



OIC/9-MCFSAD/2023/REP-SOM-FINAL

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

***(TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN OIC MEMBER STATES)***

*Doha, State of Qatar
1st OCTOBER, 2023*

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

1. The Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), preparatory to the Ninth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development under the theme "Towards Achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals" was held in Doha, State of Qatar on 1st October, 2023.
2. The meeting was attended by delegates from 41 OIC Member States. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of OIC institutions such as COMCEC Coordination Office, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB), Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) and Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC). From regional and international organizations The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) took part in the meeting.

Opening ceremony

3. Following a recitation from the Holy Quran, Mr. Fuat Kasimcan, Director General of the Directorate General for European Union and Foreign Relations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye, in his capacity as representative of the Chairman of the Eighth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, made an opening statement. In his statement, he referred to the successful implementation of the decisions of the Eighth OIC Ministerial Conference and emphasized the importance of strengthening the unity of the organization by making significant decisions and enhancing structural transformations towards achieving food security.

Appointment of the Bureau

4. The Meeting approved members of the Conference Bureau as follows:

State of Qatar	–	Chairman;
State of Palestine	–	Vice-Chairman;
Republic of Senegal	–	Vice-Chairman;
Islamic Republic of Iran	–	Vice-Chairman;
Republic of Türkiye	–	Rapporteur.

5. Subsequently, Dr. Masoud Al-Marri, Director of the Food Security Department at the Ministry of Municipality of the State of Qatar, assumed the chairmanship of the Senior Officials' Meeting and welcomed all the delegates to the meeting. In his speech, he expresses appreciation for providing State of Qatar with the opportunity to host 9th Ministerial Session. He emphasized that there are enough capacities in the OIC Member States to further enhance

closer collaboration, based on our unity and solidarity values, enabling to pursue joint action to address the challenges to food security and agriculture. He further pointed out that the OIC Member States, through establishing new mechanisms and alliances, could work together on innovative sustainable practices, adequate food distribution systems, improved abundance and yields of crops to ensure zero hunger. The benefits of the alliances shall not only cover the Member States, but to also expand to other countries. He called for collective action towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 2030 in the OIC Member States to alleviate food insecurity, improve agricultural practices and make significant impact on our people.

6. On his part, H.E. Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary General of the OIC for Economic Affairs, also addressed the meeting. In his address, Dr. Sengendo, while highlighting the activities of the OIC General Secretariat with its relevant institutions, observed that presently 23 OIC Member States are still among the 44 World Low Income Food Deficit Countries, requiring assistance in food supplies. He also noted that low labor and land productivity coupled with low public and private investments along with rudimentary technologies were among the major causes of the underdevelopment of the agriculture sector in many OIC agriculture-based economies. He emphasized the need to embark on practical implementation of adopted strategies, plans and resolutions in order to address the root causes of food insecurity. He also emphasized the need to foster the partnerships and increase synergies between the OIC Countries with arable land and natural agricultural endowments and those OIC countries with funds and technologies, to promote investment in agriculture and food security as well as build national capacities and capabilities. It is hopeful that the outcome of the deliberations of the Meetings will lead to dedicated OIC actions in addressing the food security issue.

Adoption of the Agenda

7. The Meeting adopted its Agenda.

Review of the Implementation of Resolutions of the previous Conferences

8. A representative of 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 (MCFSAD), particularly the resolution of the 8th MCFSAD held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 25th-27th October, 2021. In particular, the report described the efforts of a number of OIC Member States towards the implementation of the OIC resolutions. It also highlighted the activities of the relevant OIC institutions with regard to: financing agriculture and food sector in OIC Member States; developing strategic agricultural commodities (rice, wheat and cassava); training and capacity building for the various stakeholders; and establishing the OIC Food Security Reserve System, among others. The report also presented a set of recommendations for consideration of the OIC Member States.

Report on the Current State of Agriculture and Food Security in OIC Member States

9. A representative of the SESRIC presented the 2023 edition of the report “*The Agriculture and Food Security in OIC Member Countries 2023*”. The Report sheds light on the challenges faced by OIC Member States in achieving sustainable agricultural development and ensuring food security for their populations. It provides a detailed overview of the current state of agriculture, identifies key drivers of food security trends, and offers valuable policy recommendations to enhance resilience in the agriculture sector and food systems.

The Report found out that 203 million people in the OIC countries accounting to 11.2% of their population were undernourished in 2020. In the past decade agricultural production increased by 27% in the OIC Member States which is higher than the world average of 19%. Intra OIC Agricultural trade increased from 18% (2011) to 25% in 2021.

Policy recommendations include focusing on vulnerable and smallholder farmers, development new business models like contract farming, implementation of effective trade and price policies, improvement of market and finance access, support the adoption of modern technology, practices including digitization, implementing climate smart agriculture practices and enhancing public private partnerships for rural infrastructure development.

10. A representative of the SESRIC also presented a joint report on “*Agricultural Production and Trade Complementarities among OIC Member Countries*”, which was prepared by SESRIC and IOFS pursuant to the relevant resolution of the 8th MCFSAD. The Report analyses the complementarity of agricultural production and trade among OIC Member States and identifies possible areas for closer collaboration to promote more sustainable and inclusive growth. The Report also examines the potential for increasing food security and decreasing reliance on imports through optimizing the use of available agricultural resources, increasing food production, and strengthening the agro-food industries. Furthermore, the Report investigates the potential for intra-OIC trade in agro-food products to boost economic growth and development.
11. The participants also drew attention to the importance of human capital investment in agriculture as it plays a crucial role in promoting innovation and empowering small-scale farmers. They also spoke on the need to expand risk management tools for small-scale farmer families, which constitute the most vulnerable population, which is exposed to shrinkage in agricultural production, significant price decreases and cost increases.

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

12. A representative of IsDB in his presentation informed about the recently launched a US\$10.54 billion IsDB Group Food Security Response Program aimed at addressing the food insecurity in OIC Member States and strengthening their resilience to future shocks. USD\$2.90 Billion

has been dispersed under the program so far. He also made a presentation on IsDB strategic priorities and focus areas in agriculture, which would help to address emerging issues in this crucial sector, and capitalize on the available opportunities.

13. In his presentation, the representative of the COMCEC Coordination Office talked about the activities of COMCEC in the field of agriculture and food security including the main programs of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group. He also emphasized the role of agriculture Working Group meetings in the formulation of policy recommendations to be adopted by COMCEC Ministerial Sessions as well as COMCEC Project Funding mechanism in the realization of these recommendations in OIC Member Countries. A wide range of activities including field visits, studies for 31 Member Countries, surveys, interviews and roadmap studies have been undertaken within the activities of the working group. The presentation included a briefing on the COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism which supported 27 programs in the domain of agriculture and food security in OIC Member States. It was emphasized that the 11th call for project proposals was open for submission of project proposals from Member States.

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

14. In his presentation, IOFS representative presented an overview of the programmes and projects of the IOFS which were put in place with a view to supporting the efforts of OIC Member States in addressing food insecurity. Among the programs were the Impact Assessment to Measure the impacts of COVID 19 Pandemic on Food Security, Development of Strategic Commodities (Wheat, Rice and Cassava), and Establishment of OIC Security Reserve System, and Afghanistan Food Security Program. The IOFS representative also updated the participants about future plans of the Organization.
15. The SESRIC appraised 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.
16. 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. The representative highlighted that in products essential for food security, the OIC region still holds 48 billion USD in untapped potential including from suppliers in member states. Market access remains difficult despite the OIC's import dependency. Tariffs including for essential items remain elevated, nontariff measures in food sectors are perceived as heavy.

17. The ICCIA made a presentation on flagship initiatives of the Chamber namely Green Waqf Initiative, Islamic Chamber Halal Services, establishment of Islamic microfinance institutions in G5 Sahel countries. These projects aimed at enhancing sustainable practices in access to finance and growing share of OIC companies in the global Halal value chains. The ICCIA representative also informed that a Mega Forum on Sustainable Agriculture would be organized in Baku, Azerbaijan in June 2024.
18. Following the above presentations, the various interventions by OIC Member States highlighted the need to increase agricultural investment, trade, agricultural research and development, establishing alliances and mutually rewarding partnerships towards enhancing food quality and availability, mobilizing domestic resources and achieving self-sufficiency in basic commodities. They further emphasized the need for the OIC to enhance its important contribution through its institutions, especially in the form of mobilizing financial resources and investment in agriculture, value chains, productivity improvement, food storage facilities and other related areas, to ensure food security and adequate access to food in the Member States. To this end, it was underscored that the OIC Member States had sufficient resources in the form of land, human resources and agro-based technologies and there was need for effective coordination, streamlining, harmonization of trade and customs policies and tariffs and sharing of best practices among the Member States. Difficulties to access fertilizers, increased focus on youth and women in rural areas, prioritizing value added projects, increasing productivity and resilience of the sector, introduction and maintenance of national food reserves were among the highlights from the contributions of Member States. The Meeting also emphasized the need for OIC institutions to share detailed information with Member States about their program and projects in the field of agriculture and food security. Progress reports should include impact assessments of the initiatives and projects of OIC institutions in Member States.
19. On establishment of OIC Food Security Reserve, delegates emphasized the need to expedite conducting a detailed feasibility study on this matter and establishing a special fund for this purpose. With regard to implementation of OIC Programmes of Action on Strategic Agricultural Commodities, it was emphasized that sharing national experiences in the short term, enhancing quality of products in midterm, and simplifying trade measures in a long-term would be necessary.
20. The need to have a mechanism of assisting Member states that find themselves in urgent need of food due to inflow of refugees, disasters such as earthquakes and floods, droughts, and other catastrophes, was emphasized during the meeting.

Strategic Plan for Ensuring Food Security in OIC Member States

21. A representative of IOFS briefed the meeting about the work undertaken by the Task Force comprising the representatives of IOFS, IsDB and SESRIC to develop a strategic plan for ensuring food security in OIC Member States in accordance with the relevant resolution of the 49th Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, which was held in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, on 16th-17th March, 2023. The OIC ecosystem will generate tangible outcomes by addressing food security challenges in Member States. The Strategy covers industrial developments, model support centers, intra-trade, capacity building and resource mobilization. Reduction of import dependency by 15-25%, reduction of food waste by 15-20%, ensuring price stability of agricultural commodities, and generation of more than 3 million jobs were among the targets of the strategic plan.
22. Following the presentation, many delegates observed that there is a need to find pragmatic ways to implement the recommendations of the program to achieve its objectives. Organizing regional expert group meetings by IOFS in cooperation with SESRIC and IsDB within the three OIC groups to discuss the strategy in detail and submitting the draft strategy to the next session of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development was suggested by the Member States. They also stressed out the importance of synergizing the proposed strategy with national strategies and similar frameworks of international organizations to achieve policy integration, to avoid duplication and overlapping.

Addressing the challenges of climate change, rationalization of water resources consumption, supporting the implementation of national programs, use of irrigation systems, supporting agro-processing initiatives, increasing investment by the private sector, development of programs that are aligned for smallholder farmers, development of innovative solutions to reduce waste and post-harvest losses, development of early warning systems, harmonization of legislations for flow of goods, using digitization and improving infrastructure in rural areas, development of programs targeting vulnerable people, addressing child malnutrition, value addition were among the other issues raised by the Member States that need due attention in the elaboration of the Strategy.

Venue and Date of the Tenth Ministerial Conference

23. The Meeting welcomed the offer of Republic of Chad to host the Tenth OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development in 2025 in N'Djamena.

Consideration of the Draft Resolution and Draft Doha Declaration of the Ministerial Session

24. The Meeting, based on main discussion points and conclusions made during its proceedings, formulated and agreed to present the attached draft Resolution and draft Doha Declaration for consideration of the Ministerial Session (*Annexes 2 and 3*).

Consideration of the Agenda and Work Programme the Ministerial Session

25. The Meeting also considered and agreed to present the attached draft agenda and work programme for consideration of the Ministerial Session (*Annexes 4 and 5*).

Vote of Thanks

26. The Meeting expressed appreciation to the Government and people of the State of Qatar 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.

27. The meeting also expressed appreciation to the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRIC, ICDT, IsDB, IOFS, ICCIA and SMIIC for their respective contributions to the meeting.

Issued in Doha,

1st October, 2023