabat.

The Meeting discussed and elaborated on various activities and project proposals submitted by the representatives of various OIC institutions for the implementation of the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade with a view to achieving the target of 20% by 2015 stipulated by the OIC Ten-Year programme of Action. These activities and proposals were presented and discussed under the following five headings of the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade: Trade Financing, Trade Facilitation, Trade Promotion, Development of Strategic Commodities and Capacity Building.

During the discussion on the proposed capacity building activities in trade related areas, the representative of SESRIC, Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department, informed the Meeting of the possibility of making use of the SESRIC twining capacity building training

programme through designing and circulating a questionnaire on the needs and capacities of the member states in trade related areas. Based on the results of this questionnaire, a list of priority trade related areas can be specified and accordingly twining capacity building training programmes should be organised for the benefit of the member countries through matching the capacities and needs of these countries in these specific areas.

Following three working sessions in the first day of the Meeting, where the participants discussed and elaborated on various activities and project proposals submitted by the representatives of various OIC institutions, the second day was devoted to examine and compile these activities and projects in a matrix-format Road Map document. This document, which has been adopted at the end of the Meeting together with the final report and the recommendations, displays the recommended activities and proposed actions to be undertaken by various OIC institutions during the timeframe of the OIC Ten-Year programme of Action. The document also indicates a coordinator institution(s) for the activities and proposed projects to be undertaken under each of the five headings of the Road Map.

The Meeting decided to submit the final report together with the recommendations and the matrix-format Road Map document to the forthcoming relevant OIC fora for endorsement by the member states, notably to the 32nd Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Culture and social Affairs, which will be held in April 2009 and to the 25th Session of the COMCEC, which will be held in November 2009.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Coordination Committee Meeting on Implementation of the Framework for Development and Cooperation in the Domain of Tourism among the OIC Member States**

The First Coordination Committee Meeting on the implementation of the "Framework for Development and Cooperation in the Domain of Tourism between the OIC Member States" was held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, on 18-19 March 2009. The Meeting was attended by the following Members of the Coordination Committee: Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Cameroon, Arab Republic of Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Republic of Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, Republic of Tunisia and Republic of Turkey.

The Meeting was also attended by the representatives of the OIC General Secretariat and the following OIC institutions: Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Organization of the Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA). Mr. Nabil Dabour, Acting Director of Research Department represented SESRIC at the Meeting.

The aim of the Meeting was to develop a Short Term Plan and Program for the implementation of the “Framework for Development and Cooperation in the Domain of Tourism between the OIC Member States”, which has been adopted by the 6th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) held in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, in July 2008. The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposals for the implementation of the Framework submitted by the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, IRCICA, ICDT, ISESCO and ICCI. In this context, the Committee decided to follow the proposal of the Short Term Plan and Program which were presented by the OIC General Secretariat and the SESRIC.

The Committee also discussed the performance mechanism and evaluation for the implementation of the Framework document. It was agreed that the General Secretariat of the OIC is entrusted with the

task of implementing the Framework. The IDB is expected to contribute to financing the proposed activities and projects of the Short Term Plan and Program. The Coordination Committee will assess the implementation of the Short Term Plan and Program and submit an interim Progress Report to the next ICTM.

The Meeting finally adopted the Short Term Plan and Program for the effective implementation of the Framework and agreed to hold the Second Coordination Committee Meeting in the beginning of the 2010 (before the 7th Session of the ICTM). After the consultation with the members of the Committee, the Chairman of the Committee and the OIC General Secretariat will determine the date and venue of the Second Coordination Committee Meeting.

### Conference of the Ministers Responsible for Water from the OIC Member Countries

The Conference of the Ministers Responsible for Water from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Member States was held as a side event of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum on March 20, 2009. The meeting was inaugurated by the OIC Secretary General, Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and chaired by Prof. Dr. Veysel Eroğlu, Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey. Among the OIC institutions SESRIC, COMSTECH and IDB were represented at the Conference. Moreover, several other international organizations participated in the Conference as well. Dr. Savaş Alpay, Director General, represented SESRIC during the Conference.

In the opening session, Prof. Dr. İhsanoğlu expressed, firstly, his appreciation for the great efforts exerted by the Turkish Government toward the organization of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum. He, then, outlined the current status of water resources and the challenges the OIC Member States are facing due to overexploitation of water, increase of demand and impacts of climate change on water

resource depletion. He also called for sustainable utilization of water resources and proposed OIC Water Vision 2025. As the second speaker of the opening session, Prof. Dr. Eroğlu welcomed the Ministers responsible for water from OIC Member States. He stressed the importance of water for development and the necessity of sustainable use of the renewable water resources.

During the working session, Concept Paper on preparation of OIC Water Vision 2025 had been presented and the ministers had been asked for their views on the proposal. The comments highlighted the necessity of collaboration among OIC Member States in political, technical and financial terms and emphasized the need to have a clear roadmap of transboundary water management.

In the closing session, the general view of the vision had been approved. An experts meeting had been suggested before the next Conference of the Ministers Responsible for Water.

## OTHER MEETINGS

### 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Statistical Commission

The 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission was held on February 24-27, 2009 in New York. The representatives of National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) of 36 OIC Member States, observer countries and international organizations participated in the Session. SESRIC was also represented at the session.

The delegates discussed some reports and took decisions on various statistical subjects. During the session, the representative of SESRIC had many bilateral meetings with the delegates of the OIC Member States and with the delegates of international organizations such as the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Monetary

Fund (IMF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

SESRIC organized a sideline meeting on February 26, 2009 with the delegates of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of the Member Countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) during the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Statistical Commission in New York, USA.

Representatives of the NSOs of 31 OIC Member States, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PARIS21) participated in the meeting.

During the events of the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Statistical Commission the participants considered many vital statistical issues, among which were the followings:

#### **Climate Change and the Role of Official Statistics**

The participants discussed the report prepared by the Statistical Commission dealing with the role and importance of official statistics in monitoring

climate change, i.e. greenhouse gas emissions. In monitoring greenhouse gas emissions, official national statistics use the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) methodology. At the same time there are also many data from scientific studies, monitoring and modelling, which are also necessary but are not part of the official statistics; however, they are very important for preparing IPCC reports.

In its report the Statistical Commission proposed several recommendations for the preparation of the IPCC Report with the view of strengthening the role of official statistics, especially greater harmonization of classifications, development and implementation of environmental accounts, exchange of good practice among countries, improvement and promotion of GIS tools, etc.

#### **40<sup>th</sup> Session Focused on Statistics Related to Topical Issues in the World**

For the discussion at this session the Statistical Commission prepared several programme documents as a response to the topical needs for appropriate statistics, especially for the following areas:

- **Agricultural Statistics - the Need for a Strategy:** The Statistical Commission proposed the preparation of a strategic plan to improve agriculture and rural statistics due to the need for reviewing the effects of agricultural subsidies, environmental impacts, global warming, food vs biofuels and globalization. The strategy emphasizes the importance of the 2010 round of population censuses, which will contain an agriculture module in order to collect basic data on agricultural production and land use. The module will propose the so-called rural dimension – data on land use, water, the environment, fisheries and forestry. To this end it will be necessary to establish coordination between national statistical offices and ministries at the national level and among regional and international organizations at the international level.

- **New Manual on Energy Statistics:** Based on the discussion at the 37<sup>th</sup> Session, the Statistical Commission is preparing an updated manual on energy statistics, which will cover measurement units, energy flows and stocks, conversion factors, preparation of energy balances, integrated energy accounts and the international energy classification. In preparing the documents all documents already prepared by the OECD and Eurostat for this area will be taken into account.
- **Revised Environmental-Economic Accounts:** A revision of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts involved work in the field of environmental accounts, i.e. energy and material flows, water accounts and energy accounts.
- **Introduction of the 2008 System of National Accounts:** Preparation of the revised System of National Accounts (SNA 2008) is drawing to a close; the methodology should be published in June 2009. The next step will be the implementation of the new system in statistical offices, which is the central focus of the document.
- **Review of Social Statistics:** The report of the Statistical Commission pointed out the need to prepare an exhaustive overview of social statistics which will include international methodological standards and guidelines, the availability of social statistics at the global level, including measures of quality, and states the areas that need to be statistically monitored (child poverty, classification of crimes, deprivation, migration, human trafficking, social exclusion, etc.).
- **Common Methodological Basis for Health Statistics:** A working group within the Statistical Commission prepared a methodological document on health statistics dealing with health statistics topics where indicated the most common potential sources of health data. The document will facilitate coordination between national statistical offices and ministries of health and provide a mechanism for the flow of information on health for use at the country and international levels.

### 5th World Water Forum

The Fifth World Water Forum, with the view of “Bridging Divides for Water,” was held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 16-22 March 2009. It was organized by the World Water Council and Turkish Government. The aim of this forum was to put the water issues firmly on the international agenda and to encourage the global collaboration to address water related problems. It was the largest water-related event ever organized with over 30,000 participants from more than 90 countries.

The Forum offered the water community and policy-and-decision-makers from all over the world the opportunity to come together, create links, debate and find solutions to achieve water security. The issues were discussed both at political and scientific levels. At the political level, Ministerial Meetings and Regional Meetings were held to bring together politicians and elected officials from all over the world, not only responsible for water, environment, agriculture or energy policies, but also for finance or other domains, in order to create the understanding

for the urgency of positive and pro-active policies on water issues. At the scientific level, many presentations, workshops, and sessions were carried out in six main themes:

- Global change and risk assessment
- Advancing human development
- Protection of water resources
- Governance and management
- Finance
- Capacity building and education.

Dr. Savaş Alpay, Director General of SESRIC, Dr. Sıdıka Başçı, Director of Statistics and Information Department and Dr. Rimah Melhem, Senior Researcher, participated in the Forum. The SESRIC participants carried out several mutual contacts with other international organizations during the duration of the Forum. These contacts generated the initial steps of future cooperation especially related to training programmes on the subjects of the Forum for the benefit of the OIC Member States.

<b>UP COMING EVENTS FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2009</b>
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**April**

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32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs (ICECS), April 4-6, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Operational Meeting among the OIC Institutions in the area of Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET), April 4, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, April 6-7, 2009, *Istanbul*, Republic of Turkey

4<sup>th</sup> Coordination Meeting for the Implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Program of Action, April 7-8, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and 7th Board of Directors Meeting of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), April 14-16, 2009, *Cairo*, Arab Republic of Egypt

12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Governmental Group of Experts on the Situation of Muslim Communities and Minorities, April 18-19, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Conference of the Heads of Law Enforcement Agencies of the OIC Member States, April 20-22, 2009, *Baku*, Republic of Azerbaijan

International Conference on Islamic Economics and Economies of the OIC Countries, April 28-29, 2009, *Kuala Lumpur*, Malaysia

2<sup>nd</sup> Forum of Tourism and 3rd International Conference on Investment and Privatization, April 28-30, *Tehran*, Islamic Republic of Iran

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**May**

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Meeting of Senior Officials Preparatory to the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), May 4-6, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Muslim Ulema and Intellectuals Conference on Restoring Security and Stability in Afghanistan, May 9-10, 2009, *Kabul*, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

2<sup>nd</sup> Project Committee Meeting on Cotton, May 10, 2009, *Izmir*, Republic of Turkey

3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee on Cotton, May 11, 2009, *Izmir*, Republic of Turkey

25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC, May 12-14, 2009, *Izmir*, Republic of Turkey

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET), May 13, 2009, *Izmir*, Republic of Turkey

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Development and Cooperation Institutions (DCIs), May 13-14, 2009, *Istanbul*, Republic of Turkey

World Economic Forum on the Middle East, May 15-17, 2009, *Amman*, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), May 23-25, 2009, *Damascus*, Syrian Arab Republic

1<sup>st</sup> Agro-Industries Exhibition and Conference of OIC Member States and the 14<sup>th</sup> Food, Hotel, Propac Arabia Exhibition, May 24-28, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Workshop on the Impact of Food Crisis on the Economies of OIC Member Countries, May 27-28, 2009, *Jeddah*, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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**June**

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34<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Islamic Development Bank, June 2-3, 2009, *Ashgabat*, Turkmenistan

2<sup>nd</sup> Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States, June 26-28, 2009, *Beirut*, Republic of Lebanon