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REPORT
FORTIETH MEETING OF THE
FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR
ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (COMCEC)
(22-23 May 2024)

1. The Fortieth 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 22-23 May 2024 in Ankara, the Republic of Türkiye.

2. The representatives of the following Member States of the Committee attended the Meeting:

- Republic of Türkiye : (Chairman, Permanent)
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia : (Vice Chairman, Permanent Member)
- State of Palestine : (Vice-Chairman, Permanent Member)
- State of Qatar : (Vice-Chairman, Representing the Arab Region)
- Brunei Darussalam : (Vice-Chairman Representing the Asian Region)
- Senegal : (Vice-Chairman Representing the African Region)
- Islamic Republic of Pakistan : (Rapporteur)
- State of Kuwait : (Member of the Previous Bureau)
- Republic of Indonesia : (Member of the Previous Bureau)
- Republic of Nigeria : (Member of the Previous Bureau)
- Republic of The Gambia : (Chairman of the 15th Islamic Summit)

3. The 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 (IsDB), Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Islamic Chamber of Commerce & Development (ICCD), and OIC Arbitration Centre (OIC-AC) attended the Meeting.

(The list of participants is attached as Annex I)

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting and Adoption of the Agenda

4. Following recitation from the Holy Qur'an, H.E. Abdullah Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice-President of Strategy Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, inaugurated the Meeting.

5. H.E. AĖAOĖLU expressed deep sorrow over the passing away of Iranian President H.E. Ebrahim RAISI, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir ABDOLLAHIAN, and other Iranian delegation, conveyed condolences to their families and brotherly Iranian people.

6. At the outset, H.E. AĖAOĖLU condemned the brutal attacks of Israeli forces and expressed his regrets on atrocities occurred in Palestine. He underscored the importance of supporting Palestine in order to have a sustainable peace and justice in the region.

7. H.E. AĖAOĖLU touched upon that geopolitical tensions, commodity and energy price fluctuations, protectionist policies, supply chain disruptions, and inflation have severely affected the global economy.

8. H.E. AĖAOĖLU highlighted Islamic finance as offering new opportunities based on asset-backed, risk-sharing principles, considering the focus on the digital transformation of payment systems at the 40th COMCEC Ministerial Meeting as a well-timed choice.

9. Drawing attention to the cooperation efforts among OIC Member Countries under the umbrella of COMCEC, H.E. AĖAOĖLU underlined the importance of the TPS-OIC, which has been operational since July 1st, 2022 as well as the smooth functioning of the System by the Participating States. In this regard, he thanked the conveyance of concession lists by GCC Member Countries to the TNC Secretariat. He also stressed the necessity of widening the scope of the System in accordance with the contemporary conditions as well as needs and priorities of the Member Countries.

10. H. E. AĖAOĖLU invited the Participating Member States to actively participate in the TPS-OIC Third Ministerial Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting to be held on 10-11 June 2024, to discuss technical issues pertaining functionality of the System, and to start new rounds of negotiations. He also invited to the non-participating states to join the System.

11. Commending the operationalization of OIC Arbitration Centre, H.E. AĖAOĖLU invited all Member Countries to actively support to utilize from the services of the Centre.

12. H.E. AĖAOĖLU touched upon the importance of S&P OIC/COMCEC Index as an important halal investment tool, which offered to the use of international investors in 2022.

13. Underlining the importance of SMEs in economies of OIC Member Countries, H.E. AĖAOĖLU called upon the interested Member Countries to actively participate in and support the efforts to be conducted under the Program. H.E. AĖAOĖLU also underlined the significance of the cooperation efforts in digital transformation area within the scope of High-Level Digital Transformation Forum.

14. H.E. AĖAOĖLU expressed his belief in the concrete policy recommendations and roadmaps to be developed at the Working Group meetings held this year to contribute significantly to the cooperation efforts in the relevant fields in the coming period.

15. H.E. AĖAOĖLU lastly touched upon the projects implemented in 2023 and the ones being implemented in 2024, under the COMCEC Project Support Programs and expressed his appreciations for the efforts exerted by all the project owners and partners.

16. H.E. AĞAOĞLU concluded his remarks by wishing every success for all the deliberations to be made during the 40th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee.

(The text of the Statement of H.E. A. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU is attached as Annex II.)

17. The message of H.E. Hissein Brahim TAHA, the Secretary General of the OIC, was read out by Mr. Naghi JABBAROV, Director General of Department of Economic Affairs of the OIC. In his message, H.E. TAHA expressed his appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Türkiye for the hospitality and to the CCO for the arrangements made for this meeting.

18. H.E. TAHA mentioned about unprecedented slowdown of economic activities in global as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the associated containment measures. In this respect, H.E. TAHA underlined the disruption of global supply chain due to increased price level of oil, fertilizers and food prices in international market.

19. Acknowledging the operationalization of TPS-OIC on 1 July 2022, H.E. TAHA underlined the necessity of effectively implementing the System to achieve the OIC's goal of 25% intra-OIC trade by 2025. In this regard, he underlined the importance of completing the process of signing and ratification of the agreements by the non-participating member states at the earliest convenience for joining the System. Furthermore, he called upon all Member Countries to actively participate in the TPS-OIC Third Ministerial Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting, to be held in an open-ended format in June 2024 in Türkiye.

20. H.E. TAHA also underscored that the launching of the OIC Labour Centre (OICLC) has rekindled the belief in creating closer collaboration and coordination in the areas of occupational health and safety, unemployment and workforce capacity development, and social protection in the OIC Member Countries.

21. H.E. TAHA invited Member Countries to actively participate in the "12th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers" (ICTM) which will be held in Khiva, Uzbekistan, on 31 May - 2 June 2024.

22. H.E. TAHA also encouraged Member Countries to actively participate in OIC Private Sector Forum, which will be held in Amman, Jordan, and to the 18th OIC Trade Fair will be held in December 2024, in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan,

23. Highlighting the role of relevant OIC Institutions, namely, COMCEC Coordination Office, IsDB Group, SESRIC, ICDT, ISFD, IOFS, SMIIC, and ICCD, H.E. TAHA expressed his appreciation to them for their collaborative response for the execution of the various projects under the socio-economic agenda of the OIC.

(A copy of the text of the message of H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim TAHA is attached as Annex III.)

24. On behalf of all members of the Committee, H.E. Lamin DAMPHA, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Trade and Head of Delegation of the Republic of The Gambia delivered a statement during the 40th Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC.

25. H.E. DAMPHA underlined that The Gambia, as the current chair of the 15th OIC Islamic Summit Conference, appreciated the support received from the OIC Member Countries and OIC Institutions.

26. Highlighting the importance of the 2025 target for intra-OIC trade, H.E. DAMPHA underlined the need for the OIC Member Countries to strengthen cooperation in trade domain.

27. H.E. DAMPHA emphasized the necessity of further profound collaboration and partnerships among the OIC Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions.

28. H.E. DAMPHA expressed his sincere appreciation to the Republic of Türkiye as the host country and the COMCEC Coordination Office for the warm hospitality extended and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

Sideline Event

29. The 44th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC was held virtually on May 16th, 2024.

(Report of the 44th Meeting of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex IV.)

Working Sessions

30. The working sessions of the Meeting were chaired by H.E. A. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice President of Strategy Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye.

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

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

b. The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of the programs and projects of the COMCEC and made recommendations thereon as well as prepared the Draft Agenda of the 40th Session of the COMCEC.

(The Recommendations and the Supplementary Recommendations of the Committee are attached as Annex VI and Annex VII)

(The Draft Agenda of the 40th Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex VIII)

Closing Session

31. At its Closing Session Chaired by H.E. Abdullah Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU, Vice-President of Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of Republic of Türkiye, the Committee adopted its Report together with its Annexes.

32. Afterwards, in his closing statement Mr. Saeed ALBRAIDI, Head of Regional and International Organization, Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Qatar, delivered a closing statement. At the outset, he expressed his gratitude to the Republic of Türkiye and COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) for the warm hospitality extended and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting at the 40th COMCEC Follow-up Committee Meeting.

33. He also expressed his sincere condolences to the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the passing away of His Excellency the President, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the accompanying officials. He also condemned the continued aggression against the brotherly Palestinian people, and its serious repercussions of this aggression for the security and stability of the region and the world.

34. Afterwards, he stated that the challenges the world is witnessing today, and the state of political and economic uncertainty, including the climate change crisis, the slowdown in global economic growth, the decline in multilateral trade frequency, the difficulties facing supply chains and other challenges, require to intensify cooperation under the umbrella of COMCEC.

35. Global challenges like political and economic uncertainty, climate change, and supply chain issues, emphasizing the need for intensified cooperation under the COMCEC to increase intra-OIC trade and achieve the objectives of the Strategy.

36. He highlighted that improving e-commerce capabilities and digital transformation, as well as promoting the private sector, would open promising horizons for cooperation endeavors.

37. In conclusion, he thanked the Chairman and Heads of Delegations and the COMCEC Coordination Office, wishing this meeting success and progress in achieving the common objectives.

38. Afterwards, the message of H.E. Hissein Brahim TAHA, the Secretary General of the OIC, was read out by Mr. Naghi JABBAROV, Director General of the Department of Economic Affairs of the OIC. In his message, H.E. TAHA congratulated the chairman for the excellent conducting of the proceedings of the meeting. He also congratulated all Members of delegations for their active participation and the successful conclusion of the Meeting.

39. H.E. TAHA extended his profound thanks to the Government and the esteemed people of the Republic of Türkiye for their constant support to the activities of the OIC, particularly the activities of the COMCEC.

40. Finally, H.E. TAHA invited the Member States and the relevant OIC institutions to actively participate in forthcoming OIC events, the 12th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, to be held in Khiva, Uzbekistan, on 31 May - 2 June 2024, the TPS-OIC Third Ministerial Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting, to be held in İstanbul, Türkiye, on 10-11 June 2024, and the 18th OIC Trade Fair, to be held in Lahore, Pakistan, on 29 November - 1 December 2024.

41. H.E. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU made his closing statement. At the outset, H.E. AĞAOĞLU condemned in the strongest terms, Israeli atrocities to Palestine. Drawing attention to the human tragedy being experienced by Palestinian brothers and sisters, H.E. AĞAOĞLU underlined that Palestinian people are steadfast and honorable throughout their resistance. H.E. AĞAOĞLU expressed that the OIC Member Countries has stood by the Palestinian brothers and sisters, and continue to do so concerning the Palestinian cause.

42. Underlining the global main challenges such as migration, political disturbances, economic challenges, poverty, climate changes and pandemic, H.E. AĞAOĞLU stressed the importance of the Ummah's responsibility to make a better future for the next generations.

43. H.E. AĞAOĞLU underlined the significance of the cooperation efforts among the Islamic countries under the COMCEC, especially considering the difficulties faced due to global uncertainties.

44. Expressing the potential of increasing the trade volume among the Member Countries, H.E. AĞAOĞLU invited the Member Countries to actively participate in the TPS-OIC Third Ministerial Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting to be held on 10-11 June 2024 in İstanbul.

45. H.E. AĞAOĞLU encouraged all Member Countries to actively participate in the efforts and activities conducted within the framework of the important COMCEC Programs and projects such as the OIC Arbitration Centre, COMCEC SME Program, and COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Program.

46. H.E. AĞAOĞLU finally highlighted the significance of the projects implemented under the COMCEC Project Funding, and he conveyed his best wishes for every success to all project owners and implementation partners.

47. H.E. AĞAOĞLU concluded his speech by reiterating his thanks and appreciation to all the Members of the Follow-Up Committee for their active participation and precious contributions. He also expressed his thanks to the OIC General Secretariat, Rapporteur, COMCEC Coordination Office, the relevant OIC Institutions, interpreters, translators, and other staff taking part in the organization of the Meeting for their valuable contributions and efforts which helped rendering this meeting a success.

48. Lastly, H.E. AĞAOĞLU invited all delegates to the 40th COMCEC Ministerial Session to be held on 2-5 November 2024..

(A copy of the text of the Closing Statement by H.E. Rıdvan AĞAOĞLU is attached as Annex IX.)

ANNEX VI

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 40th COMCEC FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE

1. **Commending** the endeavors towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and The Ministerial Policy Recommendations by the Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions, the Committee **invited** the Member Countries to exert every effort, to the extent possible, to implement the Policy Recommendations and to harness the benefits of the current facilities/mechanisms, in particular the COMCEC Working Groups and COMCEC Project Support Programs namely COMCEC Project Funding and COMCEC Al-Quds Program and **requested** the OIC Institutions to support the Member Countries to this end.
2. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 39th COMCEC Session, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to utilize the COMCEC Policy Follow-up System to submit necessary information and data on the implementation of the COMCEC Ministerial Policy Recommendations in their respective countries and **requested** the COMCEC Coordination Office to regularly report the progress in the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy to the COMCEC Sessions, the Follow-up Committee Meetings and other relevant OIC fora.
3. The Committee **expressed** its appreciation to the OIC General Secretariat, CCO, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, ISFD, IOFS, SMIC, and ICCD, for their efforts towards the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy and the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.
4. **Underlining** the importance of the realization of the objectives set by OIC 2025: Programme of Action and active follow up of the economic and commercial section of the Programme by the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** the OIC General Secretariat to regularly submit comprehensive progress reports on the implementation of the Programme to the COMCEC Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.
5. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Member Countries, which 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 Countries.
6. **Considering** the importance of an equitable and fair multilateral trading system for sustainable growth of the countries, and **taking note** of the current technical assistance provided by WTO Member Countries of the OIC to the Non-Participating Countries for their accession efforts to the WTO, the Committee **called upon** IsDB and ICDT to keep on extending their technical assistance to the Member Countries in the context of the multilateral trade negotiations and coordinate the position of the Member Countries within the WTO.

7. **Welcoming** the effectuation of TPS-OIC as of July 1st, 2022 in line with relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the decisions of the TPS-OIC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC), the Committee **took note with appreciation** the conveyance of updated concession list, stamps and signatures of the concerned authorities by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) General Secretariat on behalf of their six Member Countries namely; Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

8. The Committee **requested** the Participating States, which have not done so yet, to complete their internal procedures for the effective implementation of the System and also **requested** the Member Countries, which have not yet signed or ratified the TPS-OIC Agreements to do so at their earliest convenience and complete other procedures for joining the System.

9. **Underlining** the significant role of TNC in considering the issues experienced in the implementation of the TPS-OIC as well as discussing the road-map for the period ahead, the Committee **invited** all the Member Countries to actively participate in the TPS-OIC Third Ministerial Trade Negotiations Committee Meeting towards widening the scope of the System to be held on 10-11 June 2024, in İstanbul.

10. **Took note with appreciation** the organization of workshops, webinars, trainings, fairs, exhibitions, and forums by ICDT and partner countries' institutions in trade domain and **requested** the Member Countries to keep on providing the ICDT with data relating to trade and investment statistics and regulations.

11. **Taking note with appreciation** trade finance, promotion and development, and capacity-building activities of ITFC and the mobilization of funds from the international market and development partners for funding trade finance operations in the Member Countries, contributing towards the achievement of intra-OIC trade target of 25 percent, the Committee **requested** ITFC to continue reporting its operations on the intra-OIC trade to COMCEC Sessions and Follow-Up Committee Meetings.

12. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session, the Committee **requested** the ICIEC, in cooperation with SESRIC, ICDT, and ICCD to continue their efforts to complete the technical preparations for launching the OIC Business Intelligence Programme (OBIC) and regularly submit progress reports related to the OBIC to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, and Follow-up Committee Meetings.

13. **Commending** the efforts of SMIIC in the area of standardization, metrology and accreditation and their impact on trade facilitation and capacity building, the Committee **invited** the Member Countries to adopt and use the OIC/SMIIC Standards as their national standards with a view to contributing to the harmonization of standards and alleviating technical barriers to trade among the Member Countries and **called upon** the relevant Member Countries, which use OIC/SMIIC Standards, to officially adopt the standards according to SMIIC adoption guidelines.

14. **Recalling** the resolution on the issue of Palestine and Al-Quds Ash-Sharif adopted by the 15th Islamic Summit Conference held in Banjul, The Gambia on 4-5 May 2024, the Committee **invited** all Member Countries and the relevant OIC Institutions, to the extent possible, to provide the necessary technical and financial support to the State of Palestine in economic and commercial domains including the emergency response towards the economic and social repercussions of the Israel aggression against the State of Palestine.

15. **Taking into consideration** the current situation in Palestine, the Committee **called on** Member Countries to take the necessary measures that would exempt Palestinian goods and commodities from customs duties, duties and taxes of similar effect, without quantitative or qualitative restrictions, which would have a positive effect on strengthening the steadfastness of the Palestinian people on their own territory and supporting the efforts of the State of Palestine to put an end to the Israeli occupation.

16. **Acknowledging** the important role of the OIC Arbitration Centre for the settlement of disputes, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to encourage and support their relevant institutions to actively participate in the activities of the OIC Arbitration Centre with a view to making use of services provided by the Centre.

17. **Taking into consideration** to the crucial role of private sector financing in mobilizing private investments and ensuring sustainable economic growth of the Member Countries, the Committee **invited** the Member Countries to better utilize the facilities of the ICD through the solid projects aimed at creating competition, entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities.

18. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session on the COMCEC SME Program, the Committee **requested** the interested Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate in the activities to be conducted under the COMCEC SME Program.

19. **Acknowledging** ICCD's initiative on Empowering Palestine's Economy aimed at revitalizing the Palestinian economy, through digital empowerment, development of distance education systems, and support of businesses through financial initiatives and infrastructure development for remote work, the Committee **encouraged** the Member Countries, their private sector and OIC Institutions to join the initiative for Palestinian businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs, including grants, technical support, knowledge transfer, venture capital, to stimulate innovation, job creation, and economic growth in key sectors.

20. The Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to support promotion of the S&P OIC/COMCEC Shariah International Fund, which includes shares from the OIC COMCEC 50 Shariah Index, developed under the coordination of OIC Exchanges Forum to the investors and the finance community in their respective countries.

21. The Committee **requested** the Secretariat of the OIC Exchanges Forum to complete the technical preparations on the OIC Gold Exchange Project, based on block-chain model, in cooperation with the Central Banks of the interested Member Countries.

22. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the Committee **requested** the Secretariat of the COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum to expedite the necessary legal, administrative and technological preparations for the establishment of the COMCEC Real Estate Data Platform/COMCEC Real Estate Exchange and **invited** the Member Countries, which have not done so yet, to identify their authorized bodies as well as notify them to the Forum's Secretariat for enhancing coordination.

23. **Reiterating** the importance of the Dakar-Port Sudan Railway project as one of the most significant development projects aimed at enhancing the movement of people and goods among the African OIC Member Countries, the Committee **requested** the General Secretariat, in cooperation with the IsDB Group, to expedite their communications with the volunteering Member Countries for holding the 2nd OIC Transport Ministerial Meeting as soon as possible with a specific agenda on the project mentioned above.

24. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the Committee **requested** the ICDT and SESRIC, in close cooperation with the relevant OIC institutions and international key stakeholders, to organize training and promotional events for the benefit of West African Countries Members with respect to the regional project entitled "*Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa*" to boost community-based tourism in the region and thereby support the local economy within the West African region.

25. **Also recalling** the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to continue supporting their relevant institutions, tourism companies and tour operators etc. to further their efforts through, among others, organizing promotion campaigns and additional tours to Al-Quds Al-Sharif for supporting Palestinian residents of Al-Quds and to demonstrate solidarity with them.

26. **Underlining** the importance of "IOFS Strategic Vision 2031" for improving agricultural and rural development as well as food security policies in the OIC geography, the Committee **called upon** OIC Member Countries and OIC Institutions to support, to the extent possible, the implementation of programs and projects benefiting Member Countries in order to better address specific challenges and opportunities, paving the way for a prosperous and food-secure future.

27. **Commending** the efforts of SESRIC in the execution of the OIC-TVET Strategic Road Map 2020-2025, the Committee **requested** SESRIC to continue providing regular progress updates to both COMCEC Sessions and Follow-up Committee Meetings, and to identify potential challenges and propose strategic responses to ensure the continued successful implementation of the Road Map.

28. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the COMCEC Sessions, the Committee **requested** the CCO to carry on compiling the relevant OIC Institutions' activities aligned with the prioritized SDG areas for submission to the 40th Session of the COMCEC.

29. **Commending** the efforts of SESRIC in conducting annual reports on the progress towards achievement of the SDGs in the OIC Member Countries and submission to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions on a regular basis, the Committee **requested** SESRIC to continue to carry out statistical training activities focusing on SDGs for the benefit of National Statistical Offices of the Member Countries within the framework of its Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.

30. **Underlining** the important role of Social Security Institutions (SSIs) in promoting social welfare and economic security within the OIC Member Countries, the Committee **commended** SESRIC for its efforts in this area and **requested** the Centre to further its efforts in technical preparations and collaborations with interested Member Countries aiming at initiating an Intra-OIC network of cooperation among the SSIs, thus contributing to the goal of enhanced economic security in the OIC region.

31. **Recalling** the relevant resolutions of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session, the Committee **requested** the IsDB Group to submit report regularly on the implementation of its programs, in particular ISFD, to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and COMCEC Follow-up Committee Meetings.

32. The Committee **commended** SESRIC for introducing three new Capacity Building Programmes, including Palestine National Institutions Capacity Building Programme (Palestine-CaB), which aims to enhance Palestinian national institutions' capacity for effective service delivery, governance enhancement, and contribute to sustainable development in Palestine; Halal Capacity Building Programme (Halal-CaB), which aims to enhance national institutions' capacity in formulating strategies, policies, and standards, and establishing certification bodies for the Halal industry; and Digital Transformation Capacity Building Programme (Digi-CaB), which will facilitate skills development among member countries in response to digitalization.

33. **Taking note with appreciation** the efforts of the COMCEC High-Level Digital Transformation Forum in exchanging experience among the Member Countries in digital transformation area, the Committee **called upon** the interested Member Countries and relevant OIC Institutions to actively participate in the activities of the High-Level Forum in the upcoming period.

34. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 39th COMCEC Ministerial Session, the Committee **commended** the endeavors of the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group, which will undertake the necessary preparations, including, among others, formulation of a set of policy recommendations for the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the 40th COMCEC Meeting to be conducted with the theme of “Digital Transformation of Payment Systems in the OIC Member Countries” and **called upon** the Member Countries to actively participate in the 22nd Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group to be held in September 2024.

35. The Committee **requested** the CCO to circulate a questionnaire including following themes among the Member Countries to explore their views on the possible themes of the Ministerial Exchange of Views Session of the COMCEC.

Theme 1: Developing / Improving Export Strategies in the OIC Member Countries

Theme 2: Promoting Islamic Green Finance in the OIC Member Countries to Alleviate the Adverse Effects of Climate Change and Natural Disasters

Theme 3: Increasing Competitiveness of Small Family Businesses and SMEs in Agriculture and Food Sector in OIC Countries

Theme 4: Enhancing and Sustaining Rural Accessibility in the OIC Member Countries

Theme 5: Improving the Quality and Sustainability of Heritage Tourism in OIC

Theme 6: Decent Housing for the Poor in the OIC Member Countries

36. The Committee **prepared** and **decided** to submit the Draft Agenda to the 40th Session of the COMCEC.

ANNEX VII

SUPPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 40th COMCEC FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE MEETING

1. The Committee **welcomed** the Report on the Implementation of the COMCEC Strategy submitted by the CCO highlighting the progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy and **commended** the Member Countries and OIC Institutions for their valuable contributions to the implementation of the Strategy.
2. The Committee **welcomed** the activities conducted by the OIC institutions for the realization of the COMCEC Strategy.
3. The Committee **welcomed** that twenty-five projects are being implemented in 2024 under the COMCEC Project Funding and **invited** the Member Countries to intensify their efforts to harness the benefits of COMCEC Project Funding, particularly with a view to materializing the Ministerial Policy Recommendations.
4. The Committee **also welcomed** that eight projects are being implemented by the Ministry of National Economy of Palestine under the COMCEC Al-Quds Programme in 2024, with the aim of enhancing the well-being of people living in Al-Quds Al-Sharif.
5. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the report presented by the OIC General Secretariat on the implementation of the economic and commercial component of the OIC-2025: Program of Action.
6. The Committee **welcomed** the convening of the Seventh Annual Coordination Meeting of OIC Institutions (ACMOI) on 17-18 January 2024, in Jeddah, OIC Headquarters.
7. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Trade Working Group on 6 May 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Developing the Quality Infrastructure in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries, which have registered to the COMCEC Trade Working Group to actively participate in its 23rd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 19-20 September 2024.
8. The Committee **welcomed** the activities conducted by the CCO, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, ITFC, ICIEC, ICD, IOFS, ICCD, and SMIIC in the area of trade aligned with the COMCEC Strategy since the 39th Session of the COMCEC.

9. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Bangladesh, Indonesia, Suriname, Türkiye and Uganda for the following projects being implemented in trade domain in 2024, within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project titled “Strengthening Cross-Border E-Commerce Sector in Bangladesh through Enhancing Capacity of SMEs and Professionals” being implemented by Bangladesh in partnership with Malaysia,
- The project titled “Developing Product Information and Determining Halal Critical Points” being implemented by Indonesia with Malaysia, Türkiye, Brunei Darussalam, United Arab Emirates and SMIC,
- The project titled “Increasing Internationalization of SMEs in Suriname and Guyana” being implemented by Surinam in partnership with Guyana and Türkiye,
- The project titled “Free Zone Training Program for Internationalization of SMEs” being implemented by Türkiye with Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia,
- The project titled “Enhancing Good Governance and Technical Capacity in SME to Eliminate Informalities in the Sector” being implemented by Uganda.

10. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the efforts of ICDT for the following activities in trade domain;

- Workshops such as Women owned Enterprises and Cooperatives in OIC English Speaking Countries, on 18-20 December 2023, Banjul, the Gambia; the Development of Digital Trade in Africa for African OIC Member Countries, on 8-10 January 2024 in Casablanca/Morocco; "Emerging Approaches to International Investment Agreements in African Member States", on 30 and 31 January 2024 in Casablanca; Women owned Enterprises and Cooperatives in OIC French speaking Countries, 2024, N'Djamena, Republic of Chad;
- The 4th Consultative Forum of Regional Cooperation Organizations (RCOs) operating within the OIC region, October, 2024, in Marrakesh, Morocco
- A round table Meeting regarding the raising awareness of TPS-OIC for CEMAC member countries during the 4th quarter of 2024 in N'Djamena, Republic of Chad
- Awareness raising workshop on the TPS-OIC for the Arab countries, ECOWAS and ECO countries during the 3rd quarter of 2024
- The 1st Forum & Expo of OIC Businesswomen” and a “Panel on the development prospects of Women owned Cooperatives in Sub-Saharan Africa” planned to be organized in 2024.

11. The Committee **appreciated** the role played by the CCO and ICDT as the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) in supervising trade negotiations and building capacity related to the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among OIC Member Countries.

12. The Committee also **welcomed** the readiness of the ICDT and CCO to organize awareness-raising workshops on the TPS-OIC and its impact on the private sector for the benefit of the Arab countries in accession process to the TPS-OIC in the year of 2024.

13. Considering the importance of enhancing business relations among the OIC Member Countries, the Committee **invited** the Member Countries to actively participate in the following fairs, exhibitions, and forums organized by the ICDT:

- Yaoundé Forum, scheduled to be held on 25-26 July 2024 in Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon; Moroni Forum, scheduled to be held on 25-26 September 2024 in Moroni, Union of Comoros; Cotonou Forum, scheduled to be held on 13-14 November 2024 in Cotonou, Republic of Benin under the ICDT Invest Days
- The 5th OIC Health Exhibition, scheduled to be held on 4-7 July 2024, in Dakar - Republic of Senegal;
- The 10th OIC Halal Products Exhibition, scheduled to be held on 8-12 October 2024 in Tunis- Republic of Tunisia;
- The 18th OIC Trade Fair "18th TFOIC," to be held on 29 November -1 December 2024 in Lahore - Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

14. The Committee **requested** ICDT to continue holding sector specific fairs in cooperation with the Member Countries and submit on regular basis, progress reports on trade fairs and other specialized fairs as well as exhibitions to the COMCEC Sessions and to organize investment promotion activities such as high-level forums and capacity building programs at national and regional level in order to enhance intra-OIC Investment.

15. The Committee **expressed** its thanks and appreciation to the IsDB Group and ICDT for organizing WTO-related training courses and seminars and **called upon** the IsDB and ICDT to continue providing technical assistance to the Member Countries on WTO-related issues and to enhance their efforts in sensitizing the Member Countries to the impact of WTO trade negotiations on their economies by monitoring matters relating to the WTO activities and reporting them to the annual sessions of the COMCEC and other relevant fora.

16. Recalling the relevant resolutions of the COMCEC, the Committee **requested** IsDB to submit reports on WTO-related Technical Assistance activities to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.

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

18. The Committee **also called upon** the Member Countries and the relevant OIC institutions to extend support to the Member Countries which need technical assistance on trade facilitation practices towards the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

19. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following activities in the field of halal:

- Training Course on “Halal Tourism and Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services” as part of the preparations to celebrate Khiva as the OIC City of Tourism 2024 on 8-12 January 2024,
- Workshop on “Halal Industry Development in OIC Member Countries” on 24-25 April 2024.

20. The Committee **commended** SESRIC for organizing the Training Course on “Empowering Competition Authorities for Fair Market Competition” held on 2-3 April 2024.
21. The Committee **took note with appreciation** that ITFC’s cumulative trade finance approvals and disbursement reached US\$75.4 billion and US\$63.5 billion, respectively with 1036 operations and ITFC’s cumulative funds mobilized from partner banks and financial institutions, since its inception reached US\$ 46.0 billion.
22. The Committee **took note of** the trade promotion and capacity development initiatives being implemented by ITFC under its various flagship programs such as Arab Africa Trade Bridge Program (AATB) and Aid for Trade Initiatives for Arab States (AFTIAS).
23. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of ITFC for the design of the Trade Connect Central Asia+ (TCCA+), in consultation with the targeted countries, aiming at strengthening the capacities of the trade support institutions and the private sector in the Central Asia Region countries, as well as promoting the regional cooperation initiatives in partnership with stakeholders and developing partners.
24. The Committee also **took note with appreciation** of ITFC’s efforts to expand the scope of its trade finance products aiming at facilitating trade flow between the OIC Member Countries and beyond, enhancing partnerships with local and regional Banks and Financial Institutions for private sector and SME support.
25. The Committee **took note of** the efforts of the ICIEC as the only multilateral export credit and investment insurance Corporation in the world that provides Shariah-compliant insurance and reinsurance solutions.
26. The Committee **requested** ICIEC to submit reports on their activities related to export credit insurance to the COMCEC Ministerial Sessions, and the Follow-up Committee Meetings.
27. The Committee **also took note with appreciation** of the ICIEC’s volume of business insured in 2023, which stood at USD 13.3 billion to bring its cumulative amount of business insured since inception to USD 108,3 billion.
28. The Committee **invited** the Member Countries to support the implementation of SMIIC Strategic Plan 2021-2030, in particular activation of the OIC Global Halal Quality Infrastructure (OHAQ) by the relevant authorities of the OIC Member Countries which are signatory to the Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) of the Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB), aiming to facilitate the intra-OIC trade of halal products and services based on OIC/SMIIC Standards.
29. The Committee **requested** SMIIC and relevant OIC Institutions to continue their efforts in cooperation with the relevant institutions of Member Countries for improving the quality infrastructure systems of the OIC Least Developed Countries (LDCs).
30. The Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to actively participate in the Halal Expo İstanbul and 10th World Halal Summit to be held in İstanbul, Türkiye on 27-30 November 2024 with the theme “A Decade of Halal Success: Uniting Vision, Shaping the Future” which is organized in coordination with SMIIC and ICDT.

31. The Committee **called upon** the Member Countries and their relevant private sector entities to actively participate in the following sector-specific Forums organized by ICCD in the areas of digital economy, sustainable agriculture and tourism, Islamic economy, investment, and entrepreneurship development to support the sustainable development of the private sector and economic growth of the Member Countries;

- Invest in Digital Economy Forum, to be held on 26-27 May 2024, in Amman, Jordan,
- Best of Entrepreneurship Series, to be held on 28 August 2024 in Asia,
- Sustainable Tourism Forum, to be held in September 2024 in Pakistan,
- Sustainable Agriculture Investment Forum, to be held in November 2024 in Azerbaijan.

32. **Taking note with appreciation** of the efforts and activities of the ICCD in organizing relevant Forums in the areas of sustainable agriculture, sustainable tourism, Islamic economy, investment, digital economy, and entrepreneurship to support sustainable development of the OIC Private Sector for the resilient economic growth of the Member Countries.

33. **Taking note of** the continuous efforts of the ICCD to establish Microfinance institutions and the initiation of the feasibility study in collaboration with IsDB in the G5 Sahel region in Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, the Committee **requested** ICCD in mobilizing available funds from international organizations working particularly for poverty alleviation, small farmers and green economy, to fund the creation of operational manuals for ICCD Islamic Microfinance Institutions.

34. **Taking note of** the activities undertaken by ICCD for capacity building of the private sector through the Chambers Accreditation Program and training in the areas of Agri Business management and the digital transformation of Chambers of Commerce and SMEs, the Committee **encouraged** relevant stakeholders in the Member Countries to actively participate in the programs and trainings of ICCD to enhance the private sectors digital capabilities, foster innovation, and promote sustainable economic development.

35. **The Committee expressed** its appreciations for the progress made by the OIC Arbitration Centre (OIC-AC) in enhancing its structure, governance, international presence and to promote awareness of arbitration services, capacity building for arbitrators, and facilitation of dispute resolution mechanisms among OIC Member Countries.

36. **Expressing** its appreciations of the progress made by the OIC-AC as an international arbitration institution upholding the principles of equal treatment, impartiality, transparency, and independence that are hallmarks of modern ADR proceedings, in both commercial and investment disputes, the Committee **called upon** all OIC Member Countries and their respective business communities to utilize the OIC-AC platform as the forum for resolving all commercial and investment disputes in respect of a defined legal relationship, whether contractual, treaty-based, or otherwise.

37. The Committee **welcomed** that the Kingdom of Morocco hosted the Second Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in cooperation with General Secretariat of OIC and ICDT on 14-16 September 2023 in Casablanca to negotiate the Study of the development of a mechanism for the settlement of investment-related disputes or to explore the possibility and technical aspects of integrating the settlement of investment-related disputes to the OIC Arbitration Centre's portfolio of functions, and also **welcomed** that the Republic of Türkiye will host the Third Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting in 2024 in Istanbul.

38. The Committee **took note** that as of end of the first quarter of 2024, ICD's gross cumulative approvals stand at \$8.3 billion, and cumulative disbursements totals \$4.6 billion since inception, and the contribution of ICD to address the private sector development including Lines of Finance, Term Finance, and Equity Projects in OIC Member Countries through its \$750 million approval target for 2024.

39. The Committee **took note with appreciation** the dedicated cooperation efforts of ICD to develop more than 10 joint transactions worth over \$150 Million where ICD partnered with ITFC and ICIEC during last year to capture synergies across Islamic Development Bank Group Entities.

40. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following activities in the field of private sector:

- Training Course on "Setting Up a Supportive Policy Framework to Promote Youth and Women Entrepreneurship" on 9-10 January 2024, and
- Training Course on "Statistical Business Registers" on 1-2 April 2024.

41. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 21st Meeting of the Financial Cooperation Working Group on 2 May 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of "Digital Transformation of Payment Systems in OIC Member Countries", the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries, which have registered to the COMCEC Financial Cooperation Working Group to actively participate in its 22nd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 16-17 September 2024.

42. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Nigeria project titled "Digital Finance and Payment Systems Training for SME Value Chain Strengthening" being implemented in 2024 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

43. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of training course on "Government Finance, Fiscal and Public Sector Statistics" held on 8-9 January 2024, in the field of financial cooperation.

44. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the OIC Exchanges Forum and its Task Forces and **invited** the Member Countries to actively participate in the activities to be organized under this Forum.

45. **Welcoming** the efforts carried out by the Task Forces of COMCEC Capital Market Regulators Forum namely capacity building, market development, Islamic finance, financial literacy, sustainability, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries to support the efforts of the Forum through participating in its meetings and contributing to the accomplishment of the mandates of the Task Forces.

46. **Welcoming** the training and capacity-building programs organized by the SESRIC towards the Central Banks and Monetary Authorities of Member Countries, the Committee **requested** the SESRIC to continue organizing such activities for the benefit of the relevant national institutions of the Member Countries within the framework of its Central Banks Capacity Building Programme (CB-CaB).

47. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group on 6 May 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of "Developing Intelligent Transportation Systems in OIC Member Countries", the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries, which have registered to the Working Group to actively participate in its 23rd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 24-25 September 2024.

48. The Committee **commended** the efforts of the Gambia for project titled "Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of an Institutional Framework for Intelligent Transportation System in The Gambia" being implemented in partnership with Qatar in 2024 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding.

49. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to SESRIC for the conduct of the report entitled "Transportation for Development in OIC Member Countries: Implications for Trade and Tourism & Challenges for Landlocked Countries" and two Training Courses on "SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure) Indicators" on 19 December 2023 and 18 January 2024 for the benefit of French and Arabic speaking countries, respectively, within the framework of SESRIC's Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme.

50. **Taking note with appreciation** the convening of the 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group on 2 May 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of "Developing and Branding Gastronomy Tourism Destinations within OIC", the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries, which have registered to the Working Group to actively participate in its 23rd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 24-25 September 2024.

51. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Mali, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda and SESRIC for the following projects being implemented in tourism domain in 2024, within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project titled "Capacity Building of Tourism Guides in Selected OIC Member Countries" being implemented by Mali with the partnership of Burkina Faso and Niger,
- The project titled "Enhancing Capacities of Tourism Stakeholders for Adapting to Customers Changing Needs" being implemented by Nigeria with the Gambia, Mali and Uganda,
- The project titled "Improving Entrepreneurial Capacities of Selected Tourism Stakeholders for Ensuring Competitiveness in Tourism" being implemented by Togo in partnership with Türkiye,
- The project titled "Empowering Entrepreneurship Skills of Community-Based Tourism Enterprises to Enhance Competitiveness of Tourism Industry" being implemented by Uganda with Cameroon, Malaysia and Senegal,
- The project titled "Strengthening the Capacities of African Tourism Boards through Sustainable Human Resource Management Practices" being implemented by SESRIC for the benefit of 17 Member Countries.

52. The Committee **took note with appreciation of** the efforts of the SESRIC for organizing training courses and seminars in tourism sector, particularly on halal tourism and tourism statistics within the framework of the SESRIC Capacity Building Programmes.

53. **Considering** the vital role that tourism plays in the economic and social development of OIC Member States, the Committee **commended** the conduct of the following research and activities conducted by SESRIC and ICDT:

- Report prepared by SESRIC on “International Tourism in OIC Member Countries 2024: Empowering Smart and Sustainable Tourism for Development” for submission to the 12th Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers to be held in Khiva, Uzbekistan during 31 May-2 June 2024,
- Online Workshop on “Developing Sustainable Tourism in Cross Border Parks and Protected Areas in West African OIC Member Countries” on 14-15 May 2024
- Workshop on “Halal Industry Development in OIC Member Countries” on 24-25 April 2024.
- Training Course on “Halal Tourism and Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services” as Part of the Preparations to Celebrate Khiva as the OIC City of Tourism 2024, on 8-12 January 2024,
- Webinar on “Prospects for Harmonising Statistics on Halal Sector” on 11 December 2023,
- Training Course on “Strengthening Practice of Ecotourism and Conservation in the OIC Region” on 29-30 November 2023,

54. **Taking note with appreciation of** the efforts of the SESRIC for organizing training courses and seminars in tourism sector, particularly on halal tourism and tourism statistics within the framework of the SESRIC Capacity Building Programmes, the Committee **commended** the efforts of the SESRIC for organizing activities in the field of tourism:

- Training Course on “SDG 8.9 (Sustainable Tourism) Indicators” on 18-20 December 2023,
- Training Course on “Halal Tourism and Muslim-Friendly Hospitality Services” on 8-12 January 2024, and
- Training Course on “Tourism Statistics” on 21-22 February 2024.

55. The Committee **took note with appreciation** that SESRIC and ICDT would jointly organize the Online Workshop on “Developing Sustainable Ecotourism in West African OIC Member Countries” to be held on 28-29 May 2024 for the benefit of experts and executives from Tourism Ministries and Authorities as well as Members of the Regional Project on “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”.

56. **Taking note with appreciation** of the convening of the 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group on 30 April 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Developing Livestock Production and Fishery to Foster Food Security for a Sustainable Agricultural Development in OIC Countries”, the Committee called upon the Member Countries, which have registered to the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group to actively participate in its 23rd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 19-20 September 2024.

57. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Azerbaijan, Benin, the Gambia, Niger, Nigeria, Qatar, Türkiye, COMSTECH and SESRIC for the following projects in the field of agriculture being implemented in 2024 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The Project titled “Experience Sharing on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)” being implemented by Azerbaijan in partnership of Türkiye,
- The Project titled “Capacity Building on Enriched Organic Fertilizer Production” being implemented by Benin with Egypt and IOFS,
- The Project titled “Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Agriculture Sector of the Gambia and OIC Member Countries” being implemented by the Gambia with Türkiye and SESRIC,
- The Project titled “Sedentary the Ruminant Herds to Ensure Food and Nutritional Security in Niger” being implemented by Niger in partnership with Benin, Uganda and Egypt,
- The Project titled “Capacity Building on Organomineral Fertilizers” being implemented by Nigeria with Sudan and Egypt,
- The Project titled “Capacity Building on Inclusion of Seasonal Workers into Agricultural Knowledge and Information System in Qatar and GCC Countries” being implemented by Qatar in partnership of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman and IOFS,
- The Project titled “Common Steps Towards Climate Change: Adaptation, Mitigation and Resistance Strategies in Stone Fruits” being implemented by Türkiye with Azerbaijan and Morocco,
- The Project titled “Promoting Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems (AKIS) and Precision Agriculture” being implemented by COMSTECH for the benefit of 3 member countries, namely Pakistan, Mauritania and Senegal,
- The Project titled “Promoting Food Security in OIC Member Countries through Sustainable Agricultural Inputs” being implemented by SESRIC for the benefit of 15 member countries.

58. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following activities in the field of agriculture:

- Training Course on “Climate Change Adaptation Planning and Environmental Management” on 5-6 March 2024,
- Training Session on “SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) Indicators” on 26-27 March 2024, and
- Training Course on “Genetic Engineering and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)” on 14-15 May 2024.

59. **Taking note of** the important role of private sector in improving the food security sector, the Committee invited the Member Countries to encourage the collaboration of their private sector entities in the implementation of the programs related with industrial development and smart agriculture, as well as the activities towards attracting significant investments, stimulate intra-OIC trade, and ultimately contributing to economic growth and self-reliance food sector across the Member Countries.

60. **Taking note of** the IOFS humanitarian food relief appeal for Gaza, encourages Member States and relevant OIC Institutions to support, to the extent possible, to facilitate the implementation of this important initiative.

61. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to IOFS for the conduct of the following activities in the field of agriculture and food security:

- Panel session on food nutrition in OIC Arab Countries during the International Conference on Food Security in the Arab World During and After Crises on 21 December 2023
- Panel on developing comprehensive water management policies during the International Conference on Food Security in the Arab World During and After Crises on 21 December 2023
- Capacity building training workshop on the Application of Artificial Intelligence in Precision Agriculture for Food Security on February 13-15, 2024
- Exchange visit and Hands-on Training Workshop for best practices of wheat development in Pakistan on February 19-23, 2024
- International Conference of Emerging Technologies for Crop Improvement in Pakistan on February 19-20, 2024
- The Arab Water Management Summit in Morocco on 4-7 March 2024,

62. Taking **note with appreciation of** the convening of the 22nd Meeting of the COMCEC Poverty Alleviation Working Group on 2 May 2024, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Alleviating Adverse Effects of Natural Disasters on Poor Segments of Society in the OIC Member Countries”, the Committee **called upon** the Member Countries, which have registered to the Working Group to actively participate in its 23rd Meeting to be organized with the same theme on 16-17 September 2024.

63. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Türkiye and SESRIC for the following projects being implemented under the poverty alleviation area in 2024 within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project on “Developing Policy Framework Capacity in the Field of Social Security After Natural Disasters” to be implemented by Türkiye with Indonesia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Tunisia, and SESRIC,
- The project on “Empowering Youth through Enhancing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): A Pathway to Employment and Success” to be implemented by SESRIC for the benefit of 15 Member Countries.

64. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for organizing activities under the agenda item on alleviating poverty:

- Webinar on “Advocating Women's Rights within Family Laws: Best Practices in the OIC Member Countries” held on 6-7 December 2023, and “Renewable Energy Statistics” held on 28 March 2024,
- Training Courses on “SDG 13 (Climate Action) Indicators” conducted on 19-20 December 2023, “SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) Indicators” conducted on 23 January 2024, “SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) Indicators” conducted on 12-13 February 2024,

- Training Courses and workshops on “Supporting Evidence-Based Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and SDG Reporting: Data and Statistics Innovations” organized on 6-7 December 2023, “Integrating Formal and Informal TVET Education in OIC-Africa French-Speaking Member Countries” organized on 27-28 December 2023 “Supporting Tobacco Farmers through Tobacco Control Programmes” organized on 13-14 February 2024, and “Integrating Green Skills and Sustainable Practices into TVET Programmes” organized on 13-14 March 2024, and “Effective Labour Market Information Systems” organized on 13-14 March 2024,
- 4th Meeting of the OIC Public Employment Services Network (OIC-PESNET) held on 29 February - 1 March 2024, in Marrakech, Morocco.

65. **Recalling** the relevant resolution of the 39th COMCEC Session, the Committee **took note with appreciation** of the efforts of ISFD for mobilizing resources, and **requested** the Member Countries, which have pledged to the ISFD to fulfill their commitments and make fresh contributions to finance more poverty alleviation projects in Member Countries.

66. The Committee **commended** the efforts of Sierra Leone and Türkiye for the following projects being implemented in the digital transformation domain in 2024, within the framework of the COMCEC Project Funding:

- The project titled “Legal and Regulatory Framework for E-Government” to be implemented by Sierra Leone in partnership with Türkiye,
- The project titled “HackMasters Cyber Security Challenge (Capture the Flag, CTF)” to be implemented by Türkiye in partnership with 32 Member Countries.

67. The Committee **expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for the conduct of following activities in the Digital Transformation Capacity Building Programme (Digi-CaB):

- Training Course on “Information Society Statistics” on 27-28 December 2023, and
- Training Course on “Harnessing Digitalization and AI for the Advancement of OIC Stock Exchanges” on 21-22 May 2024.

68. The Committee **also expressed its appreciation** to the SESRIC for following activities to be conducted and encouraged the Palestinian National Institutions to actively participate in these activities within the framework of Palestine-CaB:

- Training Course on “Advanced Negotiation Techniques and Diplomatic Correspondence for Diplomats”,
- Training Course on “Long-term Recovery and Reconstruction”.

