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**REPORT
OF
THE SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING
OF
THE EIGHTH OIC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON
FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
25th-26th OCTOBER, 2021**

Report of the Senior Officials' Meeting,
Preparatory to the Eighth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security
and Agricultural Development

1. The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), preparatory to the Eighth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development was held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey on 25th-26th October, 2021. The Meeting was attended by delegates from 35 OIC Member States. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of OIC institutions such as COMCEC Coordination Office, COMSTECH Secretariat, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC). From regional and international organizations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) took part in the meeting.

Opening ceremony

2. Following a recitation from the Holy Quran, Mr. Alim Bayel, Consul General of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Istanbul, Turkey, in his capacity as representative of the Chairman of the Seventh OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, made an opening statement.

Election of the Bureau

3. The Meeting elected members of the Conference Bureau as follows:

Republic of Turkey	–	Chairman;
State of Palestine	–	Vice-Chairman;
State of Qatar	–	Vice-Chairman;
The Gambia	–	Vice-Chairman;
Republic of Kazakhstan	–	Rapporteur.

4. Subsequently, H.E. Mr. Akif Ozkaldi, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, assumed the chairmanship of the Senior Officials' Meeting and welcomed all the delegates to the meeting. In his speech, he stated that increasing the socio-economic welfare of populations and addressing the unpredictable events necessitate developing the agriculture sector in OIC Member States, as well as broadening global collaboration. The OIC Member States face different challenges in promoting sustainable development of the agriculture sector, improving food systems, providing adequate access to agricultural resources, appropriate infrastructure and global commodity markets. Considering

the agricultural potential of OIC Member States, he emphasized the importance and desirability of increasing the solidarity and deepening the cooperation among the OIC Member States to address the challenges in agriculture and food sector.

5. On his part, H.E. Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary General of the OIC for Economic Affairs, also addressed the meeting. While highlighting the food security situation in OIC Member States and need to address food security challenges across OIC countries, Dr. Sengendo called on OIC Member States to step up joint efforts and intra-OIC cooperation in this important sector and enhance the ownership of the various OIC initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable agricultural development and enhancing food security.

Adoption of the Agenda

6. The Meeting adopted its Agenda as contained in **Annex 1**.

Review of the Implementation of Resolutions of the previous Conferences

7. The General Secretariat provided a summary of the OIC Secretary General's Progress Report on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the previous sessions of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development. In particular, the report described the status of implementation of the resolutions with regard to: promoting investment in agriculture and food sector; developing OIC programs of action for strategic agricultural commodities; training and capacity building; creating OIC Food Security Reserve System; and activities of the relevant OIC institutions, among others. The report also presented a set of recommendations for consideration of the OIC Member States.
8. It was pointed out that with the global population expected to reach 9.8 billion by 2050, OIC Member States' food supplies will be under far greater stress, and the demand is expected to be 60% higher than it is today. There is, therefore, an urgent necessity for promoting sustainable agricultural development and achieving resilient food systems to meet the increasing demand for food. Highlighting the difficulty to achieve many sustainable development goals without an efficient food system, it was emphasized to give more focused attention on environment, water, health, poverty alleviation and education, and development of appropriate technologies.

Current State of Agriculture and Food Security in OIC Member States

9. The SESRIC presented the 2020 edition of the report "The Agriculture and Food Security in OIC Member Countries 2020". The report highlights the recent state as well as the constraints and challenges of agricultural development and food security in the OIC Member States, exploring major issues such as agricultural production and productivity, trade in

agriculture commodities, agricultural population and land use in agriculture, water resources and their use in agriculture, production and trade of food, and food price volatility, among others. The report also captures the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for agriculture and food security in OIC Member States. Furthermore, the report analyses the current trends and status of agricultural research and development in a number of OIC Member States. Based on its findings, the report makes a set of policy recommendations aimed at enhancing intra-OIC cooperation in this domain for consideration by the OIC Member States.

10. Following the presentations, many delegates observed that there is a need to find pragmatic ways to solve the identified problems. It was pointed out that the fundamental issue in addressing these problems is adequate funding. It was also emphasized that there is a need to identify areas of complementarities among OIC Member States with regard to agricultural resources, food production and trade. Other issues to be addressed include development of agricultural commodities (wheat, rice, cassava), increasing local production capacities, modernization and mechanization of agriculture sector, creating food security reserve, control of water reserves, knowledge and experience sharing, technical assistance, south-south cooperation, role of the private sector and Public Private Partnerships, investment, among others. The need for increased cooperation among the Member States to ensure food security was emphasized.

Financing projects in the domain of agriculture and food security in OIC Member States

11. The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) made a presentation on the Bank's investment in agriculture, food security and rural development in post-Covid-19 era in OIC Member States. The presentation featured the evolution of IsDB project financing post world food crises in 2010, impact of COVID-19 and emerging global challenges on IsDB project financing, IsDB post-COVID-19 agenda and priorities with regard to financing programmes in the area of agriculture, rural development and food security in OIC Member States, and proposals on the way forward. The presentation also featured information about the flagship programmes of the IsDB with regard to developing rice, cassava and livestock value chains in a number of OIC Member States.
12. Similarly, COMCEC Coordination Office made a presentation on the activities of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group, and financing of agriculture and food security related projects in a number of OIC Member States under the COMCEC Project Funding and COMCEC COVID Response (CCR).
13. On its part, the ISF of the OIC, briefed the meeting on the activities of the Fund with regard to provision of emergency food assistance to the least developed countries of the OIC during the COVID-19 pandemic, and drilling water wells in a number of OIC countries. The

meeting was also informed that the Fund was planning to create a funding mechanism for agriculture and food security programmes through supporting the establishment of microcredit and family bank institutions in rural areas in OIC Member States. The Fund further confirmed its readiness to consider the request for assistance from OIC Member States in the area of agriculture and food security.

14. Delegates drew attention to the need to stockpile food reserves to improve food security and resilience, to develop sustainable agricultural strategy to cope with food crises, and to make effective use of grants and technical assistance. They also observed that the least developed countries do not receive enough support to address their development, including food insecurity challenges.

Supporting the activities of the Islamic Organization for Food Security and other OIC institutions working in the domain of agriculture, rural development and food security

15. The IOFS made a presentation on the “IOFS Vision 2031: Enabling a Sustainable OIC Food System” and programmes linked to the objectives of the Vision. These programmes relate to development of strategic agricultural commodities, creation of OIC Food Security Reserve system, food security governance, development of national gene banks, and promotion of the agro-food trade and investment, among others.
16. The SESRIC apprised the meeting about its training and capacity-building programmes as well as research works and publications in the areas of agriculture, rural development and food security, water resources management and environment. The SESRIC also informed that it maintains a solid data management system, statistical databases and indicators for OIC Member States in these areas. The SESRIC further confirmed its readiness to expand cooperation with Member States and relevant OIC institutions in addressing their needs.
17. The SMIIC briefed the meeting on the recent activities and progress on the Halal products and services. It was emphasized that OIC/SMIIC Halal standards were developed for production, certification and accreditation along with the new SMIIC vision to create a quality infrastructure that improves economy and welfare of the OIC Member States.
18. The COMSTECH made a presentation on its food and agriculture related initiatives for cooperation among OIC Member States. These initiatives related to introducing new breeding technologies, preservation of plant genetic resources and developing gene banks, and capacity building in modern agricultural technologies.
19. The ICDT briefed the meeting on the role of trade fairs and exhibitions, including the annual Halal Expos and specialized agricultural exhibitions, in encouraging and developing regular trade exchanges in agricultural commodities and promoting intra-OIC investments in this direction.

20. Following the presentations, the delegates emphasized the need to identify complementarities and foster closer coordination among OIC institutions for alignment and streamlining of activities for the purpose of avoiding overlapping and duplication. They also touched upon the production of commodities and strategies on agricultural development and food security in their respective countries.

OIC Programmes of Action for Development of Strategic Agricultural Commodities (Wheat, Rice and Cassava)

21. The OIC General Secretariat presented drafts of OIC Programmes of Action on the Development of Strategic Agricultural Commodities, namely:

- i) OIC Programme of Action for Development of Rice;
- ii) OIC Programme of Action for Development of Wheat; and
- iii) OIC Programme of Action for Development of Cassava.

22. In its presentation, the IOFS provided statistical data on production and consumption of rice, wheat and cassava in OIC Member States. The presentation also featured the on-going programmes of IOFS on development of rice, wheat, cassava and other commodities.

23. The Meeting also took note of inputs made by a number of OIC Member States on the drafts of the above-mentioned programmes of action and recommended the attached drafts (**Annexes 5, 6 and 7**) for the adoption by the Ministerial Conference.

24. The Meeting further emphasized the importance of these frameworks in enhancing the cooperation among the OIC Member States which produce these strategic agricultural commodities.

Creation of the OIC Food Security Reserve System

25. The General Secretariat provided background on the relevant OIC decisions toward the establishment of OIC Food Security Reserve System. IOFS presented the results of the pre-feasibility study for the creation of the Reserve System. This study was conducted by IOFS pursuant to the relevant resolution of the 7th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development. This study outlines the overall purpose of the food security reserve, main principles, conditions and mechanisms of the functioning of the reserve. The study also proposes conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding by the OIC Member States with regard to creation of the OIC Food Security Reserve System.

26. The Meeting took note of inputs made by the Member States on the draft of the Memorandum of Understanding with regard to creation of OIC Food Security Reserve

System. To this end it requested the OIC General Secretariat to obtain relevant inputs of other OIC Member States with a view to compiling an inclusive text of the MOU and submit the consolidated text to the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development for further necessary action.

27. The meeting also emphasized the need to expedite the execution of the pilot project with a view to reduce the envisaged timeframe as well as consider the possibility of simultaneous information sharing with other proposed regions for food security reserve. The other issues raised relate to operation, indicators and size of the food security reserve.

Venue and Date of the Ninth Ministerial Conference

28. The Meeting requested the esteemed OIC Member States to communicate their desire to host the Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development in 2023 to the General Secretariat at their earliest convenience.

Any Other Business

29. The Meeting received a presentation by the Director General of the COMCEC Coordination Office on the outcome of the side event under the theme “Sharing Experiences and Knowledge for the Improvement of Food Systems in the OIC Member States towards the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030”. The event organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey as part of the 8th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development. The side event highlighted the need to increase agricultural investment, trade, agricultural research and development, establishing alliances towards enhancing food quality and availability, and mobilizing domestic resources, among others.
30. Palestinian delegation drew attention to the fact that Israeli occupation and its continuing policy to impose its control on natural agricultural resources, restrict free movement, confiscate lands, enforce siege and destroy property and facilities in the Palestinian territory, results in hindering agricultural development as well as natural resource exploitation and high rates of food insecurity. The delegation called on the OIC Member States to take action to pressure the Israeli occupation to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to development and progress. The delegation also invited the OIC Member States and partner institutions to support the Palestinians in their steadfast perseverance and promote their resilience level for food security and agricultural development.
31. The delegations also emphasized that the relevant OIC Institutions should send their presentations and reports before the meeting so as to provide Member States the opportunity to study them and make meaningful contributions.

Consideration of the Agenda, Work Programme and the Draft Resolution of the Ministerial Session

32. The Meeting considered and agreed to present the attached draft agenda, draft work programme and draft resolution for consideration of the Ministerial Session (**Annexes 2, 3 and 4**).

Vote of Thanks

33. The Meeting expressed appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Turkey for the generous hospitality and excellent arrangements made to facilitate the success of the Senior Officials' Meeting. The Meeting congratulated the Chairman of the meeting for the excellent steering of the deliberations of the SOM.

34. The meeting also expressed appreciation to the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, COMSTECH Secretariat, SESRIC, ISF, ICDT, IsDB Group, IOFS and SMIC for their respective contributions to the meeting.

Issued in Istanbul,

26th October, 2021