



TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

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COMCEC

CCO BRIEF
ON
TRANSPORT AND
COMMUNICATIONS

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

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BRIEF ON TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATION

I. Introduction

Transportation and communication, as the two main pillars of modern economies and globalized world, play a crucial role in facilitating global trade, connectivity and development. It is the backbone of economies, enabling trade, commerce, and the exchange of resources on a global scale. It enables facilitation in the movement of people, goods, and services, linking producers with consumers, businesses with markets, and communities with essential services. This facilitation leads to improve the efficiency of transportation systems by connecting producers with consumers, reducing production costs, and improving market accessibility.

Besides, transportation raised social cohesion by connecting communities and enabling people to access basic services, education, and employment opportunities. In addition, it has a vital role in emergency response, ensuring timely access to healthcare and disaster relief. In this regard, transportation is indispensable for the functioning of societies, driving progress, and fostering development. In the Transport Outlook by International Transport Forum (ITF), it is foreseen that the number of megacities¹ will rise from 33 to 43 between 2018-2030 with the effect of increasing population, which will surely affect the transport sector especially in urban areas².

On the other hand, in the report “Global status report on Road Safety 2023” by World Health Organization (WHO), it is highlighted that there were 1.19 million road traffic deaths in 2021, corresponding to a rate of 15 road traffic deaths per 100,000 population³. With the contribution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), technological innovations bring a new dimension to the field of transport with special reference to the aim of increasing road-safety. In this context, the integration of ICT to the transportation systems brings the new concept as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), which further enhances the efficiency, safety as well as the sustainability of transportation networks.

ITS optimize traffic flow, reduce congestion, improve road safety, and promote environmental sustainability by leveraging advanced technologies and data-driven solutions. Thus, ITS build upon the foundation of traditional transportation infrastructure, providing innovative solutions to address the evolving needs and challenges of modern societies.

Considering the importance of the issue, the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) has devoted its 22nd and 23rd Meetings to “Developing Intelligent Transportation Systems in OIC Member Countries”. Enhancing the cooperation among the

¹ Megacity is a term for a city where has over 10 million residence.

² ITF, ITF Transport Outlook 2023

³ WHO, Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023

Member Countries on this theme through sharing experiences and the best practices would directly contribute to the realization of related output areas of the COMCEC Strategy.

II. Transport and Communications Cooperation under the COMCEC

Improving the functioning, effectiveness, and sustainability of transport and communications in the Member Countries is the main objective of the COMCEC Strategy in the field of transport and communications. Within this framework, since the 39th COMCEC Session, the COMCEC TCWG elaborated on developing intelligent transportation systems in its 22nd and 23rd Meetings.

A. Developing Intelligent Transportation Systems in OIC Member Countries (22nd and 23rd Meetings of the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group)

The 22nd Meeting of COMCEC TCWG was held virtually on 6 May 2024 and the 23rd Meeting of COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group was held on 24-25 September 2024 in Ankara. These two consecutive meetings elaborated on the theme of “Developing Intelligent Transportation Systems in OIC Member Countries”.

In order to deepen and enrich the discussions during the abovementioned meetings, a Policy Guide with the same theme has been prepared. While the preliminary findings of the Guide was submitted to the 22nd TCWG meeting, the final version of the Guide was submitted to the 23rd TCWG Meeting. The Guide provided a conceptual framework and examined best practices, innovative approaches and successful initiatives in developing intelligent transportation systems in OIC Member Countries. In addition to the desk-based case studies examining Iraq, Türkiye and the United States (US), the Guide also includes a detailed analysis based on in-depth research in the selected Member Countries, namely Malaysia and The Gambia.

Through a comprehensive conceptual framework, in-depth field and desk-based studies, and a useful and applicable road map in Intelligent Transportation Systems for the Member Countries, the guide offers insight into this field by highlighting the best practices and challenges that Member Countries have faced in this process.

In light of the main findings of the guide and the deliberations during the meetings, the 23rd Meeting of the COMCEC TCWG has come up with the following policy recommendations:

- *Planning and developing a national ITS Strategic Plan for smooth acceleration and coordination of ITS Deployment in the OIC Member Countries*
- *Developing standards for ITS architecture to ensure interoperability, seamless information flow and standardization of equipment within the ITS ecosystem*
- *Developing/Improving monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of ITS implementations*

- *Implementing ITS to promote sustainable smart mobility in transportation to minimize environmental impacts and maximize efficiency*
- *Providing safe, comfortable, affordable and accessible transport systems by taking into consideration disadvantaged groups*
- *Promoting capacity building of OIC Member Countries through exchange programs in developing regulatory policies for ITS and setting of ITS infrastructure*

All the documents including the Guide and presentations made during the WG Meetings are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)

B. The COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism

COMCEC Project Funding (CPF) is the other important instrument of the Strategy. Projects financed under the CPF need to serve cooperation among member countries and should be designed in accordance with the objectives and the expected outcomes defined by the Strategy in the transport and communication section. Projects also play important roles in the realization of the policy recommendations formulated by the member countries during the TCWG meetings.

In 2024, the project titled “Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of an Institutional Framework for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) in The Gambia” has been implemented by The Gambia with Qatar as the beneficiary country. The purpose of the project is to share experiences and devise a blueprint for an institutional and strategic framework for an intelligent, efficient, and environmentally sustainable urban transportation system in The Gambia and OIC Member Countries. Within the context of the project, Gambian experts have embarked on a peer-to-peer experience-sharing visit to Qatar’s Ministry of Transport to learn about their urban intelligent transport systems.