

TRAINING COURSE ON “DIGITAL DIPLMACY” FOR THE OIC JUNIOR DIPLOMATS

Virtual, 14-17 September 2020

Opening Remarks by
H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR
Director General of SESRIC

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- H.E. Mr. Yavuz Selim KIRAN, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey,
- H.E. Prof. Mesut ÖZCAN, Director of the Diplomacy Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey
- H.E. Amb. Ahmed Sareer, Director of Asia, Peace and Security Unit of the OIC General Secretariat
- Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Very Good day, and welcome to SESRIC Training Course on “Digital
Diplomacy for the OIC Junior Diplomats”.

- This training course marks the fourth iteration of SESRIC annual Diplomacy Capacity Building Program, which we have launched in 2017. This year represents an unprecedented year as, for the first time, we are conducting this training course virtually online due to the continuous outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.
- In order to respond to this extraordinary situation, we preferred not to postpone this training to a later date. Instead, we have designed a virtual distant learning solution in order to better serve the Centre's training activities and keep the participants motivated and engaged during these difficult times.
- This year also represents the continuation of the fruitful partnership with the Diplomacy Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey (the host country of our Centre) in organizing the training program for junior diplomats from OIC Member States.
- It is a partnership that we highly value and are proud of. In this connection, I would like to extend my profound appreciation and thanks to H.E. Mr. Yavuz Selim KIRAN, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, for nurturing the partnership between SESRIC and the Diplomacy Academy of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and for honouring us with his presence today. My deep thanks are also extended to Prof. Mesut ÖZCAN and his team at the Academy for their supporting efforts in organizing this training course.

- Fuelling our excitement this year is also the fact that we have been able to assemble a total of 81 talented junior diplomats from 29 OIC Member States to benefit from this training.
- In addition, we have been able to attract 3 outstanding practitioners and expert trainers in the field of digital diplomacy to deliver the training. Allow me here to thank them by name:
 - Dr. Gökhan Yücel, *Policy Advisor, Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey*
 - Mr. Naci Karamanoğlu, *Deputy Director General for Communications and Relations with Civil Society, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey*
 - Assoc. Prof. Ms. Selcan Kaynak, *Department of Political Science and International Relations, Boğaziçi University*
- Dear Participants,

- The selection of “Digital Diplomacy” as a theme of this year’s training was not arbitrary. It is a conscious and deliberate consideration in response to an issue of high interest to the OIC diplomatic community.
- The internet and new information and communication technologies (ICTs) are now central tenets of public and private communication. Contemporary social media platforms have shrunk the physical spaces between individuals, and between states, institutions and organisations.
- The emergence of these technologies have impacted diplomacy on an exponential scale, providing both opportunities and challenges for states and international organisations as they seek to engage with new policy spaces developing around ICTs.
- Nevertheless, a great number of diplomats in the OIC Member Countries still need further knowledge and information regarding the practical implications of digital diplomacy to their respective policy fields.

- Therefore, we aimed with this Training Course on Digital Diplomacy to provide the junior diplomats in our Member Countries with knowledge on the relationship between digital diplomacy and foreign policy objectives. The training course will identify the process of developing and monitoring effective digital diplomacy strategies.
- In doing so, this training course will enhance the skills of the junior diplomats and help them become more effective in their current and future roles.
- Dear Participants,
- Before concluding, I would like to welcome the Junior Diplomats from the OIC Member States to our 2020 Training Course on Digital Diplomacy. I am confident that this training will have a positive impact and add value to their work. I wish you a successful training throughout the 4 days of the training.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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