



COMCEC

REPORT THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC



ANKARA, 10-11 May 2017

COMCEC Coordination Office



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**COMCEC Coordination Office
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COMCEC

**Standing Committee for Economic and
Commercial Cooperation of the Organization
of the Islamic Cooperation**

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**COMCEC Coordination Office
Ankara, May 2017**

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R E P O R T

**THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC COOPERATION**

(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)

REPORT
THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC COOPERATION
(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)

1. The Thirty Third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) was held on 10-11 May 2017 in Ankara, the Republic of Turkey.

2. Representatives of the following Member States of the Committee attended the Meeting:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1- Republic of Turkey | : (Chairman, Permanent), |
| 2- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia | : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member), |
| 3- State of Palestine | : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member), |
| 4- State of Qatar | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the Arab Region), |
| 5- Malaysia | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the Asian Region), |
| 6- Republic of Gabon | : (Vice Chairman, Representing the African Region), |
| 7- Islamic Republic of Pakistan | : (Rapporteur), |
| 8- State of Kuwait | : (Member of the Previous Bureau), |
| 9- Republic of Indonesia | : (Member of the Previous Bureau), |
| 10- Republic of Niger | : (Member of the Previous Bureau). |

3. In addition, Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC) attended the Meeting.

(The list of participants is attached as Annex I.)

Agenda Item 1: Opening Session

4. Following the recitation from the Holy Qur'an, H.E. Lütfi ELVAN, Minister of Development of the Republic of Turkey, inaugurated the Meeting.

5. H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of the COMCEC, sent a message to the Meeting. His message was read out by H.E. Ambassador Sadık ARSLAN, Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the President. In his message, H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN underlined that the Islamic world is witnessing developments that will shape and in a way determine the fate of its next century and stressed that we cannot sacrifice our 1,400 year civilization to the interests of some contemptuous and hubristic groups. H.E. President further expressed that there is one truth of which we all need to be aware: It is the strength of our fraternity that defines us as Muslims; in fact, all Muslims have to “be brethren and stand together, linked like bricks in a wall,” as ordered by our Prophet (PBUH).

6. President ERDOĞAN also drew the attention of the Committee to the successful organization of the 13th Islamic Summit in İstanbul on 14-15 April 2016. President ERDOĞAN also underlined the adoption of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action for the next decade, as an important outcome of the Summit.

7. President ERDOĞAN then touched upon the importance of benefiting from the instruments of the COMCEC Strategy, namely working group meetings and project funding mechanism, which provide an important platform for the member countries to share their experiences and provide solutions to the common challenges and an important financial instrument for enhancing human capital and institutional capacity.

8. In his message, H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN emphasized the importance of effective transportation system and infrastructure in enhancing commercial competitiveness and strengthening trade relations among the OIC Member Countries. In this respect, H.E. ERDOĞAN expressed his appreciation for designation of the theme of exchange of views session of the next COMCEC Session as “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”.

9. President ERDOĞAN concluded his message by wishing success to the participants of the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC.

(A copy of the text of the Message of H.E. President Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN is attached as Annex II.)

10. Following the message of H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, H.E. Lütfi ELVAN, the Minister of Development of the Republic of Turkey, addressed the meeting.

11. H.E. ELVAN stated that the target of reaching 20 percent intra-OIC trade in 2015 as set by the previous OIC Ten-Year Plan of Action was achieved and even surpassed in 2015. However, the fluctuations in oil prices also had a role in this achievement.

12. On the other hand, H.E. ELVAN stated that the share of the OIC Member Countries in the world trade showed recently a serious decline. OIC Member Countries had approximately 12 percent share in the world trade in 2012 but this has dropped to 9.5 percent in 2015. H.E. ELVAN underlined that this decrease should be considered as an important forewarning for the Member Countries.

13. H.E. ELVAN underlined that the decline in oil prices necessitates the economic reforms towards reducing the dependence on the exports of limited number of commodities in the OIC Member Countries. In this regard, the Member Countries should continue their endeavours towards producing and exporting manufactured products and high-tech products in the long run.

14. H.E. ELVAN highlighted the organization of Working Group Meetings and implementation of projects within the framework of COMCEC Strategy. He stressed that the Working Group Meetings in six cooperation areas are suitable platforms for the experts to conduct high level technical debates and to produce crucial documents like the COMCEC Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) Guideline. He emphasized the importance of these Meetings for sharing experiences and best practices and approximating policies among the Member Countries in the long term. He also appreciated the successful implementation of the 31 projects by the member countries and the OIC institutions since 2013. He added that 15 more projects are being implemented with more than 45 beneficiary member countries in 2017.

15. H.E. ELVAN emphasized the importance of well-running transport corridors as they increase mobility, interconnectivity and bring new investment opportunities. Accordingly, transport corridors enhance access to goods, services and facilitate employment. He expressed that designation of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries” as the theme of exchange of views session of the next COMCEC Ministerial Meeting is highly pertinent.

16. H.E. ELVAN concluded his remarks by wishing that the deliberations held during the 33rd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC contribute to peace, prosperity and welfare of the Islamic Ummah.

(The text of the Statement of H.E. Lütfi ELVAN is attached as Annex III.)

17. The message of H.E. Dr. Yousef Al-OTHAIMEEN the Secretary General of the OIC, was read out by Mr. Jakhongir KHASANOV from Economic Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat. In his message, H.E. Al-OTHAIMEEN expressed his deepest appreciation to H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN and the Republic of Turkey for their consistent support for the OIC in general and for the activities of the COMCEC in particular. Furthermore, he emphasized the need for supporting the on-going efforts towards consolidating cooperation framework on South-South cooperation for least developed countries of the OIC. He also stressed the importance of the activities of OIC organs and institutions towards implementing OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

18. H.E. Al-OTHAIMEEN elaborated on the OIC initiatives on harmonizing policies on infrastructure development and the development of joint integrative projects. He highlighted the development of OIC Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration Policy, which is aimed at harmonizing national efforts of OIC Member States for the development of regional goods in the domain of agriculture and rural development, expansion of intra-OIC trade, access to OIC markets and development of transport networks among OIC member states.

(A copy of the text of the message of H.E. Dr. Yousef A. AL-OTHAIMEEN is attached as Annex IV.)

19. The Meeting was addressed by the Head of Delegation of the State of Palestine. He expressed their thanks and appreciation to the President of the Republic of Turkey for his enlightening message to the Meeting. He also thanked the Government of the Republic of Turkey for generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. He also commended the COMCEC Coordination Office for the endeavors for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation especially through COMCEC Working Groups and Project Funding Mechanism.

Sideline Event

20. The 30th Meeting of the Sessional Committee was held on May 9th, 2017.

(Report of the 30th Meeting of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex V.)

Working Sessions

21. The working sessions of the Meeting were chaired by H.E. Ambassador Salih Mutlu ŞEN, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey to the OIC.

22. The agenda of the Meeting was adopted by the Committee.

(A copy of the Agenda is attached as Annex VI.)

Agenda Item 2: The COMCEC Strategy and its Implementation

23. The Committee **welcomed** the Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy submitted by the COMCEC Coordination Office highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy, and **commended** the Member States and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy. The Committee also **requested** the Member States and OIC Institutions to continue lending their full support to the implementation of the Strategy.

24. The Committee **welcomed** the successful convening of the COMCEC Working Groups in the cooperation areas in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC and **also welcomed** the research studies conducted by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for enriching the discussions in each COMCEC Working Group Meeting.

25. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the Working Groups towards approximating policies among the Member States in their fields of competence and **welcomed** the policy recommendations made by the Working Groups in their meetings held in February-April 2017.

26. The Committee **invited** all the Member Countries to exert efforts, to the extent possible, to implement the policy recommendations and **urged** relevant OIC Institutions to support the Member States in this regard.

27. The Committee **welcomed** the finalization of the nine projects funded under the COMCEC Project Funding in 2016 and **also welcomed** the launching of fifteen new projects to be implemented in 2017.

28. The Committee **invited** the Member Countries to utilize the COMCEC Project Funding to implement the policy recommendations developed in the COMCEC Working Groups and adopted by the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions.

29. The Committee **called on** the COMCEC National Focal Points and working group focal points to work more closely with the COMCEC Coordination Office for effective coordination and communication.

30. The Committee **invited** the Member Countries to ensure the participation of the COMCEC National Focal Points and COMCEC Working Group Focal Points, to the COMCEC Follow-up Committee Meetings and the COMCEC Sessions.

31. The Committee **encouraged** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Working Groups to actively participate in the upcoming Meetings of the relevant Working Groups and benefit from the COMCEC Project Funding for realizing their cooperation projects.

32. Noting with appreciation that the number of Member Countries having registered to at least one working group has reached 50, the Committee **requested** the Member States, which have not done so, to register to the COMCEC Working Groups and actively participate in the upcoming Meetings of the Working Groups.

33. The Committee **welcomed** that the COMCEC Coordination Office will organize the Fifth Annual Meeting of the COMCEC Working Group Focal Points between 23 and 25 May 2017 in Ankara, Turkey and **called upon** the Working Group focal points and national focal points to actively participate in the meeting. The Committee **also highlighted** that this Meeting can be effectively utilized for enhancing coordination among the Member Countries, especially for development of joint projects.

34. The Committee **called upon** the Member States concerned to respond to the “Evaluation Forms” circulated each year by the COMCEC Coordination Office with a view to following up the implementation of the Policy Recommendations of the COMCEC Working Groups.

35. The Committee **also called upon** the working group focal points to be actively involved in knowledge production efforts of the COMCEC through, among others, assisting in collection and verification of country specific data and providing feedbacks to research studies.

36. The Committee **underlined** that the COMCEC Project Funding can be utilized more effectively by the member countries having advanced capacities in various cooperation areas for sharing their experience with the other member countries.

37. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group, ICCIA, and SMIIC for their efforts towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.

Agenda Item 3: Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action (TYPOA)

38. The Committee **took note of** the report presented by the OIC General Secretariat on the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

39. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the 31st and 32nd Sessions of COMCEC, the Committee **underlined** the importance of the active follow up of the economic and commercial section of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action by the COMCEC and **requested** the OIC General Secretariat to regularly submit comprehensive progress reports on the implementation of the Programme to the COMCEC Sessions and to the Follow-up Meetings.

40. The Committee **took note of** the preparations by the OIC General Secretariat and further requested the OIC General Secretariat to formally circulate the Implementation Plan of OIC-2025: Programme of Action to the Member Countries and OIC institutions/organs including the COMCEC Coordination Office with a view to seek their inputs for further development; and **called upon** the OIC General Secretariat to submit the relevant sections of the aforementioned plan to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC for consideration and its further development.

41. The Committee **called upon** the OIC General Secretariat to invite the relevant OIC Institutions and Organs, including the COMCEC Coordination Office to the Annual Coordination Meetings of the OIC Institutions for ensuring the effective coordination and synergy in the economic activities to be undertaken under the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

42. Recalling the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to sign and ratify the agreements in the economic domain for furthering economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member States.

Agenda Item 4: Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade

43. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the Ninth Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group on March 9th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Single Window Systems in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

- Strengthening Single Window efforts in OIC Member States by developing integrated Single Window strategies that reflect national and regional requirements and actively engage the stakeholders in this process,
- Improving the effectiveness of Single Window projects by identifying and implementing necessary changes in the laws and regulatory framework and operational practices,
- Prioritizing flexibility, scalability, safety and interoperability of IT architecture of Single Windows Systems,
- Promoting cross-border interconnectivity and interoperability of the national Single Window Systems in the OIC Region towards establishing Regional Single Window Systems.

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex VII.)

44. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Trade Working Group to actively participate in its 10th Meeting to be organized on November 2nd, 2017 with the theme of “Special Economic Zones in the OIC Member States: Learning from Experiences”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Trade Working Group.

45. The Committee also **welcomed** the activities organized by the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group (ITFC), ICCIA, and SMIIC in the area of trade aligned with the COMCEC Strategy since the 32nd Session of the COMCEC.

46. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Uganda in partnership with Turkey and Egypt for the successful implementation of the project titled “Improving delivery of trade facilitation services” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

47. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Palestine, Suriname and ICDT for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Facilitating Trade Relations between Palestine and Islamic Countries” will be implemented by Palestine in partnership with Saudi Arabia and Algeria,
- The Project titled “Strengthening SME Support Services in Suriname and Guyana to Enhance Participation in Global Value Chains” will be implemented by Suriname in partnership with Guyana and Turkey,
- The Project titled “Facilitating Trade: Identifying NTBs among the OIC Member States” will be implemented by ICDT in partnership with Kingdom of Morocco, Senegal and Arab Republic of Egypt.

48. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to United Arab Emirates for hosting and ICDT and IDB for organizing the workshop on “Trade Facilitation and Single Window in OIC Member States” on 16 - 18 April 2017 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

49. The Committee **requested** the Member States concerned to actively participate in the activities to be organized by the COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IDB Group (ITFC), ICCIA, and SMIIC in the field of trade and **called upon** these institutions to send invitations to the Member States sufficiently in advance of their meetings so as to ensure their participation.

i) TPS-OIC

50. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have not yet signed or ratified TPS-OIC Agreements, namely the Framework Agreement, PRETAS and Rules of Origin, to do so at their earliest convenience.

51. The Committee **invited** the GCC Secretariat, on behalf of its six member states, and Morocco to convey their updated concession lists at their earliest convenience to the TNC Secretariat with a view to operationalize the TPS-OIC.

52. The Committee **requested** the participating Member States, who have done not so yet, to notify the TNC Secretariat of their relevant internal measures to be undertaken for implementation of the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin at their earliest convenience.

53. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Republic of Indonesia to host “Training Seminar for the benefit of the Member States of the Asian Countries on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (TPS-OIC)” to be organized by the ICDT on 13-14 September 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

54. The Committee **requested** the ICDT, COMCEC Coordination Office, and other relevant OIC Institutions to continue organizing awareness raising and capacity building activities with regard to TPS-OIC.

ii) Islamic Trade Fairs

55. The Committee **expressed** its thanks and appreciation to the following Member States for hosting Islamic Trade Fairs and Exhibitions in cooperation with ICDT:

- The Republic of Senegal for hosting and ICDT and CICES for organizing the “2nd Higher Education Expo” in Dakar on 9th -12th May 2016,
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for hosting and ICDT for organizing the “10th Exhibition of Agribusiness Industries of the OIC Member States” in Jeddah on 23- 26 April 2017.

56. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the following Member States to host Islamic Trade Fairs and Exhibitions in cooperation with ICDT between 2017 and 2019 and **requested** the Member States to encourage active participation of their private sectors and relevant institutions in these events:

- The Arab Republic of Egypt to host the “3rd Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States” in Cairo on 18-21 October 2017,
- Republic of Senegal to host “1st OIC Green Economy Expo” on 26-29 October 2017 and “1st OIC Fisheries and Marine Expo”, in 2017 in Dakar,
- The Republic of Cote d’Ivoire to host the “3rd African Halal Business Forum” on 30 October – 1 November 2017 in Abidjan,
- The Republic of Turkey to host the “5th OIC Halal Expo” in Istanbul on 23-26 November 2017 in cooperation with SMIIC,
- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the “International Exhibition of light Industries and Handicrafts “ on 26 November – 2nd December 2017 in Madinah Al Munawarah, in the framework of its commemoration as the Capital of Islamic Tourism in 2017.
- The State of Kuwait to host a “Special OIC Trade Fair” in Kuwait-City 6-10 February 2018,
- The Republic of Côte d’Ivoire to host the “2nd OIC Building and Real Estate Exhibition” in 2017 and “4th Health Expo” in 2018 in Abidjan.
- Republic of Iraq or Republic of Guinea to host the 16th OIC Trade Fair in 2019.

57. The Committee **reiterated** its request to the Member States to encourage their private sector to actively participate in the Islamic Trade Fairs.

58. The Committee also **reiterated** its request to ICDT to continue holding sector specific fairs in cooperation with the Member States and submit regular progress reports on the fairs to the COMCEC Sessions.

iii) WTO Related Technical Assistance

59. The Committee **called on** IDB and ICDT to continue providing technical assistance to the Member States on WTO-related issues and to enhance their efforts in sensitizing the Member States to the impact of WTO trade negotiations on their economies and **requested** IDB and ICDT to synergize and coordinate their efforts to strengthen the human and institutional capacities of the OIC Member States, so as to facilitate their full integration into the multilateral trading system on an equitable and fair basis.

60. The Committee **called upon** the WTO members of the OIC to assist non-WTO Members of the OIC in their accession process to WTO.

61. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting and ICDT for organizing the Workshop on “Mechanisms for Settlement of Trade and Investment Disputes for OIC Member States” in Casablanca, Morocco on 20 and 21 February 2017.

62. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting and ICDT, IDB and SESRIC for jointly organizing the Workshop on “Trade in Services in OIC Member States” in Casablanca, Morocco, on 22-23 March 2017.

iv) Trade Financing Activities

63. The Committee **appreciated** trade finance and trade promotion and development activities of the IDB Group (ITFC and ICIEC) and the mobilization of funds from the international market and development partners for funding the trade and insurance operations in the Member States, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent.

64. The Committee **took note with appreciation** that ITFC’s cumulative approvals and disbursement in trade financing reached US\$35.4 billion and US\$26.8 billion respectively, and its total approvals and disbursement in 2016 reached US\$4.5 billion and US\$4.8 billion respectively.

65. The Committee **also took note with appreciation** IDB Group's (ITFC and ICIEC) increased regional presence through Dakar Regional Office and Country Gateway Offices in Dhaka, Istanbul, Jakarta and Dubai which brought ITFC and ICIEC closer to clients and enabled it to serve member countries' needs.

66. The Committee **commended** the efforts of ITFC in financing SMEs in promoting Islamic Finance and supporting Least Development Member Countries and **took note** of its efforts to diversify its portfolio and extend more financing for agriculture sector that has direct and prominent impact on improving productivity, job creation, increasing export revenues and alleviating poverty.

67. The Committee **called upon** the Member States to complete their membership requirements for the institutions of the IDB Group (ITFC and ICIEC) so that the IDB Group implements its mandate successfully.

68. The Committee **took note of** the trade promotion and capacity development initiatives being implemented by ITFC under its various flagship programs including Aid for Trade Initiative for Arab States (AFTIAS), Special Programme for Central Asia (SPCA) Arab Africa Trade Bridge Program (AATB), Trade Knowledge Program and Trade Development Forum to raise awareness of the private sectors on the activities of the ITFC.

69. The Committee **took note** of the efforts of the ITFC in implementing integrated Trade Programmes for commodity development through blending its trade finance facilities with its trade related technical assistance interventions and **requested** ITFC to develop similar programs for other strategic commodities.

70. The Committee **took note of** ITFC's efforts for the diversification of Islamic Financial Instruments, supporting training programs on Islamic finance and promoting Islamic Finance solutions at international fora.

v) Trade Related Activities of SMIIC

71. The Committee **welcomed** the activities of Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) in the area of standardization, metrology and accreditation and their impact on trade facilitation and capacity building.

72. The Committee **invited** the Member States to become a member of SMIIC and actively participate in its technical committees (TCs), Metrology and Accreditation Councils.

73. The Committee **welcomed** the increasing visibility of the SMIIC and **expressed its appreciation** to the SMIIC for organizing capacity building activities in its field of competence.

74. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to SMIIC for supporting the organization of the World Halal Summit (WHS) in Istanbul on 15-17 December 2016 under the auspices of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.

Agenda Item 5: Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation

75. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ICCIA in organizing Forums, Training Program, B2B Meetings, Seminars and Workshops in order to galvanize the role of the Private Sector to expand their network and increase their trading and investment opportunities.

76. The Committee **encouraged** their Chambers of Commerce to be actively involved in the ICCIA's activities particularly related to development of business through MASFAQ.

77. The Committee **took note** of the organization of the Workshop on Key Infrastructure Development for Rural Growth for OIC Countries, in Istanbul, Turkey on 24-25 April 2017

78. The Committee **took note** of the following activities to be organized by the ICCIA and **called upon** the private sector of the Member States to actively participate in the following activities:

- The 17th Private Sector Meeting of the OIC Countries to be held in 2017, in Madinah Al Munawarah,
- 10th Businesswomen Forum in Islamic Countries to be held in Sudan / Egypt in 2017,
- Training Program on Entrepreneurship Development through IT for the OIC Member Countries to be held in 2017,
- Trade Exchange Forum/Exhibition (Sector-wise) to be held in 2017,
- The 18th Private Sector Meeting for the OIC Member States, State of Kuwait to be held in 2018,
- Launching of the Innovation & Excellence Award (ITQAN) in 2017.
- Training Program on “Technology Entrepreneurship Advocacy and Management of Business Incubation & Technology Parks” to be held in 2018,

- Specialized Workshop/Training Program on (Development of SMEs / Skill Development / Food Security/ Textile & Garments/ Renewable Energy) to be held in 2017-2018,
- Chambers of Commerce Forum to be held in 2017.

79. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the steps undertaken by the ICCIA and the Union of Turkish Chambers (TOBB), Konya Chamber of Commerce and Konya Commodity Exchange to formulate the measures needed to introduce the best practices implemented in the City of Konya to other member chambers for the exchange of commodities and development of industrial zones.

80. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 43rd Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting of the OIC and the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **took note** of the briefing by the ICCIA and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) on the setting up of the OIC Arbitration Center in İstanbul and **requested** them to submit a comprehensive report on this issue to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

Agenda Item 6: Improving Transport and Communications

81. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group held on March 16th, 2017 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Increasing Broadband Internet Penetration in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

Policy Recommendations for all OIC Member Countries

- Preparing national broadband strategies with the involvement of the all relevant stakeholders
- Enhancing digital literacy by embedding programs in the formal education system and encouraging non-formal initiatives targeting specific segments of the population

Policy Recommendations for the OIC Member Countries with Different Stage of Broadband Development

- **OIC Member Countries at an advanced stage of broadband development**
 - Achieving high-speed Internet coverage in rural and isolated areas through regulatory holidays and direct subsidies with the purpose of improving the broadband investment business case
 - Enactment of financial incentives to operators for deploying 4G

- **OIC Member Countries at an intermediate stage of broadband development**
 - Reducing cost of broadband services through targeted public policy initiatives
 - Lowering the cultural and linguistic barriers through development of local platforms, content, and applications.
- **OIC Member Countries at an initial stage of broadband development**
 - Offering a low-priced broadband service for consumers by state-owned and government subsidized telecommunications operators
 - Offering a low-priced or free broadband service targeted for disadvantaged segments of the population

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex VIII.)

82. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to be held on October 18-19, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors in OIC Member States: Concepts and Cases”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group.

83. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Turkey in partnership with four other Member Countries for the successful implementation of the project titled “Assessment and Enhancement of Air Cargo Interconnectivity among the OIC Member States: the Air Cargo Co-modality Approach (ACCMA) to Facilitate Intra-OIC Trade” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

84. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Cote d’Ivoire for the project titled “Improving the Capacity on Road Safety in Cote d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali”, which will be implemented in partnership with Burkina Faso and Mali in 2017 under the fourth project call.

85. Recalling that the theme of the Exchange of Views Session of the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session has been determined as “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries” by the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **invited** the Transport Ministers of the Member Countries to participate in the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session along with the Ministers in charge of COMCEC Affairs.

86. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Republic of Sudan to host the Second Islamic Conference of Transport Ministers in the second half of 2017 and **called upon** the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Organs and Institutions including the COMCEC Secretariat to actively participate in this important event.

87. The Committee **appreciated** the efforts of the OIC General Secretariat to sensitize the OIC Member States concerned to the need to include the respective national segments along the OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway corridor in their national development plans and **requested** the Member states concerned to submit their well-designed feasibility studies to the IDB Group and other international development banks for securing adequate technical support and financing for this project.

Agenda Item 7: Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector

88. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group on February 16th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT): Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** the Draft COMCEC MFT Guideline as a reference document produced by the Working Group.

(Draft COMCEC MFT Guideline document is attached as Annex IX.)

89. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group to be held on September 21st, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Risk and Crisis Management in Tourism Sector: Recovery From Crisis in the OIC Member Countries”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Tourism Working Group.

90. The Committee **took note** of the report of the 5th Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum held on May 4th, 2017 in İstanbul, Turkey with the theme of “Crisis Communication and Management in Tourism: Recent Challenges and Solutions in OIC Countries.” The Committee **noted** that the recommendations of the Forum can be considered by the forthcoming meeting of the Tourism Working Group.

91. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Malaysia in partnership with ten other Member Countries for the successful implementation of the project titled “Short course on strategies in enhancing tourism workforce in community-based tourism within OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

92. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of the Gambia in partnership with Senegal and Mali for the successful implementation of the project titled “Enhancing the capacity of craft producers in OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

93. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Mozambique, Sudan, Gambia and SESRIC for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Enhancing Capacity of Muslim Friendly Tourism Workforce” will be implemented by Mozambique in partnership with Mali and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Enhancing The Capacity of Craft Producers and Customers in the OIC Member Countries” will be implemented by Sudan in partnership with Chad and Djibouti,
- The Project titled “Developing a Training and Certification Program for the Muslim Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Industry” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Nigeria and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Training Program on the Development and Promotion of Muslim Friendly Tourism in the OIC Member Countries” will be implemented by SESRIC in partnership with 18 member countries.

94. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of People’s Republic of Bangladesh to host the 10th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers on 12-14 November 2017 in Dhaka and **called upon** the Member States and all the relevant OIC organs and institutions including the COMCEC Secretariat to actively participate in this important event.

95. The Committee **welcomed** the holding of the 10th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition on 6-9 February, 2017 in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

96. The Committee **appreciated** that the Arab Republic of Egypt would host and ICDT and ICCIA would organize the Forum on “Public and Private Sector Investment in the Area of Islamic Tourism” on 18th October 2017 in Cairo, on the side lines of the “3rd OIC Tourism Fair in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat and SESRIC. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 43rd Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Committee **welcomed** that this Forum would function in cooperation and collaboration with the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum.

97. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host and ICDT to organise a workshop on “Dates Palm and Oasis Economy” on 26 -27 November 2017 in Madinah Al Munawarah, in collaboration with SESRIC, ISESCO and Al Madinah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on the side lines of the International Exhibition of light Industries and Handicrafts, in the framework of commemorating Madinah Al Munawarah as OIC City of Tourism 2017.

Agenda Item 8: Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security

98. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group on March 3rd, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Reducing Food Waste in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations;

- Developing a specific legislative framework and road map for reducing food waste in a holistic context including supply chain
- Promotion of food banks and food distribution networks
- Conducting cohesive initiatives and campaigns to increase awareness on food waste in supply chain and consumption

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex X.)

99. The Committee **called upon** the Member States which have registered to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to be held on September 28th, 2017 with the theme of “Improving Agricultural Market Performance: Creation and Development of Market Institutions.” The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group.

100. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Iran, Palestine and Turkey for the successful implementation of the following projects respectively under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Rural household empowerment on management of production, supply and market access”; which was implemented by Iran in partnership with Azerbaijan and Turkey,
- The Project titled “Improving small ruminates productivity by using different technologies as silage, feed block and hydroponic” which was implemented by Palestine in partnership with Jordan and Tunisia,

- The Project titled “Establishment of database, network connection and webpages of smallholders/ family farmers’ agricultural cooperatives between the OIC Member States” which was implemented by Turkey in partnership with twenty four other Member Countries.

101. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Gambia, Indonesia and Uganda for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Reduction of Post-Harvest losses in Cereals for Improve Rural Livelihood” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Indonesia and Nigeria,
- The Project titled “Improving income of small and medium scale farmers in the OIC Member States Through Reducing Losses of Livestock Production” will be implemented by Indonesia in partnership with Brunei Darussalam, Arab Republic of Egypt, Malaysia and Sudan,
- The Project titled “Strengthening Capacity for Setting, Checking and Compliance of Quality Standards for Agricultural Products” will be implemented by Uganda in partnership with Turkey, Cote d’Ivoire, Sudan and Gambia.

Agenda Item 9: Alleviating Poverty

102. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 9th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group held on April 6th, 2017 with the theme of “Malnutrition in the OIC Member Countries: A Trap for Poverty”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations:

- Developing and implementing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, especially towards women of reproductive age from vulnerable groups
- Improving infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices including breastfeeding in line with WHO guidelines
- Ensuring universal access to healthcare, safe water and sanitation, and launching educational campaigns on infectious diseases to eliminate undernutrition
- Providing access to safe and nutritious food for all, incusing in situation of acute food insecurity

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex XI.)

103. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group, to actively participate in the 10th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group to be held on October 5th, 2017 with the theme of “Education of Disadvantaged Children in

OIC: The Key to Escape from Poverty”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, who have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group.

104. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Indonesia in partnership with Malaysia and Turkey for the successful implementation of the project titled “Developing local initiatives for poverty alleviation through community based sustainable livelihood in OIC Member Countries” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

105. The Committee **also commended** the efforts of Albania, Gambia, Indonesia and Suriname for the following projects to be implemented in 2017 under the fourth project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Creation of a Road Map for an Integrated Social Service for Housing” will be implemented by Albania in partnership with Turkey and Azerbaijan,
- The Project titled “Training on Entrepreneurship and Management of Small Business for Women in The Gambia, Senegal and Sierra Leone” will be implemented by Gambia in partnership with Sierra Leone and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Strengthening Community-Based Sustainable Livelihood for Activating Poor by Opening Marketing Channel through E-Commerce” will be implemented by Indonesia in partnership with Turkey and Malaysia,
- The Project titled “Professionalization of Childcare in Selected OIC Countries” will be implemented by Suriname in partnership with Nigeria and Guyana.

i) Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD) and Special Program for the Development of Africa (SPDA)

106. The Committee **reiterated its request** to the Member Countries which have pledged to the ISFD to fulfill their commitments and those who have not yet pledged to the ISFD to do so in order to enable the Fund to undertake more development projects in the member countries. The Committee **also requested** the Member Countries to consider making additional commitments on a voluntary basis.

107. The Committee **requested** the ISFD to increase its efforts for resource mobilization and advocacy from different resources including the private sector in the Member States.

108. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for mobilization of resources from different financing institutions for more effective implementation of the ISFD and SPDA.

109. Recalling the relevant resolutions of the 31st and 32nd Sessions of the COMCEC, the Committee **reiterated its request** to the IDB to finalize the allocation of the funding to the SESRIC's capacity building project for the successful finalization of the OIC Cotton Programme.

ii) OIC-VET Program

110. The Committee **appreciated** the continuous efforts of SESRIC towards initiating and implementing various capacity building programmes and training courses in different fields and areas of interest to the Member States with a view to enhancing the capacities and quality of human resources in these countries and **called upon** SESRIC to mobilize more financial resources towards the programme.

111. Taking note of the report presented by SESRIC on OIC-VET Programme and appreciating SESRIC's contribution to the establishment of a Vocational Training Center at the Islamic University in Uganda, the Committee **requested** SESRIC and other OIC Institutions to exert efforts in the establishment of a similar capacity within the projected Islamic University in Kabul.

112. The Committee **called upon** the Member States to participate in and support the various capacity building programmes of SESRIC under the OIC-VET Programme.

iii) Implementation of the SDGs

113. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office to compile the OIC Institutions' activities, which are conducted on the implementation of the SDGs in the Member Countries and submit a report to the 33rd COMCEC Session accordingly.

114. The Committee **took note of** the "Tendency Survey on SDG Priorities of OIC Member Countries" conducted by SESRIC for identifying the priority SDG areas for the Member Countries and **requested** SESRIC to submit a report on the results of the survey to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

Agenda Item 10: Deepening Financial Cooperation

115. **Taking note with appreciation of** the convening of the 8th Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group held on March 30th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Improving Public Debt Management in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **welcomed** its following policy recommendations;

- Strengthening/Setting up an independent Public Debt Management Unit with well-defined functions and a dedicated debt management strategy,
- Developing/improving domestic debt market,
- Broadening and diversifying the creditor base,
- Lengthening the average maturity of the public debt,
- Applying macroeconomic risk management methods.

(The Policy recommendations document, including their rationale, is attached as Annex XII.)

116. The Committee **called upon** the Member States, which have registered to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group, to actively participate in its Ninth Meeting to be held on October 26th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “Diversification of Islamic Financial Instruments”. The Committee also **called upon** the Member States, which have not done so yet, to register to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group.

117. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the Gambia in partnership with Nigeria and Sierra Leone for the successful implementation of the project titled “Towards an improved institutional framework for Islamic finance” under the third project call within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

i) OIC Member States’ Stock Exchanges Forum

118. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts carried out by the OIC Member States’ Stock Exchange Forum and its Task Forces and also invited the Member States to actively participate in the activities organized under this Forum.

119. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Borsa Istanbul as the Secretariat of the OIC Stock Exchanges Forum, to host the 11th Meeting of the Forum in 2017 in İstanbul and **requested** all the Member States to actively participate in this Event.

120. The Committee **also requested** the Member States and IDB to support the promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Index and its potential sub-indices.

121. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **took note of** the efforts made towards establishing a highly adaptable web-based gold trading and clearing platform with the ultimate aim of a gold exchange/platform among the volunteering Member Countries and **requested** the Forum/Forum's Secretariat to finalize the necessary studies for the suggested platform/exchange and submit a comprehensive report to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

122. The Committee **called upon** the interested member states to actively participate in the Forum's Task Force to support the suggested platform/exchange through accelerating the process of integration of exchanges and harmonization of regulatory frameworks.

ii) Cooperation among Capital Markets' Regulatory Bodies

123. The Committee **welcomed** the efforts carried out by the Task Forces of COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum and **invited** the Member States to support the efforts of the Forum through participating in its meetings, contributing to the accomplishment of the mandates of the Task Forces and appointing contact persons to follow up its work.

124. The Committee **also welcomed** the offer of the Capital Markets Board of the Republic of Turkey, as the Forum Secretariat, to host the Sixth Meeting of the COMCEC CMR Forum in 2017 in İstanbul and requested all the Member States to actively participate in this Meeting.

125. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee further **took note of** the efforts made towards the Forum's proposal to establish COMCEC Real Estate electronic platform among the interested OIC Member States participating in the Forum and **requested** the Forum/the Forum's Secretariat to complete the comprehensive study for identifying the necessary stages towards establishing the suggested platform, with the support of the relevant national authorities and securities exchanges from volunteering Member States and submit a report to the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session.

126. The Committee **called upon** the interested member states to identify their authorized bodies and actively participate in the studies to expedite and complete the necessary technical work for establishing the COMCEC Real Estate electronic platform.

iii) Cooperation among the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities

127. The Committee **welcomed** the offer of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, to host the 15th Meeting of the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of the OIC Member States on 21-22 September 2017 in Bodrum/Turkey and **requested** all the Member States to actively participate in this event.

128. The Committee **welcomed** the training and capacity building programs organized by the SESRIC on the issues related to Central Banks and **requested** the SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the relevant institutions of the Member States.

Agenda Item 11: Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”

129. Recalling the relevant resolution of the 32nd Session of the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** the 10th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group to be held on October 18-19, 2017 in Ankara, in cooperation with the relevant OIC Institutions, to consider and elaborate on the theme of “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”, formulate concrete policy recommendations and report them to the 33rd COMCEC Session.

130. The Committee **encouraged** the Member States to prepare their country reports on the mentioned theme and convey them electronically to the CCO by October 15th, 2017 at the latest.

i) Possible Themes for the Exchange of Views Session of the 34th COMCEC Session

131. The Committee **took note** of the following possible themes of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 34th Session of the COMCEC:

- Theme 1: Improving Customs Risk Management Systems in the OIC Member States
- Theme 2: Improving Agrifood Market Performance and Access in the OIC Member Countries
- Theme 3: The Role of Sukuk in Islamic Capital Markets
- Theme 4: Tourism Destination Development and Institutionalization Strategies in the OIC Member Countries
- Theme 5: Implementation of the SDGs: Education Quality in the OIC Member States
- Theme 6: Financing Transport Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries

132. The Committee **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office to circulate a questionnaire among the Member States to explore their views on the above-mentioned themes and any other views and report the outcome to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

**Agenda Item 12: Draft Agenda of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC
(İstanbul, 20-23 November 2017)**

133. The Committee **prepared** and **decided** to submit the Draft Agenda to the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

(A copy of the Draft Agenda of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex XIII.)

Closing Session

134. At its Closing Session chaired by H.E. Ambassador Salih Mutlu ŞEN, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey to the OIC, the Committee adopted its Report together with its Annexes.

135. On behalf of all delegations, H.E. Sami bin Abdulaziz AZZEBIN Head of Delegation of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expressed his thanks to H.E. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN, President of Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the COMCEC for his high guidance for the cooperation efforts under the auspices of COMCEC and the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality extended to the Follow-up Committee Members. He concluded his statement by underlining the importance of recommendations adopted in the Meeting and thanked all the participating delegations for their efforts.

136. Mr. Jakhongir KHASANOV from Economic Affairs Department of the OIC General Secretariat, delivered the closing remarks on behalf of H.E. Dr. Yousef Al-OTHAIMEEN, the OIC Secretary General. Mr. KHASANOV expressed the importance of follow-up and implementation of COMCEC resolutions for enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among the Member Countries. He concluded the statement by thanking the Member Countries and OIC organs and institutions for their efforts towards realization of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

137. In his closing statement, H.E. Salih Mutlu ŞEN, after expressing his happiness for the successful conclusion of the Meeting, mentioned that the world is getting smaller day by day and economic and commercial relations between nations have been stronger than ever due to the enormous strides in technology and transportation and communication infrastructures. In this context, he stated that as the Islamic countries we should never lag behind.

138. H.E. ŞEN called upon all relevant Member Countries to complete the required steps for operationalization of the TPS-OIC. He emphasized the importance of the implementation of the policy recommendations of the Working Groups by the Member Countries and underlined the importance of the participation of Focal Points in the country delegations attending the Follow-up Committee Meetings as well as the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions.

139. H.E. ŞEN concluded his statement by expressing his thanks and appreciations to all delegations from member countries, Rapporteur, representatives of the OIC institutions, COMCEC Coordination Office, interpreters, translators and other staff taking part in organization of the Meeting for their efforts which helped rendering the meeting a success.

(A copy of the text of the Closing Statement by H.E. Salih Mutlu ŞEN is attached as Annex XIV.)

A N N E X E S

ANNEX

I

Original: English

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
THIRTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)**

A. MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC

REPUBLIC OF GABON

- Mr. CLEMENT MASSALA MANDONGAULT
First Counsellor, Embassy of Gabon in Ankara
- Mr. THIBAUT IFOUNGA
Chief of Protocol, Embassy of Gabon in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

- Ms. AYU WULAN SAGITA
Deputy Director, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. TUTI WINARTI
Head of Section, Ministry of Trade
- Ms. ADE VERONICA CHRISTIE
Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

STATE OF KUWAIT

- Mr. SAAD ALRASHIDI
Head of the OIC Affairs Division, International Economic Cooperation
Department
- Mr. AMMAR AL MAARAFI
Second Secretary, Embassy of Kuwait in Ankara

MALAYSIA

- Amb. ABD RAZAK ABDUL WAHAB
Ambassador, Embassy of Malaysia in Ankara
- Ms. ANITA KAUR GALA SINGH
Head of Chancery, Embassy of Malaysia in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF NIGER

- Mr. MOUSSA DOURFAYE
First Counsellor, Embassy of Niger in Ankara

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

- Dr. YOUSAF JUNAID
Consul General, Consulate General of Pakistan in İstanbul
- Mr. UMER SIDDIQUE
First Secretary, Embassy of Pakistan in Ankara

STATE OF PALESTINE

- Mr. RAFAT OMAR RAYYAN
Director, Ministry of National Economy
- Mr. ANAS SHAHADA
Director, Ministry of Finance and Planning
- Mr. AZMI ABU GHAZALEH
Counsellor, Embassy of Palestine in Ankara

STATE OF QATAR

- Mr. HASSAN AL MOHANNADI
Economic Consulting, Ministry of Economy and Commerce
- Mr. MANSOOR HAMID ALNAIMI
Economic Consulting, Ministry of Economy and Commerce

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

- Mr. SAMI BIN ABDULAZIZ AZZEBIN
Director General of Arabic and Islamic Trade Relations, Ministry of Commerce and Investment
- Mr. ANWAR BIN HASUSAH
Commercial Attaché, Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Ankara
- Mr. KHALID ALHARTHI
First Secretary, Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Ankara

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

- H.E. LÜTFİ ELVAN
Minister, Ministry of Development
- Mr. FATİH HASDEMİR
Deputy Undersecretary, Ministry of Development
- Mr. FERRUH TIĞLI
Senior Advisor, Ministry of Development
- H.E. Amb. SALİH MUTLU ŞEN
Ambassador, OIC Permanent Representative, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. SADIK ARSLAN
Chief Advisor, Presidency of the Republic of Turkey
- Mr. UFUK GÖKÇEN
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. MUSTAFA BAYBURTLU
Head of Department, TOBB
- Ms. AYŞE ÇELİKTEN
Head of Department, Ministry of Family and Social Policy
- Mr. HAKAN AYTEKİN
Manager, Borsa İstanbul

- Mr. KÜRŞAT YILMAZ
Manager, TSE
- Ms. REFIKA ATALAY YENEN
Manager, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. MEHMET DOĞAN
Departmental Manager, Ministry of Transport Maritime Affairs and Communications
- Mr. SAFİYE ATAKUL
Deputy Branch Manager, Ministry of Transport Maritime Affairs and Communications
- Ms. TUĞÇENAZ UĞURLU
Advisor, TOBB
- Ms. FATMA ZEHRA SAYAR
Coordinator, EXIMBANK
- Dr. MELİK AYTAÇ
Engineer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. BELDE KARACA
Engineer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. AHMET BUDAKLIER
Engineer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. İZZET YILMAZ
Engineer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. BURAK ERDOĞAN
Senior Expert, TOBB
- Ms. SEÇİL SAYIN KUTLUCA
Senior Legal Expert, SPK
- Mr. GÖKHAN GÜLEY
Expert, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. HAKAN ARSLAN
Expert, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Mr. KUBİLAY ŞİMŞEK
Expert, TOBB
- Mr. MUSTAFA ÖZSOY
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Mr. ÖZGÜ EVİRGİN
Expert, TCMB
- Mr. UTKU ŞEN
Expert, Undersecretariat of Treasury
- Ms. CANSU TANRIVERDİ
Expert, Ministry of Economy
- Ms. EDA AKÇA
Expert, Development Bank of Turkey

- Ms. NEVAL DİŞCİOĞLU
Expert, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Ms. ŞEHLA ALİ HASAN
Expert, TOBB
- Ms. GÜL ERTAN
Expert, SPK
- Mr. AHMET ŞEVKET DAYIOĞLU
EU Expert, Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Mr. KERİM TOKGÖZ
EU Expert, Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Mr. MAHMUT VARLI
Assistant Expert, Borsa İstanbul
- Mr. LOKMAN COMART
Assistant Expert, Ministry of Customs and Trade
- Ms. NİLÜFER OBA
Third Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ms. BAŞAK KARAKAYA
Translator, Ministry of Family and Social Policy
- Ms. TAMINA KİBAR
Officer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
- Ms. GÜZİN DEDE
Officer, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock

B. THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

- Mr. JAKHONGIR KHASANOV
Professional Officer, Economic Affairs Department

C. OIC SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

STATISTICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SESRIC)

- Mr. NABIL DABOUR
Assistant Director General
- Mr. MEHMET FATİH SERENLİ
Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department
- Ms. ZEHRA ZÜMRÜT SELÇUK
Director of Statistics and Information Department
- Dr. KENAN BAĞCI
Researcher
- Mr. ABDULHAMİT ÖZTÜRK
Expert
- Mr. ONUR ÇAĞLAR
Technical Cooperation Specialist

ISLAMIC CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT)

- Mr. MOKHTAR WARIDA
Assistant Director General

D. SPECIALIZED ORGANS OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB) GROUP

- Mr. ABDUL BASIT JAM
Cooperation Officer, IDB
- Mr. HUSSEIN KHALIF JAMA
Advisor to the CEO, ICIEC
- Mr. HARUN CELİK
Senior Manager, ITFC

E. AFFILIATED ORGANS OF THE OIC

ISLAMIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE (ICCIA)

- Ms. ATTIYA NAWAZISH ALI
Assistant Secretary General

STANDARDS AND METROLOGY INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (SMIC)

- Mr. İHSAN ÖVÜT
Secretary General
- Ms. EMEL GÖNÇ
Executive Assistant

F. COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

- Mr. MEHMET METİN EKER
Director General, Head of COMCEC Coordination Office
- Mr. SELÇUK KOÇ
Head of Department
- Mr. BURAK KARAGÖL
Head of Department
- Mr. FATİH ÜNLÜ
Senior Expert
- Mr. BİLGEHAN ÖZBAYLANLI
Expert
- Mr. GÖKTEN DAMAR
Expert
- Mr. CAFER BİÇER
Expert

- Mr. CEZMİ ONAT
Expert
- Mr. EMRULLAH KAYA
Expert
- Mr. İSMAİL ÇAĞRI ÖZCAN
Expert
- Mr. MEHMET TARAKÇIOĞLU
Expert
- Mr. SERVET ORÇUN ERPİŞ
Expert
- Ms. VİLDAN BARAN
Expert
- Mr. MEHMET AKİF ALANBAY
Expert
- Mr. OKAN POLAT
Expert
- Mr. NİHAT AKBALIK
Expert
- Mr. FAZIL ALATA
Expert
- Mr. MUSTAFA ADİL SAYAR
Expert
- Mr. EREN SÜMER
Expert
- Mr. HASAN YENİGÜL
Expert
- Mr. MEHMET C. AKTAŞ
Expert
- Mr. ALİ ORUÇ
Expert
- Mr. ÇAĞRI ÖZEN
Expert
- Ms. HANDE ÖZDEMİR
Acting Head of Department
- Mr. NAZIM GÜMÜŞ
Protocol Relations
- Mr. ORHAN ÖZTAŞKIN
Press and Protocol Relations
- Mr. KEMAL ARSLAN
Meeting Rooms

- Ms. LEYLA AŞK
Social Program
- Ms. ÖZGÜL YÜKSEL
Coordinator
- Ms. NAZİFE GÜLGEN
Social Program
- Ms. EMİNE DEMİREL
Documentation Center
- Ms. H. GÜL SAYIN
Documentation Center
- Mr. OZAN LİF
Documentation Center
- Mr. ERCAN İBİK
Logistic and Transportation
- Ms. EBRU ÇETİNKURŞUN KANYILMAZ
Visual Designer & Meeting Rooms
- Ms. BİLGE GÜLLÜ
Executive Secretary
- Ms. HAVVA KÖSEOĞLU
Registration Office and Accommodation
- Mr. ALİ VURAL
Web Designer & Meeting Rooms

ANNEX

II

Original: Turkish

**MESSAGE OF H.E. RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COMCEC
THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP
COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 10 May 2017)**

Honorable Chairman,

Esteemed Members of the Follow-up Committee,

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

ESSELAMU ALAIKUM VE RAHMETULLAHI VE BEREKATUH.

I salute you all wholeheartedly with warmth and respect.

I would like to welcome all the representatives participating in the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

May Allah Almighty help this meeting be a humble step towards finding solutions to the problems faced by Muslims.

I would like to thank in advance all our brothers and sisters, who are participating in this meeting, for contributing to the agenda with their ideas, suggestions and critics.

I believe that particularly in these painful times, the Follow-up Committee Meeting has gained much more importance.

Today, the Islamic world is witnessing developments that will shape and in a way determine the fate of its next century.

As Muslims, we are struggling to simultaneously overcome many threats, trials and tribulations.

On the one hand, terror organizations such as DAESH, Al Qaeda and FETO are shedding the blood of Muslims by hiding behind religious concepts; while, on the other hand, social maladies, such as Islamophobia, xenophobia and cultural racism are recurring in the West.

That being said, we see that certain countries provoke sectarian differences in the Islamic world for their short term interests, based on expansionism and fanaticism.

It is heartrending and agonizing to watch people, who for centuries have been turning towards Mecca five times a day and believing in the same Prophet, slaughter each other on a regular basis.

Our future is sacrificed for today's interests.

Nationalism that was stamped out by our Prophet is creeping through the Islamic Ummah like poison ivy.

Our brothers and sisters in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan and many other places have to live with death, cruelty and terror at every moment.

It is our responsibility to say "stop" to this harrowing and anguishing picture.

We cannot permit the greed, grudges and self interest of certain people to steal our future.

We cannot sacrifice our 1,400 year civilization to the interests of some contemptuous and hubristic groups.

There is one truth of which we all need to be aware: It is the strength of our fraternity that defines us as Muslims.

In fact, all Muslims have to "be brethren and stand together, linked like bricks in a wall," as ordered by our Prophet.

This is the solution that will thwart the seeds of strife and discord being sown among the Islamic Ummah, and undo these heinous scenarios.

My Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

It is with this understanding that we in Turkey are taking action both in our region and across the world.

We stand by the oppressed and mistreated, regardless of their origin, race, language, denomination or disposition.

We are working determinedly to settle disputes between our brothers and sisters and to reduce tensions.

We closely follow the problems and hardships faced by Muslims, from Palestine to Pakistan, from Arakan to Africa, and from the Balkans to Turkestan.

We have welcomed with open arms over three million of our Syrian and Iraqi brothers and sisters, who have been struggling to survive against state terror for six years, and who have now found asylum in our country after escaping bombs and massacres.

According to UN calculations, the amount we have spent from our budget for those in need exceeds 25 billion dollars.

With the Operation Euphrates Shield, we eliminated terrorism from an area of approximately 2,500 km², enabling 50,000 Syrians to return to their homeland.

We are taking every initiative and responsibility, and holding extensive talks, to find a political solution to the Syrian crisis.

We are also working towards alleviating the effects of the famine in Africa, which is blighting the lives of millions of our brothers and sisters.

The current situation in Somalia and East Africa is much larger and more challenging than can be handled by a few countries.

Each passing second is costing the lives of women, children and civilians.

I call on all member states to take action without delay to fight the drought in Somalia and East Africa.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and COMCEC are crucial platforms for finding solutions to our problems, consulting on our issues, and making ourselves heard across the world.

Member states should make the most of this opportunity.

Together, we should put every effort into strengthening the Organization and COMCEC, as well as increasing their influence and international reputation.

As you know, Turkey hosted the 13th Islamic Summit Conference last year.

We took very important decisions at the Istanbul summit, especially with regard to economy.

I hereby declare that throughout our chairmanship, we will take every measure to implement the resolutions.

Furthermore, the follow up of the implementation of the resolution we adopted, in the economic sections of the OIC 2025 Program of Action by COMCEC, bears great importance for coordinating our cooperation efforts in the area of economy.

The thematic research reports presented to COMCEC's Working Group Meetings provide serious contributions that help us see, from a closer perspective, the status of our region in various economic fields.

I attach great importance to the policy recommendations developed with the active participation and contributions of member countries in these meetings.

I believe that the implementation of these recommendations by the member countries is crucial for policy approximation among our countries.

The COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism is also paramount for mobilizing existing human resources and to develop a common working culture.

I call on the member countries to actively participate in the Working Groups and to benefit more efficiently from the COMCEC Project Funding mechanism.

In addition, for increasing passenger mobility and freight shipment between us, we have to constantly improve cooperation in the field of transport.

Reinforcing our cooperation in the field of transport - one of the six areas covered under the COMCEC Strategy - is important for facilitating trade between our member countries and accelerating integration.

In today's world, where global competition is intensifying, the cost and time advantage gained through efficient transport networks will make significant

contributions to enhancing our competitive power, improving our trade, and strengthening our cultural ties.

In this respect, I believe that we should combine efforts to plan an effective and efficient transport system and implement joint decision making processes.

I therefore consider it to be highly pertinent that the main theme of the 33rd Session of COMCEC, to be held in November, has been chosen as, Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries.

With this understanding, I trust that the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of COMCEC will prove to be most beneficial and auspicious for all of our member countries.

Once again, I salute all participants wholeheartedly. May Allah lead you to success in your endeavors.

May the peace, mercy and abundance of Allah be with you.

ANNEX

III

Original: English

**OPENING STATEMENT BY H.E. LÜTFİ ELVAN,
MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP
COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 10 May 2017)**

As-Selamu Alaikum,

Esteemed Members of the Follow-up Committee,
Distinguished Guests,

I would like to express my pleasure of meeting with you once again, on the occasion of the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) and welcome you all to Ankara.

The Follow-up Committee fulfills a significant task in terms of overcoming challenges regarding the implementation of the COMCEC resolutions, drawing the agenda of the COMCEC and formulating important recommendations in our cooperation areas. I wish you all a fruitful meeting in advance in your crucial assignment.

Esteemed Participants,

As we are all aware, we had a target of reaching 20 percent intra-OIC trade in 2015 as set by the previous OIC Ten-Year Plan of Action. We have reached and surpassed this significant target by achieving 20.33 percent intra OIC trade in 2015.

This is indeed a crucial achievement for us. However, we should keep in mind that fluctuations in oil prices also had a role in this achievement and obviously we cannot rely on one single commodity or just raw materials in our economic and commercial achievements.

Now, we have a new goal of realizing 25 percent intra-OIC trade to be achieved by 2025. With staunch and resolute efforts, I am confident that we can reach and even go beyond this target within this period. To that end, definitely we should take several steps simultaneously at national and regional levels. We have various challenges to overcome on our way. Some member countries' trade with other OIC members is rather low. For that reason, each of our member countries especially those with low intra-OIC figures need to develop

national strategies and programmes to enhance their trade with other brotherly Muslim countries.

Moreover, our share in global trade has shown a serious decline recently. OIC Member Countries had approximately 12 percent share in the world trade in 2012 but this has dropped to 9.5 percent in 2015. This decrease should be considered as an important forewarning for us.

Decline in oil prices once more underlines the necessity of economic reforms towards reducing our dependence on the exports of limited number of commodities. I am happy that most of our members are aware of this fact and they endeavor to diversify their economies and exports. That is a very good sign and we should continue these efforts keeping in mind that this is a long, sometimes tiresome but a necessary journey.

You will remember the example of Southeast Asian countries which have realized significant economic strides since 1960s. Among our brotherly member countries for example, Malaysia has also achieved impressive economic development and transformed its economy through reducing dependence on agriculture and commodity exports to a more diversified and open economy.

My country, Turkey is also another good example. After mid 1980's, we have been able to transform our economy with a strategy of export-led growth and our production and exports have increased remarkably since then.

As OIC Member countries, even if we cannot produce and export high-tech products in the short run, we need to continue our endeavors. At least, we can strive to process raw materials locally and we can produce the equipment to be used within the country. This is of course a long process that requires patience. We have to make investments step by step to strengthen industrial production base and services in our economies.

Distinguished Participants,

According to projections, economic activities will gain a momentum in 2017 and 2018. Global GDP growth is expected to increase, rising from 3.1 percent in 2016 to 3.5 percent in 2017 and 3.6 percent in 2018. However, this estimated growth would still remain under the average of GDP growth which was around 4 percent in the two decades prior to the financial crisis which occurred in 2008.

As the Islamic countries, we should endeavor to grow significantly more than the world average and surpass the global growth steadily for closing the huge gap in terms of our economic and social welfare.

Dear Friends,

With this perspective, we have to take necessary steps to establish the ground for well-functioning economies with efficient trade networks. In this respect, COMCEC and efforts under the COMCEC Strategy provide us new avenues for cooperation especially for learning from each other.

Within the framework of COMCEC Strategy, working groups have successfully concluded 9 rounds of meetings in 6 cooperation areas since 2013 and deliberated on important issues and themes in each cooperation area. These meetings are suitable platforms to share experiences and best practices among ourselves and will serve to approximate policies among the Member Countries in the long term. I believe that the policy recommendations produced in these meetings will provide the basis for concrete policy actions in our member countries. Moreover, we are really happy that in these gatherings, our experts conduct high level technical debates with their counterparts and produce crucial documents like the COMCEC Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) Guideline as a practical tool and roadmap for the Member Countries aiming to develop their MFT sector.

Regarding the second mechanism of the Strategy, the Project Funding Mechanism, 31 projects have been implemented successfully by the Member countries and OIC Institutions so far. For this year, 15 more projects are being implemented with more than 45 beneficiary member countries.

I would like to highlight that efficiency of the COMCEC programmes and projects and the success of our initiatives for economic and commercial cooperation depend to a large extent on your sustained efforts and contributions. Seizing the opportunity, I would like to invite all member countries to benefit more from the mechanisms brought by the COMCEC including Working Groups and Project Funding Mechanism.

Distinguished Delegates,

Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (TPS-OIC) is the most important project of the COMCEC in the field of trade. We have already reached the required number of member countries for the operationalization of the System by the end of 2014. However, one more step remained unfulfilled which is updating the concession lists. The participating member states need to

update their lists for the full implementation of the System. In addition, customs authorities of each participating state should also make their dispositions for timely adapting the system once it begins functioning.

To be frank, we have been too late to put into effect our single multilateral preferential system. We initiated our trade negotiations in mid-1980's even when WTO was not yet established. Now we are in 2017, there is not yet a single item traded among ourselves under the preferential terms. Despite the ratification of the agreements by sufficient number of member countries, the necessary technical works could not yet be accomplished. We have to speed up the process, we have to think new mechanisms and ways for enhancing our trade.

In this respect, we should also enhance our efforts for facilitating trade among our countries. Trade facilitation has a considerable positive effect on trade volumes. With this perspective, we should simplify and harmonize our custom procedures for saving the costs and the time of our traders so that they can achieve higher levels of competitiveness and trade volumes.

Among the trade facilitation efforts under the OIC umbrella, I really appreciate that COMCEC Trade Working Group have also taken up various aspects of the issue in its four meetings as follows “Improving Efficiency of the Customs Procedures”, “Establishing Well-Functioning National Trade Facilitation Bodies”, “Improving the Border Agency Cooperation” and “Single Window Systems in the OIC Member States”. Member Countries have actively participated in all these meetings denoting the relevance of the subject for our economies. I hope we will also take necessary actions in line with the outcomes and policy recommendations of these Meetings.

Another important factor that will contribute to our trade volume is to establish efficient arbitration mechanisms through which the companies can solve their possible disputes. In this respect, we have taken an important resolution at the previous COMCEC Session. Meanwhile we have also been working on establishing web-based gold trading and clearing platform and real estate electronic platform as significant sub-items of our financial cooperation. As all of these mechanisms can contribute significantly to our cooperation efforts, we need to expedite the process for their establishment.

Distinguished Guests,

Physical transportation infrastructure has also direct and indirect positive impacts on the economic growth and development of trade relations.

Particularly, well-running transport corridors bear utmost importance as they increase mobility, interconnectivity and bring new investment opportunities. Accordingly, transport corridors enhance access to goods and services and facilitate employment.

Considering the importance of this issue, we have devoted the exchange of views session of the 33rd COMCEC Session to the theme of “Improvement of Transnational Transportation Corridors”. I sincerely believe that we have a lot to learn from each other in this crucial topic and will accordingly adopt important resolutions on the issue.

Dear Colleagues,

Unfortunately, Islamic world has been undergoing difficult times due to various reasons. We all feel the pains and problems that our fellow brothers and sisters are facing not only in the Islamic world but across the world. Our Prophet Muhammed Mustafa (Peace be upon him) said: **“The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”** Our Prophet had also demonstrated, in various instances, how to show affection and mercy to all creatures.

Indeed, we may be spread to various geographies but we are the parts of the same family. Cooperation and harmony are essential for overcoming the problems and setbacks we face and unity is the keyword for our success. We can only overcome the hardships through unity and efficient cooperation. This statement is valid for all member countries as well as for all OIC institutions. We have to use our limited resources optimally. Effective coordination in our activities will definitely bear the desired fruitful outcomes for our Member Countries.

Distinguished Participants,

As I conclude my remarks, I sincerely wish you all successful deliberations during the 33rd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee. May Allah The All-Mighty make our efforts fruitful to contribute to peace, prosperity and welfare of the Islamic Ummah.

Thank you.

ANNEX

IV

Original: English

**MESSAGE OF H.E. DR. YOUSEF A. AL-OTHAIMEEN,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION
OF THE ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)**

**THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE FOLLOW-UP
COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 10 May 2017)**

Your Excellency, Lutfi Elvan, Minister of Development of Turkey

Your Excellencies, Ministers and Heads of Delegation

Honourable Delegates

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalam alaekum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu.

It is, for me, a great honour and privilege to address the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC). Allow me to, first and foremost, express my deepest appreciation to His Excellency President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Government and the friendly people of Republic of Turkey for their consistent support for the OIC in general and for the activities of COMCEC in particular.

This Follow-Up meeting is taking place at a time when the economies of OIC member states are resurging from the recent past decline of commodity prices and the attendant slow growth rates both in developed and developing countries. Fortunately, current statistics and forecasts indicate a rebound in the average growth rate from 3.4% in 2015 to 3.6% and 4.0% in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Similarly, OIC countries witnessed an increasing trend in their economic activities with their GDP increasing from US\$ 13.9 trillion in 2011 to US\$ 17.1 trillion in 2015.

Encouraged by these changing trends, the activities of OIC in the economic domain since your last meeting has been characterized by the harmonization of policies on infrastructure development and the development of joint integrative

projects. The other noticeable priority is the consolidation of cooperation frameworks on South-South cooperation and support for Least developed Countries of the OIC. These approaches are aimed at increasing competitiveness of OIC products, generating employment, especially among the youth, women and rural populations and steering OIC economies on the path of sustainable growth and development.

Accordingly, OIC's prioritization of infrastructure development as contained in the new ten-year programme of action tagged OIC 2025 has been given adequate effect. I am pleased to report that the draft OIC Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration Policy is now underway. This policy is aimed at harmonizing our national efforts for the eventual development of regional goods in the domain of agriculture and rural development, expansion of intra-OIC trade and access to OIC markets and addressing such logistical challenges through transport sector development.

Following inputs received from member states, the thrust of this OIC policy document is anchored on supporting Member States in six priority sectors, namely: transport; energy; telecommunication and postal services; trade; industrial development; and agricultural development. The policy will revise the well-known Special Programme for Development of Africa, which has hitherto approved projects within the framework of the immediate past Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in African member states of the OIC. Such projects include, among others: construction and upgrading of 2,500 KM of road in 13 member states, production of 900 MW of electricity in 6 member countries, building more than 325 new schools, 8 university and 3 technical colleges, building 10 new hospitals and 120 clinics, cultivating 800,000 hectares of land and execution of 10 strategic grain reserves to support food security.

The policy will also take on board the recently approved Special Programme for Central Asia, which seeks to finance projects in four critical socio-economic sectors, namely energy, transportation, agriculture and trade. As a component of the OIC Plan of Action for Central Asia, this regional programme would prioritise OIC cooperation activities with Central Asia in such areas as: supporting SMEs, development of strategic commodities, development of quality transport network, maintenance policies and necessary equipment, implementation of transport safety measures, modernization of border gates, increase crop production and upgrading irrigation infrastructure, development of storage and distribution hubs, among others.

Furthermore, the various sectoral ministerial meetings, which have sought to pull resources and actions among OIC member states in the relevant fields of socio-economic endeavours have continued to review modalities for implementing the agreed goals of the OIC for the next decade. On their part, OIC institutions have also spared no efforts in elaborating work programmes aimed at facilitating the task of COMCEC and indeed that of this Follow-Up Committee.

In this regard, the scheduled convening of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Transport in Khartoum during the year is aimed at addressing the logistical challenges to intra-OIC trade. The said conference will, among other issues, address on-going regional transportation projects such as: OIC Dakar-Port Sudan Railway; Transport component of OIC Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration Policy: Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway project; and Trans-Saharan Road Corridor, among others. This is more so considering the fact that the improvement of intra-OIC transport connectivity is among the major priorities of the OIC economic cooperation agenda and our Member States engaged in the implementation of a number of transport projects in the various sub-regions. Accordingly, convening of the Second OIC Ministerial Conference on Transport would be most timely indeed and I am happy to inform you that the Government of Sudan has graciously offered to host this Conference during the second half of the current year.

Mr. Chairman,

Honorable Delegates,

In the area of trade and investment promotion, I am glad to inform this Committee that despite the difficult business climate in our countries, intra-OIC trade has continued to increase on a steady basis in 2016 due to the various interventions of our trade institutions. The successful staging of the 15th Islamic Trade Fair in Riyadh and the two side meetings of trade promotion and investment agencies, held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 22-26 May 2016 are aimed at realizing the new OIC target for intra-OIC trade, which is 25% in 2025. In addition, the ITFC's interventions on trade financing, which stood at US\$ 6.48 billion in 2016, are also significant. For their part, the ICIEC and the ICD have provided made interventions in the area of export credit and insurance as well as Islamic financing for the private sector respectively. All these actions are also geared towards attaining the above mentioned target as approved by the 13th OIC Summit held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey in April 2016.

I am also pleased to inform that during 2016 series of activities were conducted by OIC and its relevant institutions to commemorate Konya in Turkey as OIC City of Tourism for 2016. Furthermore, the Government of Saudi Arabia has organized the launching ceremony of Madina as OIC City of Tourism for 2017. In this regard, relevant OIC institutions have planned a number of commemorative activities during this year. These events serve a good opportunity to learn more about these cities as well as provide an impetus to further boost intra-OIC tourist exchanges. In addition, the 10th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers which will be held in Dhaka, People's Republic of Bangladesh on 12-14 November 2017 will review the OIC activities towards developing Islamic tourism, tourism infrastructure and staging of OIC Tourism fairs as well as select OIC Cities of Tourism for 2019 and 2020, among others.

In the domain of agriculture and food security, the consolidation of the structures of Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) has reached an advanced stage, in view of the finalization and impending signing of the Headquarters Agreement between this new OIC specialized institution and the Government of Kazakhstan during this month. This will certainly lead to the imminent take-off of the 5-year Plan of Action in the area of agriculture, rural development and food security. In addition, the relevant OIC institutions such as SESRIC and IDB have continued to conduct training and capacity building programmes as well as financing projects in this domain in OIC Member States.

Within the context of promoting the development of Islamic economy and Islamic financial products, the OIC has embarked of series of activities in the area of Islamic micro-finance, Islamic tourism and indeed Islamic labour practices. In this regard, I am glad to report that the 2nd Meeting of Steering Committee of Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers, which was held in Jakarta, Indonesia last month recommended the elaboration of three important OIC legal frameworks on Mutual Recognition of Skills; Bilateral Agreement on Exchange of Skilled Labour; and OIC Labour Market Strategy.

These three mechanisms will further advance intra-OIC cooperation in this critical sector. In a similar vein, the Workshop on Promoting Research and Study on Islamic Concepts and Practices on Employment held in Jakarta, Indonesia back to back to 2nd Steering Committee recommended, among others, conducting more research and studies as well as formulating Islamic Labour Standards. Accordingly, the 4th Islamic Conference of Labour Ministers

scheduled for Saudi Arabia on 29-30 November 2017 will deliberate on these new frameworks and their mechanisms of implementation.

Your Excellency,

Distinguished Delegates,

Before concluding, I wish to reiterate my fervent desire to consolidate on the gains and achievements already realized in the above-mentioned areas through closer cooperation and coordination with the Follow-Up Committee of COMCEC. This is as we seek to ensure the vigorous, diligent and timely implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly of COMCEC.

I thank you for kind your kind attention and I wish you all a successful deliberation at this meeting.

Wassalamu Alaykum wa-Rahmatullah wa-Barakatuh.

ANNEX

V

Original: English

**REPORT OF THE 30th MEETING OF
THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE
(Ankara, 9 May 2017)**

1. The 30th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held on May 9th, 2017 in Ankara, on the sidelines of the 33rd Meeting of the COMCEC Follow-up Committee.

2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Mehmet Metin EKER, Director General at the COMCEC Coordination Office. In addition to the OIC General Secretariat and COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO), the following OIC Institutions attended the Meeting:

- Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)
- Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT)
- Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group
- International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)-IDB Group
- Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA)
- Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

3. The Meeting agreed on the following agenda items for discussion:

- Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy: Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the COMCEC Strategy
 - The List of Activities of the OIC Institutions Aligned with the COMCEC Strategy and COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations
 - The Issue of Measuring the Impact of the Activities of the OIC Institutions
- Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination Among the OIC Institutions
 - Developing Multi-Year Technical Capacity Building Programs
- Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the Implementation of the SDGs in OIC Member States
- Implementation of the Economic Cooperation Section of the OIC-2025
- Any Other Business

Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy: Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the COMCEC Strategy

4. Emphasizing the significance of the contributions of the OIC Institutions to the realization of the COMCEC Strategy and the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations, the Committee reviewed the completed and planned activities for the relevant OIC Institutions, aligned with the COMCEC Strategy for the period December 2016- November 2017, based on the cooperation areas, namely trade, transport and communications, tourism, agriculture, poverty alleviation and financial cooperation. The Committee was also briefed by the relevant OIC Institutions on their planned activities.

(The list of activities organized and to be organized by the OIC Institutions aligned with the COMCEC Strategy between December 2016 and November 2017 is attached as Annex 1.)

5. The Committee was informed by the CCO that out of 235 activities of the OIC Institutions implemented/to be implemented in the reviewed period, 36.6 percent of the activities will be/were implemented in trade area followed by poverty alleviation (24.3%), financial cooperation (9.8%), agriculture (9.4%), tourism (4.7%) and transport (4.7%) respectively. The Committee was also informed that with respect to types of the activities, the Institutions specially focused on trainings and technical assistance programs (30.6%), various expert meetings (16.6%) and Workshops (14.9%) between December 2016 and November 2017. In view of the fact that the research reports and studies constitute only 8.4 percent of all activities, the Committee highlighted the importance of conducting greater number of research reports and studies in the future.

6. The CCO informed the Committee about the sectoral themes to be supported by the COMCEC Coordination Office in the 5th Project Call to be made in September 2017, under the COMCEC Project Funding. In this regard, the Committee underlined the importance of the submission of the project proposals by the OIC Institutions through COMCEC Project Funding for the realization of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations. The Committee also underscored that the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations should be utilized by the OIC Institutions in planning their future cooperation activities and programs.

7. With a view to better reflecting the activities of the OIC Institutions aligned with COMCEC Strategy and Policy Recommendations adopted at the Ministerial level, the Committee requested the OIC Institutions to indicate specifically the relevance between the activities and the policy recommendations in their lists of activities.

8. Highlighting the importance of measuring the impact of the activities implemented by the OIC Institutions, the Committee asked the relevant OIC Institutions to present their best practices in this crucial subject and the CCO to present the practices from the other international institutions/organizations on this topic to the next Sessional Committee Meeting.

Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination among the OIC Institutions

9. With respect to the sub-item titled "Developing Multi-Year Technical Capacity Building Programs", the Committee was briefed by the ITFC (IDB Group) on the comments of the ICCIA and CCO to the sample "Multi-year Cooperation/Capacity Building Program of Trade Facilitation for Enhanced Regional Cooperation & Seamless Connectivity". The Committee thanked the ITFC (IDB Group) for their efforts, requested the remaining institutions to share their views, asked ITFC (IDB Group) to revise the aforementioned document accordingly and to circulate the revised document to the OIC Institutions one month before the next Sessional Committee Meeting for the further deliberations.

Possible Contributions of the OIC Institutions to the Implementation of the SDGs in OIC Member States

10. The Committee was informed by the SESRIC that "Tendency Survey on SDG Priorities of OIC Member Countries" was circulated to the Member Countries in line with the relevant resolutions of the 31st and 32nd Sessions of the COMCEC and 27 member countries have communicated their completed or partial responses to the SESRIC. The Committee was also informed that SESRIC will submit a report on the Member Countries' survey responses to the 33rd COMCEC Ministerial Session.

11. The Committee reviewed “the Template of the List of Activities of the OIC Institutions to SDGs”, which was proposed by the CCO in line with the relevant resolution of the 32nd COMCEC Ministerial Session. After deliberations, the Committee asked the OIC Institutions to give their feedback and comments to the aforementioned template within one month especially for its simplification. Accordingly, the Committee requested the CCO to revise and simplify the proposed format taking into consideration the comments of the OIC Institutions.

12. While underlining that the possible contributions of the OIC Institutions can play a role for the implementation of the SDGs in the member countries, the Committee emphasized the realization of the objectives of the OIC 2025 Programme of Action and the COMCEC Strategy.

Implementation of the Economic Cooperation Section of the OIC-2025

13. Regarding the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action, the Committee underlined the importance of getting the inputs of the Member Countries as well as the OIC Institutions and Standing Committees to the implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action. In this respect, the Committee noted that Standing Committees, including COMCEC, can be utilized in their respective fields for expediting the receipt of the inputs from the Member Countries.

Any Other Business

14. The Committee Meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

ANNEX

VI

Original : English



**AGENDA OF THE 33rd MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC**

(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation
3. The Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action
4. Intra-OIC Trade
5. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
6. Improving Transport and Communications
7. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
8. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
9. Alleviating Poverty
10. Deepening Financial Cooperation
11. Preparations for the Exchange of Views on “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”
12. Draft Agenda of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC
13. Any Other Business
14. Adoption of the Report

ANNEX

VII

Original: English

THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 9TH MEETING OF THE TRADE WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Trade Working Group (TWG) has successfully held its 9th Meeting on March 9th, 2017 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “*Single Window Systems in the OIC Member States.*” During the Meeting, Trade Working Group, made deliberations for policy approximation among the Member Countries regarding developing Single Window Systems. The Room Document, prepared in accordance with the main findings of the analytical study conducted specifically for the 9th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group titled “*Single Window Systems in the OIC Member States*” and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions sent to the COMCEC Trade Working Group focal points by the COMCEC Coordination Office. During the Meeting, the participants agreed on the policy recommendations included in the Room Document. The existing document includes these policy recommendations highlighted during the Meeting.

Policy Advice 1: Strengthening Single Window efforts in OIC Member States by developing integrated Single Window strategies that reflect national and regional requirements and actively engage the stakeholders in this process

Rationale:

A strategy process leading to a concise strategy document is a crucial step in the process of developing a Single Window. Decisions that are taken in the early phases stages of a Single Window initiative shape the planning, design and development of the system. A Single Window is a long-term commitment to a transformation from a large number of stakeholders. Therefore, these stakeholders, and in particular so the trading community, should be closely involved in the design phase. The trading community’s perspective ensures that the Single Window caters to their needs as much as the needs of the government agencies. The consultative bodies, such as trade facilitation committees, should be integrated into the business strategy development process. Moreover, regional perspective should be considered while designing the Single Window Systems.

The Single Window strategy should rest upon the identification of business and technology requirements and define priorities as well as clear objectives and measurable performance indicators to guide the Single Window project. Once the Single Window is operational it is necessary to continue measuring its performance and set qualitative and quantitative performance for service delivery. A cost and benefit analysis should be conducted while preparing visions and strategy documents.

Policy Advice 2: Improving the effectiveness of Single Window projects by identifying and implementing necessary changes in the laws and regulatory framework and operational practices

Rationale:

A Single Window is a major transformation of the way how the government agencies operate and interact with the trading community. Such a transformation requires changes in regulatory framework that applies to the import, export and transit of goods and in operational practices and business processes. Single Windows can only successfully deliver results if these changes are clearly identified and acted upon in an expedited manner. This requires strong political support to bring about changes across government agencies and departments.

The analysis of agencies' current practices and procedures (AS-IS status) is the starting point for changes as it allows for the identification of prevalent and potential operational bottlenecks. These business processes must be re-designed (TO-BE status) to speed up, simplify and coordinate the processing and interaction. The legal, regulatory and administrative procedures need to be aligned in accordance to the re-designed processes. In this respect, in order to promote paperless or no paper trade, it is of utmost importance that the legal framework for e-documents and digital signature are in place at the national, and where applicable, supra-national level.

Policy Advice 3: Prioritizing flexibility, scalability, safety and interoperability of IT architecture of Single Windows Systems

Rationale:

Single Windows leverage operational changes and IT to achieve improvements to the accessibility, costs and quality of services. The Single Window IT architecture has to be consistently integrated with the business objectives and fully support the functional requirements of the stakeholders that are part of the Single Window environment. All stakeholders need to understand early in the design process how the IT architecture contributes to the delivery of the Single Window objectives and its costs implications.

The IT architecture must be flexible and scalable to accommodate rapid changes of the IT development, diverse technologies, to integrate new technological evolutions and to deliver new services over time. Furthermore, the Single Window IT architecture should have the ability to integrate and support diverse IT systems and applications. Therefore, interoperability, meaning the ability to provide collaborative, networked and interconnected business processes, should be taken into consideration while defining the IT architecture of Single Window Systems. High availability and business continuity is one of the most important aspects of the Single Window System. For ensuring the high availability and business continuity, the IT infrastructure

of Single Window Systems needs to be designed to be protected from human and natural disasters with a fault tolerant system and off-site data backup.

Policy Advice 4: Promoting cross-border interconnectivity and interoperability of the national Single Window Systems in the OIC Region towards establishing Regional Single Window Systems

Rationale:

For many years, Single Windows systems were national efforts. With the increasing number of national Single Windows, there is a growing potential to leverage more benefits for the trading and transport community by fostering cross-border exchange and regional Single Window Systems. Such regional approaches aim at the electronic and automatic exchange of information among participating countries.

The main challenges for Regional Single Window Systems initiatives are, the lack of interconnectivity, interoperability and harmonized data and processes among national Single Window Systems. In this respect, while further encouraging national Single Window Systems, it is necessary to support cross-border projects amongst OIC Member countries that already operate a Single Window.

These projects can focus on the exchange of selected documents within clearly determined business processes, such as the Certificate of origin within OIC Member countries that are member of a free trade area or customs union. Such projects will encourage the alignment to common standards for data and information exchange.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:

COMCEC Trade Working Group: In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

COMCEC Project Funding: Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for project proposals each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above-mentioned policy areas and their sub-areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects. The projects may include seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

ANNEX

VIII

Original: English

THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE 9TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) successfully held its 9th Meeting on March 16th, 2017 in Ankara, Turkey with the theme of “Increasing Broadband Internet Penetration in OIC Member Countries”. During the Meeting, TCWG made deliberations concerning policy approximation among the Member Countries in the field of broadband penetration. The Room Document, prepared in accordance with the main findings of the research report conducted for the 9th Meeting of TCWG and the answers of the Member Countries to the policy questions, were the main input for the discussions. During the Meeting, the participants discussed the policy recommendations given below.

A. Policy Recommendations for all OIC Member Countries

Policy Recommendation I: Preparing national broadband strategies with the involvement of the all relevant stakeholders

Rationale:

National broadband strategies are important policy documents which basically determine the goals for increasing broadband coverage and penetration for the respective countries (differentiating between consumers, businesses and government services), and define technology, competition, and investment models. Within this perspective, national broadband strategies aim at ensuring fast and high-quality broadband access at affordable prices for all segments of the society as well as strengthening sectoral competition. In addition, national broadband strategies facilitate the development of data collection mechanisms as well as monitoring and evaluation of the achieved progress.

Policy Recommendation II: Enhancing digital literacy by embedding programs in the formal education system and encouraging non-formal initiatives targeting specific segments of the population

Rationale:

Digital literacy¹ is crucially important to reap the full benefits of information and communication technologies. Individuals with sufficient level of digital literacy

¹ Digital literacy is defined as the “ability to use digital technology, communication tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information” (Hauge and Prier, 2010).

demand broadband internet services and can create additional value by utilizing them. Digital literacy can be enhanced by embedding programs in the formal education system, and by encouraging non-formal training initiatives targeting specific segments of the society (elderly, rural poor, etc.). Digital literacy programs embedded in the formal education system should be large scale, centralized and focus on improving skills on using devices and services. On the other hand, non-formal programs can be initiated by offering online training, building local access centers in areas with limited ICT adoption, implementing programs in public schools or cultural centers together with local authorities, and deploying trainers to rural areas.

B. Policy Recommendations for the OIC Member Countries with Different Stage of Broadband Development

1. OIC Member Countries at advanced stage² of broadband development

Policy Recommendation I: Achieving high-speed Internet coverage in rural and isolated areas through regulatory holidays³ and direct subsidies with the purpose of improving the broadband investment business case

Rationale:

High-speed broadband service is already provided in urban and suburban areas of the advanced countries. Achieving high-speed coverage in rural and isolated areas remains an important challenge before the advanced countries. By alleviating some business case constraints, approaches combining regulatory holidays and direct subsidies aim at addressing this issue. In order to enhance deployment of next generation networks in rural areas, the member countries can encourage the operators through regulatory holidays, which exempt them from the obligation of sharing their network with competitors in rural areas. Furthermore, subsidies, as co-financing mechanisms, can also be utilized in deploying broadband infrastructure in areas with limited return on investment.

Policy Recommendation II: Enactment of financial incentives to operators for deploying 4G

Rationale:

Concerning broadband penetration, full deployment of 3G has been fulfilled in most of advanced and intermediate OIC Member Countries. At this point, 4G

² OIC Member Countries at advanced stage refers to the countries which have high coverage and adoption of broadband internet.

³ Regulatory holiday refers to the absence of some regulatory obligation to provide access, at least for a predefined period of time.

technology has been deployed in 41 OIC countries although coverage rates remain significantly low, benefitting primarily urban populations. Many operators are reluctant to proceed towards fully deploying 4G before achieving a reasonable rate of return on the prior generation. Therefore, in order to accelerate 4G deployment, governments can consider enacting financial incentives for operators. In this respect, tax exemption for the provision of network equipment can be utilized. Furthermore, governments can reduce spectrum licensing costs.

2. OIC Member Countries at an intermediate stage⁴ of broadband development

Policy Recommendation I: Reducing cost of broadband services through targeted public policy initiatives

Rationale:

Increasing demand is one of the biggest challenges faced by the OIC Member States with intermediate broadband deployment. In order to reduce access prices for end-users, governments can either reduce taxes on service and devices or provide subsidies. These could be done in the form of a plain voucher or a tax refund for qualifying segments of the population (e.g. students). The second option is to negotiate an agreement between the government and private sector broadband providers to offer reduced prices for certain groups. The third option comprises offering free internet access through Wi-Fi services located in public areas, such as squares, libraries, and transportation hubs.

Policy Recommendation II: Lowering the cultural and linguistic barriers through development of user-friendly local platforms, content, and applications.

Rationale:

Cultural and linguistic barriers have a negative impact on the demand for broadband Internet services. Also, the lack of content in local languages and cultural irrelevance represent a major barrier for adoption of Internet. It is apparent that cultural and linguistic relevance encourages people to make more use of internet. In response to this challenge, governments together with the private sector should promote the development of local digital content, user-friendly platforms and applications and thus increase the internet penetration.

⁴ OIC Member Countries at intermediate stage generally have advanced coverage but limited broadband penetration.

3. OIC Member Countries at an initial stage⁵ of broadband development

Policy Recommendation I: Offering a low-priced broadband service for consumers by state-owned and government subsidized telecommunications operators

Rationale:

Generally, the countries at initial phase of broadband development are the ones which have not completely privatized their telecommunications industry. The lack of competition directly affects the affordability of broadband services. Within this framework, since affordability remains one of the biggest problems faced by the OIC Member Countries at initial stage of broadband development, state-owned broadband providers can assume responsibility, as a public service entity, for providing affordable broadband access services for end users. This may also encourage private operators to decrease their prices.

Policy Recommendation II: Offering a low-priced or free broadband service targeted for disadvantaged segments of the population

Rationale:

Disadvantaged socio-demographic groups have limited capacity to afford the acquisition of broadband services. Governments can develop sound policies for creating an appropriate environment where disadvantaged groups could afford broadband services. Governments can also offer free internet access in the public institutions such as schools, libraries or health clinics. For this purpose, governments can encourage private operators to offer a low-priced broadband service for disadvantaged segments of the population. This can be achieved in the context of the formulation of a national broadband plan. Alternatively, it could be achieved as part of an agreement between the government regulator and a private incumbent operator as a condition for allowing the latter to pursue a particular initiative (e.g. a merger or an acquisition).

⁵ OIC Member Countries at initial stage refers to the countries which need to increase both supply and demand for broadband services. For those countries, a combination of infrastructure deployment incentives and demand stimulation policies are required to increase broadband penetration.

ANNEX

IX

Original: English

DRAFT COMCEC MFT GUIDELINE FOR REGULATING ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS

With the rising numbers of Muslim travelers, who have unique faith-based needs, tourism businesses around the world have started to pay attention to the needs of this growing and lucrative market segment. Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) is defined as “the activities of Muslim travelers who do not wish to compromise their faith-based needs while travelling for a purpose, which is permissible.”⁶

Given the growing importance of the MFT market, COMCEC commissioned the following three studies on MFT:

1. *Muslim Friendly Tourism: Understanding the Demand and Supply Sides in the OIC Member Countries*
2. *Muslim Friendly Tourism: Developing and Marketing MFT Products and Services in the OIC Member Countries*
3. *Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT): Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries*

The findings of the third MFT study - *Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries* were presented to the 9th Meeting of the Tourism Working Group held on February 16th, 2017 in Ankara.

In recent years, the tourism industry has started to grasp and address the distinct needs of Muslim travelers. Muslim-friendly travel is seen as a promising niche market by many accommodation providers. There is no current consensus on which MFT elements to incorporate, however, accommodation establishments make their decision based on the ease of implementation, the cost, and the impact on non-Muslim guests. Previous research studies show that needs of Muslim and non-Muslim travelers do overlap in some areas, such as a hotel's location and price, which are critical for travelers, regardless of faith. Furthermore, Muslim and non-Muslim travelers alike value many of the characteristics captured by conventional quality standards, including cleanliness, spaciousness and convenience. However, research has indicated that Muslim travelers have specific faith-related needs; some of which may even clash with the needs of non-Muslim travelers, including, for instance the absence of alcohol from hotel premises. Given the varying levels of MFT services and facilities offered in the tourism industry, there is a need for regulation, especially in the accommodation sector.

Based on the COMCEC *Muslim Friendly Tourism (MFT) Regulating Accommodation Establishments in the OIC Member Countries* study which includes insights from case studies, surveys, expert interviews as well as an analysis of existing standards, this document presents basic MFT Regulation guidelines for OIC and Non-OIC countries. It presents key considerations in evaluating and setting up of MFT guidelines, and

⁶ “Muslim-Friendly Tourism: Understanding the Demand and Supply Sides in the OIC Member Countries.” COMCEC, Feb. 2016. Web.

general MFT services & facilities guidelines for different levels of MFT readiness across the OIC Member Countries. Finally, market positioning options for MFT travel are also summarized in this document.

Evaluating & Setting-Up for MFT Guidelines

The aforementioned study strongly recommends the regulation of MFT elements within the accommodation sector (albeit at varying level depending on individual country environment and maturity), given the strong feedback provided by surveys and a clear articulation of the types of services required.

In the consumer survey that was conducted for the purpose of this study, respondents attached great importance to Halal food being regulated by a Muslim-friendly accommodation standard; 99 percent of respondents rated it as important (83 percent rated it as extremely important). This was followed by offering Ramadan services, such as breakfast buffets, which 95 percent of respondents rated as important, followed by having Qibla direction in the hotel room, which 94 percent of respondents rated as important.

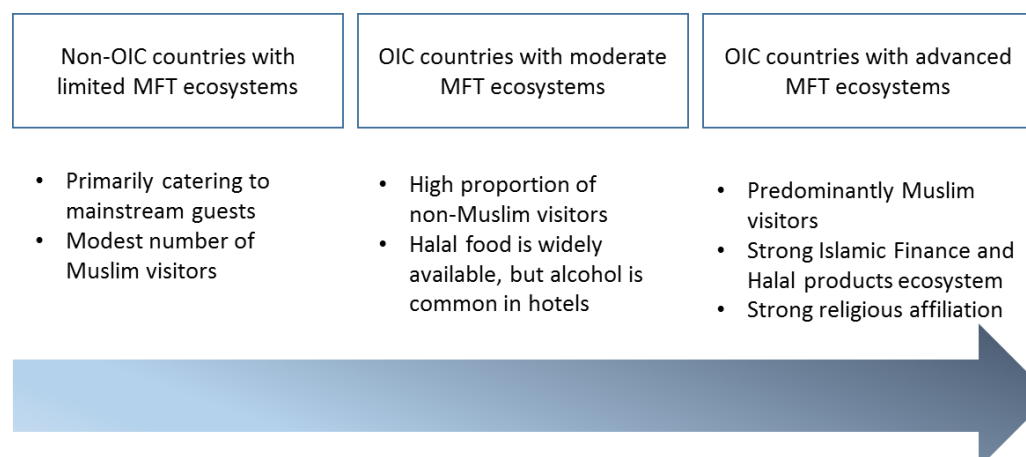
MFT regulation provides guests with an assurance of authenticity, especially in case of Halal food, provides consistent expectations, and supports a family-friendly ecosystem, which is beneficial to both Muslim guests as well as to mainstream guests traveling with their families.

The analysis and main findings of the research report titled “*Muslim Friendly Tourism: Understanding the Demand and Supply Sides in the OIC Member Countries*” and “*Muslim Friendly Tourism: Developing and Marketing MFT Products and Services in the OIC Member Countries*” which have already prepared for the COMCEC TWG, can also be utilized by member countries in their efforts towards regulating MFT accommodation establishments.

MFT Services & Facilities – General Guidelines

The relevance of MFT services and facilities will differ by nature of country. The chart below illustrates country segmentation based on whether or not it is an OIC Member Country, and based on the level of MFT ecosystems available.

Country Segmentation - MFT Ecosystem



Based on the review of various existing MFT guidelines, below are a summary listing of MFT services and facilities guidelines per segment category of country described above.

1. MFT Services and Facilities for non-OIC Countries with Limited MFT Ecosystems

In non-OIC countries, establishments can attract Muslim consumers in a practical way by offering low cost basic services that are easy to implement and have a low impact on mainstream guests.

The recommended services and facilities can be summarized as follows:

1. Provide some Halal food options
2. Remove alcohol from the mini-bar for Muslim guests
3. Provide *qibla* (prayer) direction in rooms.
4. Provide list of local Halal restaurants and directions to local mosque
5. Provide a prayer rug and prayer schedule upon request
6. Train staff on awareness of MFT principles

While very important to Muslim guests, most of these services and features have little effect on mainstream guests and are low cost.

2. MFT Services and Facilities for OIC Countries with Modest MFT Ecosystem

There are three practical MFT services that are important to Muslim guests, are easy to implement and have low impact on mainstream guests, which accommodation facilities in OIC countries with modest MFT ecosystems should incorporate. These three services, as illustrated in the following chart, include the following⁷:

1. Offering exclusively Halal certified food (with a consideration to have the hotel kitchens Halal certified)
2. Providing prayer mats in rooms
3. Accommodating for Ramadan meal timings and menu items.

MFT services and facilities that may be offered by accommodation providers can be segmented based on whether they are low cost or costly to implement as well as on their effect on non-Muslim guests (whether implementing the new service will have a low or high impact on Muslim guests). MFT services that are low cost and have a low impact on mainstream guests are easy to implement, while services that are low cost but have a high impact on mainstream guests are sensitive to implement, etc. (Please refer to Figure 15: MFT Services for Modest Ecosystems in the study).

Additional services, which were rated important and are of medium to high cost to implement are as follows:

1. Installing a bidet or hand shower in bathrooms, both in guest rooms as well as in bathrooms in public areas

⁷ An additional service that was rated as important by survey respondents and is not costly to provide is having a “musalla” or prayer area within the hotel.

2. Providing family-friendly entertainment
3. Being alcohol free and having no casinos or nightclubs on site.
4. Removing adult channels and placing internet content filters
5. Requiring staff to dress modestly

3. MFT Services and Facilities for Countries with Advanced MFT Ecosystems

For OIC countries with advanced MFT ecosystems, the following higher level of MFT services and facilities are recommended in addition to the basic services:

General:

1. Hotel kitchens should be Halal certified
2. No alcohol should be available or allowed inside the hotel
3. Wudu-friendly facilities should be available in public bathrooms and room bathrooms
4. Holy Qurans should be placed in each room
5. Congregational prayers should be held at the musalla/masjid including Friday prayers, and the call to prayer should be broadcast on the speaker system.
6. In Ramadan, in addition to providing iftar and suhoor meals, shuttle transportation should be provided to local mosques
7. Halal certified products should be extended to wellness products such as shampoos and lotions.

Leisure Activities:

8. Gender-separated wellness facilities including gyms, pools, spas, and beaches should be provided, either by having separate facilities, or by allocating certain hours for women.

Managing the business

9. All financing should adhere to Shariah-compliant principles
10. The accommodation's employees should be treated fairly and receive a living wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living
11. Businesses should have eco-friendly processes in place and have an environmental certification.

Family-Friendly and Ethical Positioning

The level of practicality in introducing MFT features varies by country. One of the key consideration is positioning and promoting Muslim-friendly services without alienating non-Muslim customers. Some of the features relating to MFT may be of higher cost and more difficult to implement; however, several MFT features also accentuate the accommodation facility's family-friendly and ethical positioning. For example, the absence of a nightclub or a bar, not only accommodates the needs of Muslim guests, but also strengthens a hotel's family-friendly positioning, since many mainstream families with children would consider such an environment a safer place for their family.

The table below lists MFT services and facilities that strengthen an accommodation facility's family-friendly and ethical positioning across the different MFT ecosystem levels. Having no alcohol, casinos, or nightclubs, in addition to banning adult channels, obscene artwork and placing internet filters, all accentuate an accommodation facility's family-friendly positioning, in addition to being ethical.

Family-Friendly and Ethical MFT Services and Facilities

Minimum requirements	
Halal Food	Halal food options
Alcohol Policy	Alcohol-free minibar for Muslim guests
Good to have	
Alcohol Policy	No alcohol: no bar or alcohol served at hotel restaurants
Entertainment	No nightclubs on site No casinos on site No adult channels available Internet content filters in place (for obscenity) Family-friendly programming and entertainment on site
Staff	Staff to wear modest clothes
Premium	
Alcohol Policy	No alcohol on site (e.g., at restaurant or on demand)
Entertainment	No obscene, music or artwork that may contradict Islamic values, displayed
Environmental	Environmental certification and eco-friendly processes in place

ANNEX

X

Original: English

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP

The Agriculture Working Group (AWG) held its 9th Meeting on February 23rd, 2017 with the theme of “*Reducing Food Waste in the OIC Member Countries*”. During the Meeting, the participants deliberated on important policy issues about reducing food waste in the OIC Member Countries and approximating policies among the Member Countries on this important subject. The policy advices presented below have been identified in light of the main findings of the research report prepared specifically for the Meeting and the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions which were sent by the COMCEC Coordination Office ahead of the Meeting.

Policy Advice I: Developing a specific legislative framework and road map for reducing food waste in a holistic context including supply chain

Rationale:

Development of a legislative framework is considered to be a key issue for reduction of food waste. Many countries have regulations to prevent waste in entire food supply chain. Thus, they aim to ensure that all food is adequately separated from the waste stream and is made available for human consumption. Nonetheless, researches indicate that few OIC Member Countries have legislative framework related to food waste, such as Qatar, Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan and Indonesia.

In this respect, the OIC Member Countries, which do not have any legal framework on food waste, can develop a legal framework and food waste road map. Prior to this, the Member Countries should evaluate the level of waste in general as well as for specific product groups and sectors so that they may focus their efforts to the areas where significant amount of the waste occurs. Doing so, the Member Countries would also contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 12.3 which is “By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses”.

Policy Advice II: Promotion of food banks and food distribution networks

Rationale:

Creation of food banks and food distributions networks are considered to be among the leading ways of reducing food waste both globally and within OIC

Member Countries. These initiatives could play an important role in the distribution of food surplus to the needy people. An important successful initiative, in this regard, is the Egyptian-based food bank model. The program was initiated in 2005 and donates more than 17 million meals each month. This program facilitated the participation of more than 400 hotels and restaurants, ranging from five star hotels to local coffee shops in the Egyptian food bank system.

In this framework, development of food banks and distribution networks will help member countries in reducing food waste. Furthermore, the distribution of food that is being unnecessarily wasted can also increase access of poor to food, and thereby can help Member Countries achieve food security. Therefore, the Member Countries are encouraged to establish food banks or to improve the efficiency of the existing ones.

Policy Advice III: Conducting cohesive initiatives and campaigns to increase awareness on food waste in supply chain and consumption

Rationale:

The research report conducted for this Meeting reveals that significant proportion of the people living in the OIC Member Countries have little concern for food waste. It is also indicated that if they had access to further information on the environmental impacts associated with food waste and the provision of solutions on how to reduce food waste, this would encourage them to reduce food waste. Lack of concern for food waste is applicable to both households and the food service sector. Taking this into consideration, conducting food waste initiatives and creating food waste campaigns should be a priority for OIC Member Countries.

There are various crucial campaigns and initiatives conducted internationally and by member countries to reduce food waste such as Save Food Initiative of UN, Pakistan's 'one-dish law', Indonesia's 'Law on Food' and Turkey's 'Do not waste your bread'. For instance, Turkey has conducted a 'Do not waste your bread' campaign, which resulted in 18 percent reduction in bread waste amounting to US\$ 131 million per day. The OIC Member Countries may examine the experiences of these initiatives, in terms of implementation, evaluation and monitoring taking their unique cultural and social settings into consideration. Furthermore, the active involvement of relevant stakeholders along the food supply is of particular importance for the success of the campaigns/initiatives. In this respect, the campaigns/initiatives should be designed in a way to ensure the active involvement of relevant stakeholders including businesses, local authorities and consumers.

Instruments that can contribute to realizing the Policy Advices:

COMCEC Agriculture Working Group: In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

COMCEC Project Funding: Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the member countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above- mentioned policy areas, the member countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding where the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

ANNEX

XI

Original: English

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC POVERTY ALLEVIATION WORKING GROUP

The Poverty Alleviation Working Group (PAWG) held its 9th Meeting on April 6th, 2017 in Ankara with the theme of “*Malnutrition in the OIC Member Countries: A Trap for Poverty*”. During the Meeting, the participants discussed some crucial policy issues about reducing malnutrition in the OIC Member Countries. The policy advices presented below have been identified in light of the main findings of the research report prepared specifically for the Meeting and the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions which were sent by the COMCEC Coordination Office in advance of the Meeting.

Policy Advice 1: Developing and implementing nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, especially towards women of reproductive age from vulnerable groups

Rationale:

Nutritional status of women at the time of conception and during pregnancy is of particular importance both for the health of the mother and for ensuring healthy fetal growth and development. Neonates with fetal growth restriction are also at substantially increased risk of being stunted at 24 months and of development of some types of non-communicable diseases in adulthood. Furthermore, good nutrition early in life is essential for children to attain their developmental potential. Yet, 27% of all births in low and middle income countries are of low weight. Individual counselling and group-wise education for mothers have been demonstrated to have positive impacts on improving nutritional status of women at the time of conception and during pregnancy. Moreover, providing maternity conveniences at the workplace for pregnant women is an important nutrition-sensitive intervention that help improve the future prospects of the baby.

Proven nutrition-specific interventions aimed at improving mothers’ nutrition status include iron and folic acid supplementation, calcium supplementation, and iodine supplementation and fortification (iodised salt). Multiple micronutrient deficiencies often exist in low and middle income countries and need to be addressed through multiple micronutrient supplementations. Furthermore, maternal wasting and food insecurity need to be addressed through balanced energy and protein supplementation. Such nutrition-specific interventions would reduce malnutrition up to 15%.

Policy Advice 2: Improving infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices**Rationale:**

Poor IYCF practices, including inadequate breastfeeding contribute to the high levels of malnutrition. WHO guidelines state that children should be breastfed within 1 hour of birth and exclusively breastfed for 6 months. Mother milk shall be provided up to 2 years in conjunction with complementary feeding. Labor laws shall be implemented in such a way that encourages these requirements.

Beyond this period, complimentary foods should be introduced in line with the guidelines on minimum acceptable diet, which accounts for both meal frequency and dietary diversity. Preventive zinc supplementation, vitamin A supplementation and iron supplementation for infants and young children should also be encouraged. On the other hand, regulation of mother-milk substitutes effectively and preventing false-marketing of unhealthy food are also important implementation issues.

Interventions to increase knowledge of and positive attitudes towards recommended feeding practices and dispelling harmful beliefs are needed to ensure optimum nutrition of infants and young children. In this respect, behavioral change communication - in the form of individual counselling for primary caregivers/mothers - can have a considerable positive effect on nutrition, if properly implemented. Moreover, developing IYCF integrated curriculum for health provider education programmes and establishing IYCF counselling and other support services in primary health care facilities can enable the poor segments of the societies to reach necessary knowledge on appropriate feeding practices.

Malnutrition in the form of child obesity could be a problem as much as undernutrition. These together forms the double burden of malnutrition. It is crucial to put in place an action plan to fight the scourge of childhood obesity that affects several Islamic countries.

Policy Advice 3: Ensuring universal access to healthcare, safe water and sanitation, and launching educational campaigns on infectious diseases to eliminate all forms of undernutrition**Rationale:**

Infections lead to loss of appetite and reduced food intake, as well as a malabsorption of nutrients and metabolic losses, and are a direct cause of malnutrition. Moreover, there is a clear link between a range of micronutrient deficiencies and risks of infection: vitamin A deficiency, for instance, increases

risks of severe diarrhea, malaria and measles severity and child mortality. Hence these two mutual effects form a vicious cycle. This calls for wide micronutrient supplementation of children as well as widespread fortification of staple food (such as wheat flour) with iron, zinc, vitamin and water-soluble vitamins.

Poor access to safe sanitation, drinking water and healthcare are also significantly associated with heightened vulnerability to infectious and water-borne diseases, eventually leading to acute and chronic malnutrition. For instance, 90% of all deaths from diarrhea are attributable to lack of access to safe drinking, water and sanitation, and poor hygiene practices. Protecting children from infectious diseases requires increasing access to safe drinking water, sanitation and health through investment in infrastructures and planning (thereby eradicate open defecation), effective and wide-spread vaccination programs and behavioral interventions aimed at improving hygiene practices (such as systematic hand-washing with soap after toilet use).

Policy Advice 4: Providing access to safe and nutritious food for all with community-based initiatives and by forming resilient capacities for food-security

Rationale:

Consistent access to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food is a fundamental human right, and is necessary to eradicate malnutrition. In situations of acute or chronic food insecurity, scaling up the coverage of food aid interventions to reach the poor – especially in remote, rural areas - is crucial to avoid under-nutrition, hunger, and starvation. Community-based programs that leverage local food production (for example by expanding house-gardening practices) and expand the capacities of local food storage facilities are important for increasing access to food and reducing food prices.

Due to natural and man-made disasters, some countries need emergency relief on a wide scale to prevent millions of children suffering from acute malnutrition. Despite actions taken by the international community, the level of emergency assistance that reach vulnerable countries often fall short of the requirements. It is also more cost-effective to support resilience and early responses to crises than to rely on emergency interventions once large-scale crises have unfolded. All the stakeholders including governments, international organizations and other donors should take steps for funding and allocating resources.

It is also important to ensure availability and access to safe and nutritious food outside of emergency contexts. Cash transfer programs can have the potential to improve food security for poor households, whereas raising awareness of what nutritious foods are, and ensuring affordability of these foods are critical to avoid both under- and over-nutrition.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:

COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group: In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

COMCEC Project Funding: Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office issues calls for project proposals each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the member countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For realizing above-mentioned policy recommendations, the member countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding facility. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparation of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

ANNEX

XII

Original: English

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 8TH MEETING OF THE COMCEC FINANCIAL COOPERATION WORKING GROUP

The COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group (FCWG) held its 8th Meeting on March 30th, 2017 in Ankara / Turkey with the theme of “Improving Public Debt Management in the OIC Member Countries”. During the Meeting, the participants discussed some crucial policy issues in light of the main findings of the research report prepared specifically for the Meeting and the responses of the Member Countries to the policy questions that were sent by the CCO in advance of the Meeting. Accordingly, the working group has come up with the policy advices below.

Policy Advice 1: Strengthening/Setting up an independent Public Debt Management Unit with well-defined functions and a dedicated debt management strategy

Rationale:

In several OIC member countries the delineation of competences between different institutions involved in public debt management remains vague. Especially the partial lack of centralization at a dedicated Public Debt Management Unit (DMU) might prove to be challenging for further management improvements. Therefore, all OIC member countries are encouraged to either set up a new independent DMU or institutionally strengthen an existing one, possibly located at the Ministry of Finance or the Central Bank. Moreover, the development of a formal debt management strategy, including quantitative strategic targets, is recommended. The DeMPA Performance Indicators of the World Bank can serve as an initial reference point. In order to support the transition process, OIC member countries that have already professionalized public debt management practices may advise partner countries in establishing such institutional frameworks. This could include policy recommendations with regards to specific areas of debt management, including but not limited to a long-term strategy development, risk management, debt monitoring or institutional coordination. Besides exemplary institutional settings and public debt management documents, the exchange about challenging experiences and the respective ‘lessons learned’ might prove to be especially helpful during the process.

Policy Advice 2: Developing/improving domestic debt market**Rationale:**

Domestic debt markets are important sources of funding for public budgets. A well-functioning, liquid domestic market encourages the investments from domestic creditors due to lower transaction costs and hence provides additional diversification opportunities for the government. As domestic investors tend to react less to the global macroeconomic and financial shocks, refinancing risks may be lowered in addition to a decreased currency risk. However, a number of domestic public debt markets in the OIC member countries still show potential for improvements. Most importantly, strengthening the legal accountability and regulatory frameworks while maintaining political stability is a key aspect for the member countries faced with some political changes in the past few years. Moreover, low and stable inflation rates as well as an independent central bank may help to keep savings in the domestic financial market, which might be especially relevant for the Sub-Saharan countries group. Additionally, governments should reduce their reliance on the domestic banking sector by encouraging institutional investors such as insurance companies or pension funds to participate in the market. Finally, the introduction or further development of Islamic finance instruments, especially Islamic sukuk bonds, can deepen domestic financial markets and mobilize additional financial resources from both, private and institutional investors. Overall, a high share of marketable securities in total domestic debt, a broad participation of different financial agents and a high ratio of fixed versus floating bonds usually describe a sound domestic bond market.

Policy Advice 3: Broadening and diversifying the creditor base**Rationale:**

In many OIC member countries, the limited investor base is perceived to be one of the most relevant challenges for realizing efficient public debt operations. Along with an improvement of domestic debt markets, a further opening towards global markets as well as offering new investment vehicles may address this problem. Generally, the issuance of Islamic sukuk bonds may broaden the credit base as new (international) investors, who are specializing in Sharia-compliant financial instruments, may be attracted. While even non-OIC member countries experience greater popularity of such Islamic sovereign bonds, this development is especially relevant for cross-border investments between OIC countries, particularly through sovereign wealth funds of OIC member states. Moreover, recent innovation efforts such as state contingent debt instruments or Master Collateralized Murabahah Agreements (which are

bundled assets based on rent-to-own agreements) might be evaluated in order to broaden the investor base and better management of risks. It should be also noted that to attract international investors, it is crucial to increase the transparency and information availability regarding public debt data, procedures and (predictable) management strategies. It is generally recommended that OIC countries with a yet developing domestic market avoid a large dependence on either domestic or foreign borrowings, but strive for a balanced exposure to both markets to mitigate global macroeconomic as well as country-specific shocks.

Policy Advice 4: Lengthening the average maturity of the public debt

Rationale:

Governments have a tendency to issue short-term rather than long-term bonds. Currently, the average maturity of new external debt commitments of private creditors (excluding official creditors such as the IMF) in the OIC member countries hovers at only 4-5 years, and has even shown a declining trend since 2013. Although interest rates on short-term obligations are usually lower than long-term ones due to an additional maturity premium investors demand for a long tie-up of their capital, a tradeoff arises as short-term debt is subject to a higher refinancing risk. Moreover, the concentration of short-term bonds may prevent the establishment or further development of a domestic debt market which is supposed to satisfy both the investors' preferences and the government's needs for medium- to long-term financing. Hence, OIC member countries which are negatively affected by those factors are encouraged to expand the maturity mix of their public debt portfolio. Especially governments in the high- and median-income group with access to global debt markets may consider increasing bond issuances with longer time horizons relative to short-term bills if the domestic market conditions permit such operations, given the current period of low interest rates in many developed economies. Overall, it is advisable to exploit the benefits of all maturity categories, from short- over medium to long-term, and achieve a sustainable maturity balance without an exclusive dependence on either one category.

Policy Advice 5: Applying macroeconomic risk management methods

Rationale:

Macroeconomic developments pose a significant risk for public debt management as the respective shocks are often difficult to mitigate in the short-run. Thus, OIC member countries are encouraged to implement quantitative information and analysis systems based on adequate frequency data which provide early warning indications. A basic set of macroeconomic indicators

include the ratio of the net present value of debt relative to GDP and government revenues, external debt servicing costs relative to exports or the consolidated general government net lending relative to GDP. Best practices include the OECD System of Composite Leading Indicators which is designed to provide early signals of turning points in business cycles. OIC countries with a high degree of integration into the global financial system might find the signal approach methods (such as the Signal Approach) helpful, which assesses the probability of a currency and banking crisis. Nations which have a high natural disaster risk may consider negotiating standing backup credit lines for immediate release of additional funding. Finally, the public budgets in many OIC member countries strongly depend on commodities which are prone to global macroeconomic shocks. Especially the recent decline in oil prices has led to a strong increase in newly issued public debt in some member countries. Concerned countries should aim to diversify their economic activities into less volatile sectors, which admittedly differ from case to case. Overall, synergies from macroeconomic risk management may be achieved if the responsible authorities built strong communication and coordination channels with the DMU.

Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:

COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group: In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

COMCEC Project Funding: Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office issues calls for project proposals each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the member countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For realizing above-mentioned policy recommendations, the member countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding facility. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparation of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.

ANNEX

XIII

Original: English



**DRAFT AGENDA
OF THE 33rd SESSION OF THE COMCEC
(İstanbul, 20-23 November 2017)**

1. Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda
2. Report on the COMCEC Strategy and Its Implementation
3. The Implementation of the OIC-2025: Programme of Action
4. World Economic Developments with Special Reference to the OIC Member Countries
5. Intra-OIC Trade
6. Enhancing the Role of Private Sector in Economic Cooperation
7. Improving Transport and Communications
8. Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector
9. Increasing Productivity of Agriculture Sector and Sustaining Food Security
10. Alleviating Poverty
11. Deepening Financial Cooperation
12. Exchange of Views on “Improving Transnational Transport Corridors among the OIC Member Countries”
13. Date of the 34th Session of the COMCEC
14. Any Other Business
15. Adoption of the Resolutions

ANNEX

XIV

Original: English

**CLOSING SPEECH BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SALİH MUTLU ŞEN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY TO THE OIC
THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 11 May 2017)**

Distinguished Members of the Follow-up Committee,
Esteemed Delegates,

After intensive deliberations, we have successfully concluded the 33rd Follow-up Committee Meeting of the COMCEC. We have reviewed various issues taken up by COMCEC and drawn up its agenda for the 33rd Session. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all delegations for their active participation in the Meeting as well as their valuable contributions to the deliberations.

Ultimate aim of COMCEC is to contribute to the development efforts of our member countries and lay the ground for efficient economic cooperation among ourselves. Follow-up Committee is definitely one of the most important cornerstones in this process.

Distinguished Delegates,

The world is getting smaller day by day. Economic and commercial relations between nations have been stronger than ever due to the enormous strides in technology and transportation and communication infrastructures.

In this context, as the Islamic countries we should never lag behind. If we remember the saying of our Prophet Muhammed Aleyhisselam "**He whose two days are equal in accomplishment is sure at loss**", it is evident that we all need to endeavor to be the most progressive societies in the world.

First and foremost, we have to remove the barriers to trade. Besides our trade facilitation endeavors, we have to take necessary steps for reducing the tariffs in trade. To that end, we have an available tool in our hand which is TPS-OIC. Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC, TPS-OIC has been on our agenda for a long time and we all know the details. For that reason,

hereby I will just call upon all relevant Member Countries to complete the required steps at the earliest so that we can reap at last the fruits of the system.

Esteemed Delegates,

We should also deepen our cooperation in all possible areas such as finance, agriculture, transportation, communication, tourism and poverty alleviation. As the highest economic and commercial cooperation platform of the OIC, COMCEC has been exerting efforts to further contribute to cooperation efforts among the Member Countries with successful implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.

Within four years, more than 50 Working Group Meetings have been held in six cooperation areas and analytical reports based on in-depth research have been produced in various technical themes. The Working Groups, hence, provide a regular platform for having knowledge based discussions, sharing experiences and learning the international practices and success stories in each field. The Working Groups also provide an important opportunity to the member country experts to receive the perspectives of international institutions, private sector and NGOs in each theme.

I would like to underline that the implementation of the Working Group policy recommendations is of particular importance for enhancing institutional and human capacity of the Member Countries. In this respect, COMCEC national and Working Group focal points have a critical role in mobilising the relevant institutions in their respective countries for the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy recommendations.

I would also like to emphasize the particular importance of the active participation and contributions of the Member Countries in the activities, projects and programs under the framework of the COMCEC. It is a pleasure for me to hear that more than 45 member countries will benefit from the projects that are being implemented this year under the COMCEC Project Funding.

Esteemed Delegates,

During our Meeting, we have discussed various issues of importance for our member countries in critical sectors such as trade, transport, agriculture, poverty alleviation, tourism and financial cooperation. As we have already spent sufficient time on all these matters, it would suffice at this point with

mentioning the importance and relevance of the “Improving Transnational Transportation Corridors among the OIC Member Countries” as the theme of the Exchange of Views Session of the 33rd Session of the COMCEC.

In this respect, I believe that the outcomes of the exchange of views session will provide us with strong insights and indications with regards to improvement of the transportation infrastructure and linkages with an ultimate target of strengthening commercial ties among the Member Countries.

Esteemed Guests,

I would like to remind you that the 5th Annual Meeting of the Focal Points of the COMCEC will be held in this month, on 23-25 May. This Meeting bears great importance in terms of discussing ongoing efforts under the COMCEC and the implementation of the outcomes of the Working Group Meetings and COMCEC PCM. Furthermore, our focal points will have the chance of designing our future works and plans. In this respect, I would also like to emphasize the importance of including the Working Group focal points and national focal points, who are coordinating the COMCEC activities at the national level throughout the year, in the country delegations attending the Follow-up Committee Meetings and the COMCEC Sessions. Therefore, I would like to call upon all the Member Countries to facilitate the participation of the COMCEC Focal Points in the Country delegations in the 33rd COMCEC Session to be held this November.

Before concluding, I would like to thank all the Members of the Follow-Up Committee, the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC, the IDB Group, ICDT, ICCIA, SMIIC for their participation and valuable contributions in this meeting. I would also like to thank our colleagues in the COMCEC Coordination Office, the staff on duty in this Organization, interpreters, revisers and translators for their untiring efforts which helped a lot in rendering this meeting a success.

I wish you all a safe trip back home.

Thank you.

ANNEX

XV

Original: English

**LIST OF BASIC DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED
AND/OR PRESENTED AT THE THIRTY THIRD MEETING OF
THE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE COMCEC
(Ankara, 10-11 May 2017)**

1.	Progress Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy - Progress Report	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(1)-CCO</i>
2.	Report of the OIC General Secretariat on the Implementation of the OIC 2025: Programme of Action.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(2)-OIC</i>
3.	Brief on Trade.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(3)-CCO</i>
4.	Member States that Signed/Ratified the TPS-OIC Agreements.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/-CCO</i>
5.	Proceedings of the 9 th Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(4)-CCO</i>
6.	Policy Recommendations of the 9 th Meeting of the Trade Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(5)-CCO</i>
7.	Reports of ICDT on the OIC Fairs and Exhibitions.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(6)-ICDT</i>
8.	Executive Summary - Annual Report on Intra-OIC Trade 2016-2017	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(7)-ICDT</i>
9.	Report on IDB's WTO-Related Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(8)-IDB</i>
10.	Report on the Issues Relating to the Activities of the World Trade Organization	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(9)- ICDT</i>
11.	ITFC Progress Report on Enhancing Intra-OIC Trade.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(10)- ITFC</i>
12.	Report of SMIIC.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(11)-SMIIC</i>
13.	Report on the Activities of ICCIA.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(12)-ICCIA</i>
14.	Brief on Transport and Communications	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(13)-CCO</i>
15.	Proceedings of the 9 th Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(14)-CCO</i>
16.	Policy Recommendations of the 9 th Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(15)-CCO</i>
17.	Brief on Tourism	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(16)-CCO</i>
18.	Proceedings of the 9 th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(17)-CCO</i>
19.	MFT Guidelines.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(18)-CCO</i>

20.	Report of the 5 th Meeting of the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(19)- Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey</i>
21.	Brief on Agricultural Cooperation.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(20)-CCO</i>
22.	Proceedings of the 9 th Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(21)-CCO</i>
23.	Policy Recommendations of the 9 th Meeting of the Agriculture Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(22)-CCO</i>
24.	Brief on Poverty Alleviation	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(23)-CCO</i>
25.	Proceedings of the 9 th Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(24)-CCO</i>
26.	Policy Recommendations of the 9 th Meeting of the Poverty Alleviation Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(25)-CCO</i>
27.	Report on the Activities of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(26)-IDB- ISFD</i>
28.	Report on the Special Programme for the Development of Africa (SPDA)	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(27)-IDB- SPDA</i>
29.	Brief on Financial Cooperation	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(28)-CCO</i>
30.	Proceedings of the 8 th Meeting of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(29)-CCO</i>
31.	Policy Recommendations of the 8 th Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(30)-CCO</i>
32.	SESRIC Activity Report Towards the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy.....	<i>OIC/COMCEC-FC/33-17/D(31)- SESRIC</i>

Reports are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)



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