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ANKARA CENTRE UPDATE

2nd Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET)

The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) organised the Second Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee (MAC) of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET) in Antalya, Republic of Turkey, on 11-12 May 2010, on the sideline of the 26th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC. The main purpose of the Meeting, which was chaired by Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli; Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department at SESRIC, was to review the implementation process of the OIC-VET Programme since the First Meeting of the MAC. The Meeting was attended by the delegations of the National Focal Points (NFPs) of the OIC Member States, namely Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iran, Morocco, Qatar, Senegal, Turkey and Yemen. Also present were

representatives of the OIC General Secretariat and the concerned OIC Institutions, namely COMCEC, IDB, ICCI, ISESCO, OISA, and SESRIC.

The Meeting heard presentations of country experiences in vocational education and training in an OIC context, as well as brief updates about existing and planned activities of OIC Institutions in the field of VET, potential roles each could play and take in the OIC-VET Programme. Participants of the Meeting summarized the state of VET capacity in each country and lessons learnt from their experience for matching the existing competences, and identify possible areas of future cooperation.

For more details, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/event-detail.php?id=418>

SESRIC's Visit to Qatar University

A SESRIC delegation, comprised of Eng. Huseyin Hakan Eryetli, Director of IT and Publication Department and Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, visited Continuing Education Office of Qatar University (QU) in Doha on May 20th, 2010. The SESRIC delegation was accompanied by Mr. Khalid Mohammed Al-Khulaifi, Head of Human Resources at Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA) and welcomed by Dr. Tajalsir Ibrahim Kardaman, Director of Continuing Education Office at QU.

Dr. Kardaman briefed the SESRIC Delegation about the activities of the Continuing Education Office where he emphasised their cooperation with Qatar Statistics Authority in the training of statisticians working in various governmental departments. He also talked about their efforts

and programmes on human resource development in cooperation with various international organisations.

In return, Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli briefed Dr. Kardaman, on the capacity building programmes of SESRIC, mainly the Statistical Capacity Building Programme (StatCaB), which is based on the analysis of the needs and capacities of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in the OIC Member Countries, and matching these needs and capacities through sending experts among these institutions to offer the needed training programmes.

Representatives of SESRIC, QSA and Qatar University conferred on the possibility of developing a capacity-building programme. Such programme will be provided in line with the strategic plans to meet the needs and capacities

of the NSOs through conducting full-fledged surveys and taking into consideration the specific peculiarities of national statistical systems of the member countries. The two parties consented on preparing a preliminary

MoU with a view to establishing a strong partnership between the two institutions and with a view to organizing short and long-term training programmes on various socio-economical subjects for the benefit of the region.

SESRIC's Meeting with the Qatar Statistics Authority

A SESRIC delegation, composed of Eng. Huseyin Hakan Eryetli, Director of IT and Publication Department and Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, was received by H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor bin Jassim Al Thani, President of the Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA), and high level officials from the QSA in Doha, Qatar on 19 May 2010.

H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor bin Jassim Al Thani, President of the QSA, kindly accepted the SESRIC delegation. Dr. Hassan Ibrahim Al Mohannadi, Director of Permanent Population Community, Khalid Mohammed Al-Khulaifi, Director of Human Resources, Dr. Ahmad Hussein, Statistics Advisor, were also present during the meeting.

The SESRIC delegation was briefed on various statistical activities conducted by the QSA, in particular the role of QSA in the forthcoming International Statistical Institute (ISI) organised by the Khawarizmi Conference. The SESRIC delegation was further informed about the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics in the State of Qatar, prepared by the QSA in conformity with PARIS21 National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) guidelines and the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics for strengthening statistical capacity across the entire Qatari national statistical system.

Following the briefing on training and technical cooperation activities of SESRIC on statistical capacity building by Mr. Serenli, Mr. Eryetli explained SESRIC's various statistical activities and gave some insight about the statistical tools which have been recently developed by SESRIC.

The two parties conferred on the possibility of developing a tailored statistical capacity-building programme for the statisticians in Qatar, in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders, including international organisations and universities.

A separate meeting was organised on May 20, 2010, where Mr. Eryetli presented the statistical databases and tools developed by SESRIC during the last 4 years. This special meeting was attended by over 20 QSA officials including consultants, department directors and technical staff. After a short introduction of BASEIND, SESRIC's statistical database, Mr. Eryetli focused on SESRIC's statistical data visualization tool, namely the SESRIC Motion Chart (SMC) Generator. The project titled "OIC Member Countries in Figures" was also demonstrated online.

After the meeting, Mr. Mansoor Ahmed Al Malki., Director of IT at the QSA, briefed the delegation on QSA's recently developed GIS system. A demonstration has been presented by Mr. Al Malki to the SESRIC delegation on how to create online thematic geographic maps of Qatar by using this software. This demonstrated capacity of the GIS has been noted by the SESRIC delegation as it may have the potential of initiating technical cooperation among OIC Member Countries. Mr. Al Malki also proposed that a system integration of the statistics database of the QSA and the BASEIND database of SESRIC should be considered as the next step towards international statistical data dissemination and it was emphasized that this could easily be implemented via web service technologies.

SESRIC Initiates the First Pilot Project of the OIC-VET Programme Pilot Application Phase

SESRIC has successfully initiated, in cooperation with the Turkish Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (ISGUM), the first Pilot Project of the OIC-VET Programme Pilot Application Phase in the field of occupational health and safety. The Pilot Project titled “Study Visit on Occupational Health and Safety” took place at the premises of ISGUM during the period 24-28 May 2010, in Ankara, Turkey, with the participation of experts and directors of occupational health and safety from 7 OIC Member Countries, namely Azerbaijan, Jordan, Libya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Additionally, the Arab Labour Organization was also represented at this Pilot Project.

At the opening session, H.E. Sıddık Topaloğlu, Deputy Undersecretary of the Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security, welcomed the gathering and expressed the Ministry’s compliments regarding initiating the OIC-VET Programme pilot project in this important field. H.E. Topaloğlu stressed the importance of the continuity of this project and the continuous interaction among the participants.

The Representative of SESRIC welcomed the participants of this significant project and thanked ISGUM for the logistic support provided to the participants in facilitating this

important event. She stressed the importance of the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations constitutes the core of every actions and efforts in occupational health and safety. It was also mentioned that this important programme would generate benefits for the professionals of occupational health and safety to improve their knowledge and skills through close partnerships and networking among similar institutions operating in our member countries.

It was noted that this important Pilot Project is expected to solidify the existing relationships between occupational health and safety centres in OIC Member Countries in order to help them produce a better outcome in providing enhanced services to the individuals in their countries. Therefore, it is indeed heartening that representatives of occupational health and safety centres are participating in this project to share their knowledge and exchange experience regarding the safety and healthiness of working places in the OIC Member Countries.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.oicvet.org/pilot-project.php>

SESRIC Received Experts on Occupational Health and Safety

SESRIC received a delegation comprised of experts on occupational health and safety from OIC Member Countries on 25 May 2010, as part of the OIC-VET Programme pilot project titled “Study visit on Occupational Health and Safety”, which was jointly organised by SESRIC and the Turkish Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (İSGÜM) in Ankara, Turkey. Members of the delegation were experts from the Arab Labour Organisation, Azerbaijan, Jordan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya and Pakistan.

The SESRIC representatives expressed their thanks and welcome to the delegates and underlined the importance of occupational health and safety in OIC Member Countries, in particular the need for cooperation and collaboration among relevant similar agencies.

The delegates were then briefed about the activities of the Centre by the heads of the technical departments in the three areas of the centre’s mandate: research, statistics and training. They were also provided with some insight about the statistical tools recently developed and available to the public through

the SESRIC website, and they were informed about the latest publications of the Centre available both online and in hard copy.

They were further informed about the OIC-VET Programme under which this study visit is being conducted, and about its aims and objectives for the benefit of Member Countries. In this regard, the representative of the SESRIC has expressed their readiness to cooperate with occupational health and safety centres in OIC Member Countries to strengthen the capacity of the relevant institutions.

Members of the delegation expressed their thanks and gratitude to SESRIC for organising this significant study visit and articulated their willingness to improve their relationship with the Centre.

For more information on the Occupational Health and Safety Capacity Building (OHSCaB) Programme, please visit:

<http://www.oicvet.org/cbp-ohscab.php>

Training Course on 'National Accounts: Supply-Use and Input-Output Tables' in Egypt

The Centre organised a training course on “National Accounts: Supply-Use and Input-Output Tables” at the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on May 25-27, 2010. The course was provided by Mr. Mehmet Kula, expert from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) and was attended by 26 staff members of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Ministry of Planning of Egypt. The training course on “National Accounts: Supply-Use and Input-Output Tables” mainly covered the following subjects:

- ▶ General Overview of National Accounts
- ▶ National Accounts in Turkey
- ▶ Supply and Use Tables and Input-Output Tables in the System of National Accounts
- ▶ Valuation Matrices

- ▶ Balancing of Supply and Use Tables and Transformation to Input-Output Tables
- ▶ Data Sources and Questionnaires
- ▶ Non-Observed Economy
- ▶ CIF/FOB Adjustments
- ▶ Calculation and Allocation Methods of FISIM
- ▶ Price and Volume Measures in Supply and Use Framework

The aim of this training course was to improve the statistical capacity building and performance of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) of the Arab Republic of Egypt on “National Accounts: Supply-Use and Input-Output Tables”.

For more information regarding the StatCaB Programme, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/cbp-statcab.php>

OIC-VET Programme Pilot Project Inaugurated by Mrs. Erdoğan

The OIC-VET Programme pilot project titled “Strengthening VET through Local Vocational Courses: the Experience of the Centre of Art and Vocational Training Courses of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İSMEK)” was inaugurated by Mrs. Emine Erdoğan, wife of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on 8 June 2010 at Feshane

International Fair Congress and Culture Center, in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey. The project was organized jointly by SESRIC and İSMEK with the participation of representatives of the municipalities from nine OIC Member Countries, namely Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria and Yemen.

The OIC-VET Programme pilot project started with the opening ceremony of the 13th General Exhibition of İSMEK, during which Mrs. Emine Erdoğan welcomed the representatives from OIC Member Countries and underlined the importance of global efforts to end poverty and the need for solidarity among neighbouring countries in this respect. She emphasized the importance of vocational education and training in poverty reduction and alleviation, and stated that İSMEK has shown great progress in making people involved in training activities and increasing their employability, reaching to approximately 1 million trainees in the last fourteen years. Mrs. Erdoğan commended the efforts of İSMEK for organizing training courses for the citizens residing in Istanbul, as well as organizing this study visit for OIC Member Countries in a view to opening its experience and expertise in the field of vocational training to other brotherly countries.

The representatives of SESRIC welcomed the participants of this significant project and thanked İSMEK for their support provided to the participants in facilitating this important event. They also mentioned that this important programme would generate benefits for the OIC Municipalities to provide better

services to the citizens through close partnerships and networking among similar institutions operating in the member countries. They also stated that this project is a first collaborative project among OIC Municipalities in the field of vocational training with a view to enhancing current capacity of VET in our cities and exchanging knowledge and expertise concerning local practices of vocational courses. In this respect, this project is a timely decision emphasizing the fact that sharing the experiences of İSMEK will be instrumental to the success of many countries to take similar initiatives in training talented people in the areas of interest.

During the opening session, Mr. Hüseyin Avni Mutlu, Governor of Istanbul, pointed out to the importance of İSMEK courses and expressed that they are an example of a modern and social municipality services. On the other hand, Dr. Kadir Topbaş, Mayor of Istanbul, pointed out to the remarkable achievements undertaken by İSMEK and congratulated the graduates prior to the opening of the exhibition.

For more information, please visit the official OIC-VET Web Site at:

<http://www.oicvet.org>

Strengthening VET through Local Vocational Courses: the Experience of the Centre for Art and Vocational Training Courses of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İSMEK)

SESRIC has successfully initiated, in cooperation with the Centre for Art and Vocational Training Courses of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İSMEK), the second Pilot Project of the OIC-VET Programme Pilot Application Phase titled “Strengthening VET through Local Vocational Courses: the Experience of İSMEK”. The OIC-VET Programme pilot project started with the opening ceremony of the 13th General Exhibition of İSMEK and took place at Feshane International

Fair Congress and Culture Center, in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey during the period 9-10 June 2010, with the participation of representatives of the municipalities from nine OIC Member Countries, namely Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria and Yemen.

For detailed information about this event please visit:

<http://www.oicvet.org/pilot-project2.php>

Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey Visited SESRIC

A delegation headed by Mr. Siddık Topaloğlu, the Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of the Republic of Turkey visited SESRIC on 11 June 2010. The delegation comprised of Mr. İsmail Gerim, Deputy General Director of the General Directorate of Occupational Health and Safety in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Mr. Coşkun Demirci, Director of Occupational Health and Safety Centre (İSGÜM) and a number of senior experts from the Ministry.

At the outset, the SESRIC delegations expressed their thanks and welcome to the delegates for their kind visit and the successful undertaking of the joint OIC-VET Programme pilot project entitled “Study Visit on Occupational Health and Safety” during the period 24-28 May 2010 in the premises of the Occupational Health and Safety Centre (İSGÜM) in Ankara, with the participation of senior officials and experts from the peer institutions in the OIC Member Countries. In this regard, they underlined the importance of occupational health and safety in promoting the quality of civil life in OIC Member Countries, and stressed the need to cooperate and collaborate among relevant agencies operating in member countries particularly in the field of capacity building.

It was also stated that SESRIC has recently initiated a new capacity building programme on occupational health and safety under the long standing SESRIC Capacity Building Programme and is planning to implement short term training programmes and workshops by matching the needs and capacities of the related institutions in the member countries under the

OIC-VET Programme, which was endorsed by the 24th Session of the COMCEC in Istanbul in 2008 and launched by H.E. Abdullah Gül, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of COMCEC at the COMCEC Economic Summit held on 9 November 2009 in Istanbul.

SESRIC endeavours to enhance all sorts of cooperation and collaboration with all related national, regional and international institutions aiming at realising its noble aims and objectives for the benefit of all member countries. In this regard, she expressed SESRIC’s readiness in improving mutual relationship and establishing new partnerships with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security on the areas of interest to the OIC Member Countries.

On his part, the Head of the delegation Mr. Siddık Topaloğlu, the Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Turkey, expressed his thanks to the SESRIC for their warm receiving of the delegation and informed them that his Ministry is ready to cooperate with the Centre in the field of occupational health and safety through exchanging technical expertise in technical training for the benefit of the OIC Member Countries. He also extended his invitation to the Centre to actively participate in the XIX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work scheduled to be held on 11-15 September 2011 in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, and which will be hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security together with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Social Security Association (ISSA).

The International Conference on Strategies of Scientific Research in the Universities of the Muslim World: Reality and Prospects

‘The International Conference on Strategies of Scientific Research in the Universities of the Muslim World: Reality and Prospects’ was jointly organized by International Institute for

Muslim Unity (IIMU), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), The Federation of Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW), and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization (ISESCO) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 6-8 July 2010 with the objective of preparing studies, reference documents and recommendations that provide the basis of a working plan to draw clear and practical scientific strategies that would ultimately lead to future plans for promoting the status of scientific research in the countries of the Muslim world.

In this connection, the importance of research in science and technology as a key to progress towards a knowledge-based economy and as a tool for improving competitive advantage has been emphasized. The findings

of SESRIC's OIC Outlook Report on 'Research and Scientific Development in OIC Member Countries' presents an overview of the performance of the OIC Member Countries in the field of research and development (R&D) and science & technology (S&T), with a main focus on human resources in R&D, expenditures on R&D, high-technology exports, and scientific publications.

For more information about this event please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/event-detail.php?id=466>

FAO Representatives Visited SESRIC

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) delegation comprising of Mr. Parviz Koochafkan, Director of Land and Water Division (NRL) at the FAO, and Mr. Moustafa Sinaceur, the FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Central Asia visited SESRIC on 13 July 2010. The visit took place subsequent to the sign of the one-year project titled "Support to policy consultation and actions to boost sustainable use of water and energy resources for agricultural production and livelihood improvement in the Near East Region in the context of climate change" by the OIC and FAO on 9 June 2010. Under this Project, SESRIC has been designated as the OIC implementing agency of the Project, and a member of the Project Task Force.

At the outset, the representatives of SESRIC expressed their thanks and welcome to the delegates for their kind visit, and briefed them on the activities of the Centre in three areas of mandate: research, statistics and training. On his part, Mr. Koochafkan informed about the

background of the project referring to the High Level Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa held in 2008 in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and underlined the importance of the project in assisting NENA countries to build their capacity and to make policy makers and the public at large aware of the new evidence on the importance of linking water and energy sector in the planning of the region.

In the end, the two parties agreed to nominate Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, as the focal person from the Centre to undertake necessary managerial roles and to represent the Centre within the Project Task Force.

For more information about the OIC-FAO joint project, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-oicfao.php>

The World Association of Industrial Technological Research Organizations (WAITRO) Representatives Visited SESRIC

The World Association of Industrial Technological Research Organizations (WAITRO) delegation comprising of Dr. Rohani Hashim, Secretary

General of WAITRO and Mr. Zulkefli Mohd Nani, Programme Manager visited SESRIC.

At the outset, the delegates were welcomed for their kind visit, and then participated in a presentation session briefing on the main activities of the Centre as well as the activities of WAITRO.

At the end of the meeting, the two parties agreed on studying the potential areas of cooperation in research and training programs.

Qatar Donated US\$2 Million towards the Construction of SESRIC's Headquarters

The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) received the donation of the State of Qatar towards the construction of the Centre's Headquarters. Mr. Mohamed Ali al-Malki, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Embassy of the State of Qatar to the Republic of Turkey, donated the cheque issued by Qatar National Bank.

For the construction of the new SESRIC headquarters, the Republic of Turkey generously donated the land. Following the land donation of the Republic of Turkey, the State of Kuwait donated US\$ 1 million and the United Arab Emirates donated US\$ 500 thousand for the construction. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be donating US\$ 1.5 million soon after the construction of the building begins.

'Ninth Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices in Asia and Pacific' and '40th Anniversary Celebration of SIAP'

SESRIC participated in the "Ninth Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in Asia and the Pacific" which was organised by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and the 40th Anniversary Celebration of the SIAP on 31 August – 2 September 2010, in Tokyo, Japan.

Direction in Official Statistics: The Role of Heads of NSOs", "What capability is needed by NSOs now and into the future, and how to achieve?", "Getting the right balance between internal capacity and utilizing external professional skills" and "Developing a framework for building statistical capability".

The subject of the Ninth Seminar was "Developing Professional Capability for National Statistical Systems". Heads of NSOs from 30 countries and representatives of 5 international organisations such as UNSD and IMF participated in the Seminar.

The Seminar also included three Group Work Sessions where small groups discussed and deliberated on various relevant issues and reported the results during the main plenary session of the seminar.

During the Seminar, the invited speakers and representatives of the NSOs made presentations in four sessions titled as follows: "Paving New

The representative of the SESRIC also held bilateral meetings with the heads of the NSOs of the 7 OIC Member Countries who participated in the Seminar.

OIC NEWS

Meeting of Experts on the Ranking of Universities in Islamic World

The Ministry of Higher Education of Saudi Arabia hosted the Technical Meeting of Experts on the Ranking of Universities in Islamic World on 24-25 April 2010 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Resolution ICMHESR-4/2008/R.2.5, adopted at the 4th Islamic Conference of Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research held in October 2008, in Baku, Azerbaijan, on the subject of "Ranking of the Universities of the Islamic World", recommended to refer the draft document to the Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research to further examine it and to give their opinion thereon. The Resolution No. 2/36-S&T on Higher Education Matters of the 36th Session of the Islamic Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Damascus, Syria on 23-25 May 2009 requested the OIC General Secretariat, in collaboration with

ISESCO, to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research to review the feedbacks on the University Ranking documents with the purpose of preparing the final document concerning its implementation.

The aim of the Technical Meeting of Experts on the Ranking of Universities in Islamic World was to review the document on criteria, procedures and mechanism for University Ranking. The recommendations of the Experts Meeting shall be submitted to the Extraordinary Meeting of Higher Education Ministers.

For more information on the University Ranking of the OIC Member Countries project, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-university-ranking.php>

2nd Meeting of the Development Cooperation Institutions (DCIs) of the OIC Member Countries

The Second Meeting of the Development Cooperation Institutions (DCIs) of the OIC Member Countries was organised jointly by SESRIC, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) and the OIC General Secretariat and held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on 3-4 May 2010. The Meeting was attended by 22 representatives of DCIs of 9 OIC Member Countries; namely Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. It was also attended by representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, IDB, Arab Monetary Fund and SESRIC.

After the opening session of the meeting the working sessions started with one on the activities of the various DCIs of the OIC member countries. In this session the representatives of the following DCIs made presentations on the missions, activities and various programmes of their institutions: Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), the

Organisation for Investment, Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran (OIETAI), the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) of Indonesia and the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

The meeting proceeded with a session on the potential areas and project proposals for cooperation and coordination among the DCIs of the OIC member countries. In this session, SESRIC made a presentation on the initiative of the OIC Vocational Educational and Training Programme (OIC-VET) in which some project proposals in different areas and fields have been presented with a view to implement them in partnership with some DCIs within the framework of the OIC-VET Programme. The representative of the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) of Indonesia presented the Indonesian National Programme for Community Empowerment (PNPM Mandiri), which aims at eradicating poverty within the Indonesian national development framework. The

representative of the Export Development Bank of Iran also made a presentation on the various activities and programmes of this institution.

The meeting also included a session on the cooperation and dialogue with the existing development coordination groups and international organisations. In this session the representative of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) made a presentation on the activities of the Arab Coordination Group (Arab National & Regional Development Institutions or Arab Aid), which includes in its membership 8 institutions, 5 of which are multilateral aid institutions as follows: the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the OPEC Fund for International Development, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (ABEDA), the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), and 3 bilateral aid institutions as follows: Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), and Kuwait Fund for Arab Development (KFD).

During the session on the theme “Enhancing the visibility of the Development Assistance of the DCIs of the OIC Member Countries”, SESRIC made a presentation titled “Statistics for Visibility”. The presentation highlighted the issue of misreporting of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) activities and other types of aid and assistance in the OIC Member Countries. In this presentation, a proposal of a questionnaire has been introduced by SESRIC to be used in collecting the ODA and other aid data of the OIC Member Countries according to the international definitions and classifications.

Another two sessions have been devoted to discuss and consider the “Draft Operational Framework for the OIC Development Assistance Committee (OIC-DAC)” prepared by the Experts Group Meeting, which was organised by SESRIC and held in Ankara in December 2009 pursuant to the recommendation contained in the Istanbul Declaration, which was adopted at the First Meeting of the DCIs of the OIC Member Countries held in Istanbul in May 2009.

The participants extensively discussed and deliberated on the various contents of the “Draft Operational Framework for the OIC-DAC”, including the objectives, the membership, the structure and rules of procedures, the meetings, the Chairmanship, the Secretariat and the working groups of the Committee.

During the discussion, the participants agreed on various concepts and issues related to the operational framework of the proposed OIC-DAC and at the end of the discussion they agreed on the following issues:

- ▶ The proposed Committee shall be named OIC Development Cooperation Forum (OIC-DCF) instead of OIC Development Assistance Committee (OIC-DAC).
- ▶ The OIC-DCF shall be a voluntary, informal and technical forum, open for all DCIs of the OIC Member Countries for dialogue, consultations, cooperation and coordination.
- ▶ The OIC-DCF shall convene regularly, preferably on annual basis, and chaired by the OIC-DCI which is hosting the annual Meeting.
- ▶ Any participating OIC-DCI, willing to host the annual Meeting, may coordinate with the Focal Institution.
- ▶ The Focal Institution (i.e. SESRIC) will facilitate the future meetings and disseminate data on development assistance in consultation with DCIs and the Secretariat of the Arab Coordination Group.
- ▶ The role of the Focal Institution will be performed by SESRIC during the initial period: until further decision is taken.

Following a general debate, the participants finally approved the “Operational Framework for OIC Development Cooperation Forum (OIC-DCF)”.

For more information on the Meetings of DCIs, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-dci-meetings.php>

26th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC

The 26th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC was held on 10-12 May 2010 in Antalya, Turkey, with the participation of 11 OIC Member Countries of the Committee (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Palestine, Senegal, Kuwait, Iran, Cameroon, Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia and Sierra Leone). The OIC General Secretariat and the following subsidiary, affiliated and specialised organs; namely, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB, ICCI, ITFC, and OISA; attended the Meeting. Representatives of ECO and FAO have also attended the meeting. The Centre was represented at the meeting by its Director General; Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department; Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department; Mr. Nader Abdulhamid, Researcher and Mr. Murat Ilkin, Researcher.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the 25th COMCEC Session, which was held in November 2009 in Istanbul. The discussion included a set of common issues of concern to the member countries with a view to enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among them. These issues were discussed under the following main Agenda Items:

- ▶ Review of the implementation of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action and the Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among the OIC Member States;
- ▶ Promotion of intra-OIC trade;
- ▶ Private sector Cooperation;
- ▶ Poverty alleviation and economic/technical assistance to OIC countries;
- ▶ Financial cooperation among the OIC Member States and enhancing intra-OIC investment flows;
- ▶ Preparations for the exchange of views on “Agriculture and Rural Development”.
- ▶ Development of the OIC Halal Food Standards and Procedures;

- ▶ E-government applications and their economic impact on the OIC Member States; and
- ▶ Activities of the Statistical Working Group.

Under Agenda Item: “Poverty alleviation and economic/technical assistance to OIC countries”, Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department at SESRIC, briefed the Committee on the latest developments on cooperation among the Development Cooperation Institutions (DCIs) of the OIC Member Countries. He informed the Committee that the Centre has organised the Experts Group Meeting on “the Establishment of the OIC Development Assistance Committee (OIC-DAC)” in Ankara on 22-23 December 2009. The said Meeting prepared the “Draft Operational Framework for the OIC Development Assistance Committee (OIC-DAC)” and submitted it, for consideration, to the 2nd Meeting of the DCIs of the OIC Member Countries, which has been organised by SESRIC, in collaboration with the OIC General Secretariat and Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) and held on 3-4 May 2010 in Abu Dhabi. In this connection, the Committee welcomed the decision of the 2nd Meeting of the DCI’s on continuing their activities within the framework of the OIC Development Cooperation Forum (OIC-DCF), and requested DCI’s of the member countries to expand their cooperation through exchanging their experiences and joint programs in the member countries, particularly in the least developed ones.

Under the same Agenda Item, Mr. Mehmet Faith Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department at SESRIC, briefed the Committee on the latest developments related to the preparations and implementation of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for the OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET). In this connection, the Committee expressed its appreciation to the SESRIC for its efforts towards the implementation of OIC-VET and welcomed

the launching of pilot projects to be implemented in 2010 in coordination with National Focal Points (NFPs) of the Member States and concerned OIC institutions. The Committee called upon the member states that have not done so, to designate their NFPs for the OIC-VET Programme in order to facilitate the communication between SESRIC and the relevant member state and urged the member states to actively participate in the implementation process of the OIC-VET. The Committee also expressed its appreciation to SESRIC for organising the Second Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee of the OIC-VET on 11 May 2010 in Antalya, Turkey, which discussed the proposed pilot projects by the national focal points.

Under Agenda Item: "Financial cooperation among the OIC Member Countries", Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department at SESRIC, briefed the Committee on the latest developments on cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member Countries. He informed the Committee that the 2nd Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member Countries will be organised by SESRIC, in collaboration with the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, and held in Istanbul on 26-27 September 2010. In this connection, the Committee emphasised the importance of cooperation in the area of Islamic Banking and welcomed the invitation of the Republic of Senegal to the African Ulema Conference to be held on 7-9 June 2010 and Islamic World Ulema Conference to be held in first quarter of 2011 in Dakar, Republic of Senegal. The Committee also welcomed the offer of the Republic of Turkey to host the 2nd Meeting of Member Countries' Central Banks and Monetary Authorities in Istanbul on 26-27 September 2010 and requested the member states to actively participate in the meeting which will focus, among other issues, on exchange of experiences in Islamic banking system.

Under Agenda Item "Preparation for the exchange of views on the Agriculture and Rural Development", the representative of the IDB

briefed the Committee on the preparations for the Workshop on the said theme which will be organised by the IDB prior to the 26th Session of the COMCEC. Under the same Agenda Item, the Committee took note of the following proposals as possible themes for the exchange of views sessions to be held during the subsequent COMCEC Sessions: (1) The Impact of Exchange Rate Policies and Currency Harmonization on Intra-OIC Trade; (2) Development of Financial Architecture in OIC Member States; and (3) Islamic Banking in the New Financial System. In this context, the Committee requested SESRIC to circulate a questionnaire to the member states to explore their views on the above themes and report to the 26th Session of the COMCEC.

Under Agenda Item: "E-government applications and their impact on the OIC Member States", Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department at SESRIC, briefed the Committee on the latest developments on this Agenda Item. He informed the Committee that the Centre has organised, in collaboration with the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA), e-Government Centre of the Public Administration Institute for Turkey and the Middle East (TODAİE eDEM) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the "International Conference on e-Government: Sharing Experiences" (eGOVsharE2009). The Conference, which was held on 8-11 December 2009 in Antalya, Turkey, brought together leaders, public managers and professionals, ICT representatives and academics from the member countries and elsewhere. During the said Conference, SESRIC also organised a sideline Meeting with the representatives of the OIC Member Countries. In this context, Mr. Dabour informed the Committee that the Centre is working on the establishment of an E-Government Working Group (eGovWG) to be convened in late 2010 with the aim of seeking ways and means for establishing a platform (portal) to facilitate and increase cooperation and collaboration among the OIC Member Countries in the area of e-government applications and services. In this connection, the Committee took note of the recommendations of the Conference

organised by SESRIC and welcomed the efforts of SESRIC for the establishment of an information portal which will include relevant information, such as an e-government Experts Database, an OIC e-Practice community, initiative of ICT fellowship programme, etc.

Under Agenda Item: “Activities of the Statistical Working Group”, Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Research Department at SESRIC, briefed the Committee on the latest developments on this Agenda Item. He informed the Committee that the Centre organised, in collaboration with the IDB, the Meeting of the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) of the OIC member countries on 22-23 March 2010 in Istanbul under the theme ‘Statistics for Development in Post-Crisis World’. The Meeting adopted the Istanbul Declaration, in which the representatives of the NSOs agreed to organise the Meeting of NSOs under the title “OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-SC)” annually, and to designate SESRIC the

secretariat of the OIC-SC. In this connection, the Committee noted, with appreciation, that IDB will organise the 3rd Meeting of Statistical Working Group in its Headquarters in Jeddah during the Second half of 2010 to review the activities and renew tasks arising from the Istanbul Declaration. The Committee also requested SESRIC and IDB, in collaboration with the NSOs of the member countries, to work on developing a road map for cooperation in the area of statistics as well as a web portal as a source for exchanging information in the area of statistics.

Finally, the Committee prepared the Draft Agenda of the 26th COMCEC Session, which will be held in Istanbul in October 2010.

For more information on COMCEC Meetings, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-comcec.php>

The 37th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM)

The 37th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), “Session of Shared Vision of a More Secure and Prosperous Islamic World” was held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan, on 4 - 6 Jamadul Thani 1431 H (18 -20 May 2010). A wide range of issues of interest to the Member States were discussed during the Meeting and resolutions were adopted by the Council concerning the Palestinian Cause and the Middle East; Other issues such as; Political Affairs; Ten-

Year Programme of Action; Statutory, Organic and General Matters; Legal Affairs; Conditions of Muslim Minorities and Communities in non-OIC Member States; Information Affairs; Administrative and Financial and Humanitarian Affairs were also discussed during the Session.

For more information, please visit the official web site:

<http://www.oic-oci.org/37cfm/en>

International Scientific Symposium on “ICT Impact on Municipal Service Development: Towards E-Government”

An International Scientific Symposium entitled “ICT Impact on Municipal Service Development: Towards E-Government” was co-organised by the Organisation of Islamic Capitals and Cities (OICC) and the Doha Municipality in Doha, Qatar on 18-20 May 2010. An exhibition on “ICT and Achievements of Islamic Capitals and Cities” was held in parallel to the symposium. SESRIC was represented

thereat by Eng. Hüseyin Hakan Eryetli, Director of IT and Publication Department and Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department.

The Symposium was organised with the following objectives:

- ▶ To emphasize the importance of utilizing the Information and

Communication Technologies (ICT) and e-Government as a tool for the achievement of sustainable development and enhanced decision-making.

- ▶ To define the basic, current and prospective, needs, obstacles and electronics-related priority issues in the field of e-government and municipal services.
- ▶ To define the strategic and empirical considerations for implementing electronic municipal and e-Government services and e-service documentation and processes.
- ▶ To exchange experiences between the different municipalities and specialized agencies, in the field of local e-Government services, and presentation of the best practices at both regional and international levels.

Eng. Hüseyin Hakan Eryetli, presented a paper titled “e-Government Readiness: The Performance of the OIC Member Countries.” In his presentation, Mr. Eryetli focused on the status of the OIC Member Countries evaluating it with reference to the data drawn up during the 2005-2007 period. The data was collated and processed to build up the composite e-Government Readiness Index (ERI) of the OIC Member Countries based on Web Measurement Index (WMI), Telecommunication Infrastructure Index (TII), and Human Capital Index (HCI). He emphasized the importance of establishing an OIC e-Government Working Group and encouraged the e-Government Experts

participating in the symposium to fill in the e-Government Experts Form available online through the official web site of SESRIC at

<http://www.sesric.org/egovernment-experts.php>.

He explained that this e-government experts' database would be utilized by SESRIC to determine potential members of the OIC e-Government Working Group, which is planned to convene in the first quarter of 2011.

Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, presented a paper titled “A Novel Cooperation Initiative among Islamic Capitals and Cities: Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET)” where he stated that vocational training could focus on areas where OIC municipalities could share their best practices and learn from each others' experiences in areas of common challenge. In particular, the use of ICTs by the Municipalities may not only change the structure in which municipal services are provided to citizens but reach to a wider community through the enhancement of their operations. Cooperation among OIC Municipalities on vocational training constitutes a novel practice due to the variety of cooperation areas given the nature of municipal services throughout the OIC Member Countries.

For more details on the conference, please visit the official web site:

<http://www.oicc.org>

OIC and FAO Signed a Project on Use of Water and Energy Resources for Agricultural Production and Livelihood Improvement in NENA Region

The Project titled “Support to policy consultation and actions to boost sustainable use of water and energy resources for agricultural production and livelihood improvement in the Near East Region in the context of climate change” was signed by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) on 9 June 2010. The Project is a one-year project, and will be

implemented in a context of a global financial crisis and will also be an opportunity to address water control projects within the framework of an undergoing program “Special Program for Food Security (SPFS)”. SESRIC has been designated as the OIC implementing agency of the Project, and a member of the Project Task Force.

The Project will cover the following OIC Member Countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE, Uzbekistan, and Yemen.

The Project is based upon the fact that many countries in the region face problems related to water resource scarcity, overexploitation of groundwater resources, limited supply of fertile land, land degradation, pollution, inappropriate use of fertilizers and pesticides and recurrent droughts. On the other hands efforts to achieve the food, water and energy security targets reflected in the Millennium Development Goals call upon the international community to assist developing countries and particularly the most vulnerable groups of the society in facing new global challenges of rising food prices, water scarcity, growing energy demand, and climate change which will affect food security in all its four dimensions - food availability, food accessibility, food stability and food utilization.

The Project will carry out studies on the use of water resources, on the management strategies and on the investment needs at national level,

but the various parts of the region are explicitly called to seize opportunities for more supportive integrated regional development policies and strategies, which will complement the efforts of individual member countries. It will bring together a number of other organizations, including non-governmental organizations and actors in the civil society, as well as international organizations that seek similar objectives, in order to compare experiences, share knowledge and best practices, and frame the way ahead for an immediate future of increased food and energy security, in face of the growing water scarcity, in the NENA Region.

At the end of the Project, it is expected that all the countries involved, adopting a participatory approach that engages members of the civil society and of the private sector, generate awareness on the issues of water for agriculture and energy and climate change, enhance their knowledge in the concerned fields and a better understanding of the current situation at the country and regional level, and reflect these findings into the respective National Reports.

For more information about the Project please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-oicfao.php>

2nd Consultative Meeting of the OIC Institutions on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade

Within the framework of the implementation of the OIC Ten Year Program of Action (which along with other objectives aims to raise the share of intra-OIC trade in the global trade of the OIC Member States to 20% by 2015), 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 and in compliance with the outcomes of the First Consultative Meeting of the OIC Institutions operating in the economic field, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) organized the 2nd

Consultative Meeting of the OIC Institutions to review the progress on the implementation of the “ Executive Program of the Road-Map for Achieving Intra-OIC Trade Targets”.

The Meeting was held at the ICDT’s Headquarters in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco on 31st May and 1st June 2010. The Meeting was attended by the 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) and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). The Meeting was also attended by the Ministry of Foreign Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco, the Ministry of Finance of the State of Kuwait, the Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation and the Regional Office of IDB in Rabat. Mr. Mazhar Hussain, Researcher at SESRIC, represented the Centre in the said Meeting.

The Meeting aimed to review the progress in the implementation of activities and projects assigned to various OIC institutions to facilitate the implementation of the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade. During the two working sessions in the first day of the Meeting, the participants analyzed and evaluated the implementation of the activities and projects of the OIC Institutions under the following five themes: Trade Financing, Trade Facilitation, Trade Promotion, Development of Strategic Commodities and Capacity Building. During the working sessions, the representatives of the OIC institutions presented their respective reports and briefed the Meeting about their completed activities and their planned activities scheduled to be implemented during the remaining five years of the OIC Ten Years Plan of Action, till 2015. In its capacity as the Coordinator of the capacity building section of the “Executive Program of the Road-Map for Achieving Intra-OIC Trade Targets”, the representative of SESRIC, Mr. Hussain informed the Meeting about the SESRIC’s efforts to help the member countries to train their workforce through its Capacity Building Programs which are designed for a wide range of sectors and could also be equally beneficial for the capacity building in the area of trade. In addition, Mr. Hussain also briefed the Meeting about SESRIC’s Vocational Education and Training Program for OIC

Member Countries (OIC-VET) which aims to improve the quality of vocational education and training both in public and private sectors.

Under the agenda item “New Modalities for Cooperation”; the ICDT presented the outcome of a study titled “The Guiding Principles and Foundations for Cooperation between the OIC Institutions active in the field of Economic and Commercial Cooperation”. This study gave recommendations on four broad areas namely Principles and Foundations, Planning and Organization, Instruments for the Selection, Implementation and Follow up of Joint Activities and Financing. The Meeting elaborated on this study in detail and after some minor amendments adopted its recommendations unanimously. In this context, the Meeting also agreed to launch a new wave of joint activities based on integrated sector based program approach focused on targeted products and countries. To initiate the first pilot project based on integrated approach, ICDT requested the OIC Institutions to send the list of products, which can be selected for joint activities. The Meeting also decided to rename the OIC Consultative Meeting as “Consultative Group for enhancing Intra-OIC Trade”.

The second day of the Meeting was devoted to prepare the new updated version of the “Executive Program of the Road-Map for Achieving Intra-OIC Trade Targets” which contains the activities and projects to be carried out by the OIC institutions for the period 2011/2015. This New Executive Program along with the final report and the recommendations has been adopted at the end of the Meeting. The final report of said Meeting will be submitted to the competent Organs of the OIC notably, the Islamic Commission of Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs, the COMCEC Meetings (Ministerial Session and Follow up Committee) and to the meetings of the Task Force on Intra-OIC Trade.

Meeting to Develop the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade

At the eve of 35th Annual Meeting of the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB Group), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), a member of IDB Group, organized a two-day Meeting to develop and enrich the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade. The Meeting held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan on the 21st – 22nd June, 2010.

The representatives of the following international and regional organizations participated in the meeting: the General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the COMCEC Coordination Office, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce (ICCI), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Customs Organization (WCO), Export Promotion Centre of Turkey (IGEME) and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE). Mr. Mazhar Hussain, Researcher at SESRIC, represented the Centre in the said Meeting.

The aim of the Meeting was to explore new ways and mechanisms to further enrich and make the Road Map for Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade more effective by sharing the views of the relevant United Nations and other international institutions on the implementation process and target of increasing Intra-OIC trade volume to 20% by the end of 2015. In this regard, during the two day Meeting, participants deliberated in length on five themes of the Road Map namely trade financing, trade promotion, trade facilitation, trade capacity building and development of the strategic commodities in the OIC Member States.

The opening ceremony of the Meeting was held under the patronage of H.E. Shahin Mustafayev, Minister of Economic Development of Azerbaijan,

H.E. Dr Ahmad Mohammed Ali, President of the IDB Group and H.E Dr. Waleed Al-Wohaib, CEO of ITFC. Following the opening ceremony, ICDT and ITFC made their presentations to inform the participants about the latest developments on intra-OIC trade, possible impacts of recent financial crisis, trade-financing activities in Member Countries and issues and challenges to meet the targets set in the Executive Program of the Road Map.

During the working sessions, ICT, WTO, WCO, UNCTAD, UNDP and UNIDO made their presentations on certain possible mechanisms and measures to enhance the effectiveness of the Road Map in the light of their research findings and field experiences in trade sector. The following major proposals are among others which emerged from the deliberations:

- ▶ Involving Member States and Regional Economic Groups in the implementation of the Executive Program.
- ▶ Accelerating the process of signature and ratification of the agreements and protocols concluded under the auspices of OIC in particular the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (TPS/OIC), the Preferential Trade Agreements (PRETAS) and the Rules of Origin.
- ▶ Accelerating the accession process of OIC Member States with the World Trade Organization and international agreements aiming at facilitating exchanges in order to harmonize legislations and procedures.
- ▶ Implementing sustainable trade strategies by investing in products with high exchange potentials and value added and for which there are complementarities within OIC Member States.
- ▶ Paying a special attention to trade in services and exports insurances as well as small and medium enterprises within the framework of trade development programs.

- ▶ Developing competitiveness and conformity of products with international standards.
- ▶ Enhancing collaboration between UN and OIC Institutions to provide tailored made trade capacity building services to the Member States.
- ▶ Creating a fund for trade promotion.
- ▶ Establishing trade gateways and intercontinental shipping lines in the Islamic world.
- ▶ Inventing more Shariah compliant trade financing tools.

The report of this Meeting will be submitted to higher OIC level fora for consideration by the concerned authorities in the OIC Member States.

Networking and Knowledge Sharing Programme for Senior Staff of Chambers of Commerce and Industry from Arabic Speaking Countries of the OIC

The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) participated in the “Networking and Knowledge Sharing Programme for Senior Staff of Chambers of Commerce and Industry from Arabic Speaking Countries of the OIC”. The Meeting was jointly organised by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchange of Turkey (TOBB). The Meeting was held at the Headquarters of TOBB in Ankara during the period 22-25 June 2010.

The objective of the Meeting was to share Turkey’s experience with OIC Member Countries in the field of trade and industry development as well as introducing the Turkish Chamber System and its role in policy making and economic transformation of Turkey as a whole. The Meeting

also heard presentations of country experiences in trade and economic opportunities.

The Meeting was attended by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of fourteen Arab states namely, Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen.

Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, and Mr. Nader Jamil Abdulhamid, researcher, represented SESRIC at the Meeting. Mr. Abdulhamid made a presentation titled “Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade: The Role of SESRIC in Trade Capacity Building”. The presentation focused on possible areas of enhancing intra-OIC trade through the OIC-VET Programme and other SESRIC’s Capacity Building Programmes.

Preparatory Meeting for the High Level Regional Conference on Central Asia

SESRIC participated in the preparatory meeting for the High Level Regional Conference on Central Asia organised by the OIC General Secretariat in the premises of OIC Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) in Istanbul on 28 June 2010. The main purpose of the meeting was to explore the possible areas of cooperation between the Central Asian OIC Member Countries and the rest of the Muslim World, and identify the roles of the OIC Organs in this regard. The meeting was attended by the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination

Office, Islamic Development Bank (IBD), SESRIC and ICDDT.

The High Level Regional Conference was mandated by Resolution No.42/37-POL on “Central Asia and the Muslim World: Strategic Vision for Solidarity” adopted by the Thirty-Seventh Session the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan on 18-20 May 2010 for the purpose of preparing a detailed Plan of Action for cooperation and integration to be submitted to the Thirty-Eight Session of CFM.

OIC-UN Biennial General Cooperation Meeting

The 3-days UN-OIC General Meeting on Cooperation was launched on Tuesday, 29 June 2010 in Istanbul, Turkey. SESRIC has been represented thereat by Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department, and Mr. Murat İlkin, Researcher.

The Meeting evaluated the joint cooperation activities carried out by the two major international organisations in the political and economic fronts as well as in science and technology during the period July 2008-July 2010 and explored new areas of cooperation for the next two years based on mutual areas of interest, including partnership projects and programmes.

During the meeting SESRIC representatives discussed and exchanged views with several participating UN Agencies, such as UN-ESCWA, FAO, IFAD, ILO, UN-HABITAT and UNDP, on the possibilities of cooperation, and agreed to cooperate on developing and

implementing capacity building and training programmes, as well as sharing and exchanging information, including data, between the concerned institutions in the areas of food security and agriculture, Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), science and technology, alternative energy sources, occupational health and safety, poverty alleviation and tourism and environment, water and sanitation.

The Biennial OIC-UN General Coordination Meeting is the institutional framework of exchange of views, discussions and coordination between the two major international organizations and it is attended by high level delegations from both the OIC General Secretariat and specialized agencies of OIC and the UN.

For more information on OIC - UN Coordination Meetings, please visit:

<http://www.sesric.org/activities-oic-un-coordination.php>

Expert Group Meeting on Preparation for the COMCEC Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the TYPOA

Pursuant to the decision of the 26th Meeting of COMCEC Follow-up Committee, a Mid-term Review Meeting of the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action (OIC-TYPOA) in the economic domain was held in the premises of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey on 28-30 July 2010.

Besides the representatives of the Department of Economic Affairs of the OIC General Secretariat, the Meeting was also attended by the representatives of the following OIC institutions working on the field of economics: The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group, Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Organisation of the Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA) and COMCEC Coordination

Office. SESRIC was presented at the meeting by Mr. Nabil Dabour, Director of Economic Research Department.

The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Hameed A. Opeloyeru, Assistant Secretary-General of the OIC for Economic Affairs. During the Meeting, the representatives of the above-mentioned OIC institutions, reviewed the progress made so far towards achieving the objectives of the OIC-TYPOA in the following four major areas of economic cooperation: (1) Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade, (2) Poverty Alleviation (including the Special Programme for Development of Africa (SPDA), the progress in the operation of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), and Jeddah Declaration on food Security), (3) The Role of the Private Sector, and (4) Other related economic cooperation areas and issues (including cooperation in cotton sector, tourism sector, financial sector and central banks, etc.).

The representatives of the OIC institutions participating in the Meeting also discussed the major challenges and obstacles facing them during the implementation of their various activities related to the above-mentioned areas of cooperation over the last five years since the adoption of the TYPOA in 2005. In the light of this discussion, the Meeting elaborated on a set of recommendations and concrete steps that need to

be taken, and identified solutions for more effective and successful implementation of the Programme in the economic domain in the next five years before 2015. The final report and recommendations of the Meeting will be submitted to the 26th Session of the COMCEC, which will be held in Istanbul in October 2010, for consideration by the Ministers of Economy and Trade of the OIC Member Countries.

First General Assembly of the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

The First General Assembly of the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) was convened in Ankara, Republic of Turkey, on 2-3 August 2010. Being the Turkish representative in the SMIIC General Assembly, the Turkish Standards Institution (TSE) organised this Meeting, in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat, as the Statute of SMIIC has entered into force through the ratification of ten OIC Member States of the OIC.

H.E. Nihat Ergün, Turkish Minister of Industry and Trade, delivered a speech at the opening of the First General Assembly of SMIIC.

The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the eleven OIC Member States, as Turkey has also ratified the Statute of SMIIC on 8 June 2010. The other ratifying countries are Algeria, Cameroon, Guinea, Jordan, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia. Representatives from the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC, SESRIC, ICCI and IUT also attended the Meeting.

Short Background

The Statutes for SMIIC was adopted as per Resolution No. 1 of the 14th Session of the COMCEC held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, in November 1998. So far 16 OIC Member States signed the Statutes and 11 ratified it. The Statutes entered into force on 27 May 2010, following the deposition of instrument of ratification by Somalia.

According to the Provisions of the Statutes, SMIIC shall be an affiliated organ of the OIC and its Headquarters shall be located in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, where the Turkish Standards Institution (TSE) will cover the expenses of SMIIC for the first three years of its establishment.

SMIIC, as a sound mechanism for harmonisation of standards/preparation of new ones among the OIC Member States, aims at achieving a set of objectives in this field. These include, among others, realising harmonised standards in the Member States and eliminating any factor relating to the standards, likely to affect adversely the trade among the Member States, establishing a certification scheme for the purpose of expediting exchange of materials, manufactured goods and products among the Member States beginning with mutual recognition of certificates.

SMIIC also aims at achieving uniformity in metrology, laboratory testing and standardisation activities among the Member States and ensuring education and training and providing technical assistance to the Member States in the domain of standardisation and metrology. In doing so, SMIIC may cooperate with other international and regional organisations interested partially or wholly in standardisation, metrology or related activities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2010

September

- ▶ 16th Session of Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, 01 – 03 September 2010, Vienna – Austria
- ▶ Workshop on Agricultural and Rural Development 'Sharing of Best Practices and Success Stories within the Poverty Reduction Framework', 16-18 September 2010, Antalya – Turkey
- ▶ Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the Member Countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), 26 – 27 September 2010, Istanbul, Turkey
- ▶ Workshop on 'Payment Systems and Capacity Building', 26 September 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ 3rd Project Committee and 4th Steering Committee Meetings on Cotton, 27 – 29 September 2010, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco
- ▶ 32nd Meeting of the Board of Directors of SESRIC, 30 September – 01 October 2010, Antalya, Turkey

October

- ▶ Seminar on Islamic Capital Markets, 01 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ 4th Meeting of the OIC Member States' Stock Exchanges Forum, 02-03 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ 2nd Meeting of the Project Steering Group of the Atlas of Islamic World Science and Innovation Project, 03-04 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ 4th Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers, 05 - 07 October 2010, Tunis - Tunisia
- ▶ Twenty-Sixth Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC), 05 - 08 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ 14th International Business Forum Congress (IBF), 06 - 09 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ SESRIC-AITRS Workshop on 'Quarterly National Account and Short Terms Indicators', 06 - 10 October 2010, Amman – Jordan
- ▶ SESRIC-AITRS Workshop on 'How to Move from the 1993 National Account System to the 2008 NAS', 11 - 14 October 2010, Amman – Jordan
- ▶ International Symposium on Poverty Alleviation Strategies: Experiences and New Ideas, 13 - 15 October 2010, Istanbul – Turkey
- ▶ Fifth International Conference on Agriculture Statistics – ICAS-V, 13 - 15 October 2010, Kampala – Uganda
- ▶ 5th Islamic Conference of Ministers of Higher Education and Scientific Research (ICMHESR), 19 - 21 October 2010, Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia

November

- ▶ 7th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, 29 November - 01 December 2010, Tehran - Iran