

WELCOMING REMARKS

by **H.E. Amb. Musa KULAKLIKAYA, Director General of SESRIC**

WORKSHOP ON ‘PEER REVIEW MECHANISMS FOR NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICES IN OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES’

19-20 DECEMBER 2017

ANKARA, TURKEY

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Distinguished Representatives of the National Statistical Offices and International Institutions,

Esteemed Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the **Workshop on “Peer Review Mechanisms for National Statistical Offices of OIC Member Countries”**. I would like to thank you all for accepting our invitation and attending to the Workshop. I also want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to **Eurostat PARIS21 and African Union Commission** for their participation and providing their valuable knowledge and experience.

I am confident that your deliberations today would strengthen the long term and mutually beneficial cooperation and, reinforce the capacity of National Statistical Offices (NSO) to produce **high-quality, accurate and timely official statistics**, and increase the **trustworthiness** and **accountability** of the National Statistical Systems (NSS)

Distinguished Participants,

As we all know Monitoring and Evaluation is a fundamental need to enhance the integrity and accountability of any institution and/or framework. Being the primary producers of data based on which the decision makers design and implement their policies, National Statistical Offices (NSOs) should not be any exception. To open the doors to be monitored and evaluated also indicate the willingness to do better and also signals the inherent confidence and transparency.

In this regard, during the Fifth Session of OIC-StatCom, the importance of **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems** has been underlined to better plan and coordinate the future strategies of NSOs and to improve the credibility of National Statistical Systems (NSS).

Based on the resolutions, SESRIC initiated the project on **Peer Reviews for National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of the OIC Member Countries (OIC-Peer)** to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of NSOs of volunteer OIC member countries through a M&E mechanism that will also enhance South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

As a first step, SESRIC has collaborated with **Eurostat** and **PARIS21** on the project towards establishing a sound M&E mechanism for the NSOs of the OIC Member Countries. Besides, SESRIC has been also in continuous communication with **Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat)** as they have a significant experience with the Peer Reviews conducted by the Eurostat.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Within the scope of the OIC-Peer project, two meetings, an **Expert Group** and a **Roundtable Meeting** on ‘Peer Reviews for National Statistical Offices in the OIC Member Countries’ were organised by the Centre on **3-4 November 2016 in Konya, Turkey** with the objectives to introduce the Peer Reviews mechanisms in the world including the methodology of different approaches, to receive recommendations and inputs on the OIC-Peer project, and to discuss the way forward.

In addition to these gatherings, we have developed the OIC-Peer Review Inclination Survey (in short OPRIS) in collaboration with our partners Eurostat, PARIS21 and TurkStat, and the survey - prepared in three official languages of OIC; Arabic, English and French - was circulated to the NSOs of OIC member countries in January 2017. As of today, we have received responses to the survey from **33 NSOs**. According to the survey results, the need for holding a workshop on OIC-Peer has been strongly highlighted by member countries to better understand the peer review mechanisms and to learn more about the benefits and challenges of the peer review for OIC countries.

Moreover, as part of our collaboration with Eurostat and PARIS21 several virtual meetings have been organised to revisit the roadmap and ponder carefully on next steps to achieve sustainability and syndicate the common efforts.

As far as OIC countries concerned, there are **18 member countries** which have been reviewed in coordination with international organisations. These countries are *Albania, Azerbaijan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Palestine, Senegal, Tajikistan, Tunisia, and Turkey*. Additionally, **14 OIC countries** have involved in M&E mechanisms through being in the review team. Hence, in total **24 OIC countries** have experiences in peer review processes either as the reviewed country or as the reviewer.

Distinguished Participants,

Peer Review is a key element for improving national statistical systems in OIC member countries. Many examples showed that this is indeed an effective instrument to assure credibility of the statistical system constituents and maintain healthier infrastructures for data production and dissemination.

In this regard, I am sure that this Workshop will foster exchanges of knowledge, and help to create an environment for collaboration and innovation concerning the **methodology and assessment environment of the peer reviews mechanism**, and also will provide us the opportunity to listen the country experiences.

I wish you very productive deliberations, and pray to Allah Almighty to grant us ease and guide our steps to improve prosperity and welfare in our societies.

Thank you for your attention.

Wassalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu