

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



**STATEMENT OF
H.E. PROF. EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OIC,
AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT
AND COOPERATION INSTITUTIONS
OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES**

**ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
13-14 MAY, 2009**

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Your Excellencies Ministers

**Our Distinguished Co-hosts and partners, President of TIKA
and Director General of SESRIC**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and a pleasure to be here in Istanbul and to address the First Meeting of the Development and Cooperation Institutions (DCIs) of OIC Member States. At the outset, I would like to thank to the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) and the OIC Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) for the excellent arrangements for holding this significant event. The OIC General Secretariat is proud with its association with this initiative as it addresses a very important priority issue within the new vision of the OIC.

It is considerable that this meeting is bringing together, for the first time, high level representatives from major Development and Cooperation Institutions and Development Funds operating in the OIC Member States. Especially today, amid the global financial crisis that poses serious challenges to societies and economies across the world, the opportunity presented by this Meeting for exchange and networking between these institutions, is of utmost importance. This is a welcome opportunity to underscore the pre-eminent place of development cooperation on the agenda of the OIC.

The main objective of this meeting is to establish closer and stronger partnerships among DCIs in their developmental efforts in the OIC Member States. The OIC community has committed itself to implementing the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, especially achieving sustainable development, poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth in Member States. This programme emphasizes the importance of coordination and

cooperation among all institutions of OIC Member States to achieve the stated new vision and mission for a brighter, more prosperous and dignified future for our people. These objectives, which are at the very core of the OIC new vision, call for more effective and coherent development cooperation.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a well established fact that the phenomenon of poverty, malnutrition and food scarcity, as well as poor education and health care, underdevelopment of infrastructure and lack of sufficient employment opportunities, together with political conflicts, wars and natural disasters are the main challenges for achieving sustainable development aspirations in many OIC member states, especially in the Least Developed OIC Countries.

International community, including OIC member states and institutions, is extending support to these countries through technical assistance and capacity building programs to address the development challenges. In this context, in the past several years some OIC Member States have emerged as prominent donors in the area of supporting economic and social development plans and programs in developing countries in general and in other OIC Member States in particular.

At the same time, today there are large numbers of multilateral bodies, bilateral agencies, special purpose funds, NGOs, private sector and others which are working for development goals in the OIC Member States. Their missions and efforts are diverse, and it has resulted in making the fabric of development cooperation increasingly complex and fragmented. Meanwhile some OIC donor countries on bilateral basis or through different UN agencies are extending assistance to other OIC

Member States for implementation of development programs or projects.

I believe that there is a need for a new mechanism or platform or forum within the OIC for discussing the development agenda, coordinating activities and synergizing efforts of various development and international cooperation institutions and development funds. Such a coordination would certainly be useful and provide valuable data to make healthy diagnoses and assessments as to what are the needs, which needs are not addressed, if the efforts are overlapping and whether the assistance programs overall are effective.

In this context, the First Meeting of the Development and Cooperation Institutions (DCIs) of the OIC Member States is so vital. It can help bring greater coherence to our collective efforts and it can gear those efforts towards the realization of the partnership for development, as set out by the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, as well as the Millennium Development

Goals. Here, I would like to underline that the OIC General Secretariat considers the objectives of the Ten year Program of Action in the socio-economic field in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals.

Moreover, this meeting could decide on the establishment of an OIC development Forum to serve as a coordination and cooperation mechanism for the development agencies and funds in the OIC Member States. With the establishment of this new platform, we would be able to discuss effective ways of fund raising, share data within a network, respond to the transformation that has been taking place in development cooperation and review new trends in this field.

Distinguished Participants,**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to bring to your attention that the new vision of the OIC which is based on its new Charter adopted at the OIC Summit in Dakar in March 2008 and the Ten Year Program of Action adopted at the Third Extraordinary Summit in Makkah Al Mukarramah in December 2005, has identified “moderation and socio-economic development” as one of the main objectives of our Organization. Based on this new vision and expanded mandate from the OIC heads of state, immediate action initiated to establish a “Poverty Alleviation Fund” (ISFD) and a Special Program for the Development of Africa (SPDA). Presently, we are conducting consultations with our Specialized organ Islamic Development Bank to combine our comparative advantages together and to streamline joint policy guidance for better coordination of activities related to the ISFD and SPDA.

At the same time, this new vision required us take immediate steps to establish an International Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs Department at the OIC General Secretariat with a view to coordinating overall action within the OIC system. It gives us pride that in the short period of its existence, this Department has already become one of the most active units within the OIC and opened ways towards cooperation and coordination with the international organizations and NGOs.

Present and future programs of this department include assistance for Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sierra Leone, Banda Aceh, Niger, Gaza, Yemen, Mozambique, Bangladesh, Darfur, Somalia and Chechnya.

On the other hand, the OIC General Secretariat signed a MoU with the United States to provide emergency healthcare services to mothers and children in the least developed OIC countries. We are discussing with some Western countries, such as Finland and UK ways and means of cooperation in similar projects.

I would be remiss if I do not mention some other activities which are very dear to my heart, already initiated OIC Cotton Project and the project we are trying to develop capacity for the OIC member states in food processing. Dakar-Port Sudan railroad project is also another important ambitious development project that we are trying to contribute.

As an academician with science background I am also very proud that the efforts of our Science and Technology Department in the fields of four domains; namely, science and technology, higher education, health and environment have started to give significant results. The Department of Science and Technology has taken a number of new initiatives and implemented several high quality activities for the benefits of the Ummah with a perspective to contribute to the socio-economic development of the OIC member states.

Distinguished participants,

I have tried to project very briefly how the contemporary agenda or the OIC has been dominated by our concern to be able to make meaningful contribution for the overall development of the Muslim World.

Therefore, it is indeed heartening that high level representatives of major Development and Cooperation Institutions and Funds based in the OIC Member States are participating in this meeting to discuss key development issues. It is my hope that open and inclusive dialogue will be the hallmark of this meeting and its concrete outcome will provide guidance for more coordinated action.

I have come to this meeting with great expectations that the First Meeting will generate new perspectives and approaches to development cooperation within the OIC. I look forward to making 2009 a milestone year in our efforts to promote effective and coherent development cooperation under the OIC umbrella, for the benefit of all our peoples.

In that spirit, I wish you most fruitful meeting and deliberations.

Thank you for your kind attention and patience.