

The First Meeting of the Development and Cooperation Institutions of the OIC Member States

13-14 May 2009, Istanbul, Turkey

Your Excellency, Secretary General of the OIC,

Your Excellencies, Ministers of Turkey, Qatar, Iran and Pakistan,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu

It gives me a great honour to address this important gathering on the occasion of the First Meeting of the Development and Cooperation Institutions of the OIC Member States.

At the outset, I would like to thank you all for accepting the invitation and designating time to attend this important meeting. Inspired by the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, adopted by the Third Extraordinary Islamic Summit held in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in December 2005, the idea of convening this meeting has been initiated jointly by the OIC General Secretariat, the Statistical Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA). And we are honoured to be a co-organizer of this very important meeting.

As we are all aware, many countries in the world suffer from poverty, including a significant number of OIC Member States. Many of these countries need to develop the essential capabilities and capacities of eradicating poverty and during this development phase external support and assistance from other Member Countries and relevant institutions will be vital. In this context, it is worth recalling that the current global financial crisis will have a negative impact on the flows of foreign aid provided by international donors to developing and least developed countries, including the OIC members.

On the other hand, a good number of OIC countries are among the leading donor countries in the world. The effective collaboration and cooperation among donors is a fundamental premise and principle for enhancing aid effectiveness in the recipient countries. In this connection, we are all aware of the vital role Development and Cooperation Institutions can play in alleviating poverty in the Member States. This role could be more enhanced and strengthened if these institutions increase their cooperation and collaboration among themselves at OIC level. Towards realizing this noble goal, SESRIC has initiated the idea of bringing the DCIs together.

Considering the importance of sharing our development experiences and knowledge with the aim of enhancing our efforts to achieve our national development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, we believe that the outcome of this meeting will significantly contribute to the efforts of our Member Countries towards alleviating poverty and raising the standards of living of their population.

In fact, given the high level of capacity of the relevant institutions of OIC Member States, we have many evidences to believe that our initiative would improve the life conditions of our people and improve the overall well-being and prosperity. By sharing our knowledge and experience in the area of socio-economic development, and cohering our policies and practises across in areas like agriculture, trade, investment, migration and others the possible impact of individual efforts of the DCIs would significantly increase.

Excellencies,

I am also very pleased to inform you about a very important initiative of SESRIC which I believe to be strongly associated with the work of development and cooperation institutions of the OIC Member States. The OIC Vocational Education and Training Programme (OIC-VET) developed by our Centre and approved by the 24th session of COMCEC targets the development of vocational/professional skills in the Member States through the transfer of accumulated expertise and experience of the Member States. The first meeting of Monitoring and Advisory Committee is being held today in Izmir during the 25th session of the Follow-Up Committee of the COMCEC and we will certainly share the outcomes with you.

I wish this meeting to be the starting point of efficient collaboration of the development and cooperation institutions of the OIC Member States, and thank you all for your participation in this very important meeting.

I would like to end with an interesting saying from Africa: If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu