

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**MESSAGE OF
H.E. PROF. EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OIC,
TO THE MEETING OF
NATIONAL STATISTICAL ORGANIZATIONS
OF OIC MEMBER STATES**

**ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
22-23 MARCH 2010**

Bismillahi Arrahmani Arrahim

**Honorable Dr. Savas Alpay, Director General of the SESRIC,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalamu Alaikum wa-Rahmatu Allahi wa-Barakatuhu

It is a great pleasure for me to address this important gathering and to congratulate both SESRIC and IDB for the excellent arrangements made for this important event. This Conference is the fifth in the series of such meetings, aimed at coordinating the various statistical activities of OIC Member States.

It is taking place six years after a similar meeting was held in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in February 2004. I am, therefore glad to note the historic moment, represented by the resumption of work on the crucial dossier of statistics in OIC here in the city of Istanbul. There is no doubt that this meeting today epitomizes the new spirit of action, which is gradually permeating the various aspects of the OIC activities.

You would recall that since the adoption of the Ten Year Programme of Action at the 3rd Extraordinary Summit in Makkah al-Mukarammah in 2005, the issue of sustainable development in OIC countries and the promotion of economic integration among Islamic countries has assumed primacy of place on the economic cooperation agenda of our Organization.

Within the context of a renewed emphasis on intra-OIC economic cooperation, the General Secretariat has mapped out various ways of stepping-up capacity-building among national governments and agencies in OIC Member States in diverse areas. This has led to the adoption of various programmes and projects on trade promotion and trade facilitation, alleviation of poverty, rehabilitation of cotton sector, promotion of food security and tourism, development of the Private Sector and infrastructure. Critical to the success of implementing these programmes is the availability of reliable statistical data that provides the necessary inputs in developing and monitoring effective economic policies. It also gives the needed guidance on resource allocation, budgeting and monitoring, which represent the inevitable ingredients of a successful economic project.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

The process of globalization, the rapid advance of the information technology and other changes taking place in the global scene are increasingly putting pressure on the national statistical systems. The foundation of the traditional mode of collecting statistical data, based on readily identifiable and measurable parameters, is being eroded, giving the way to information technology-based statistics.

Considering the urgency for OIC countries to modernize their respective economies, the task before the various national statistical agencies is mammoth. It is widely acknowledged that the level of economic development in most of the OIC, particularly the LDCs, is reflective of the slow progress in the area of planning and efficient resources allocation.

Reversing this trend is absolutely critical to our quest to achieve faster economic growth and major socio-economic improvements in the lives of OIC people. Therefore, I believe that a collective approach to scale up the capacities of our national statistical agencies would assist greatly in the rapid transformation of the OIC economies.

**Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

As we chart this new course of dedicated action of promoting intra-OIC cooperation in the area of statistics, the following areas should take a prominent place in developing the capacity of national statistical agencies:

1. Application of information and communication technology in producing statistical data;
2. Supporting Member States in the areas of capacity building, data collection, utilization and dissemination through sharing best practices and transfer knowledge;
3. Harmonization of standards of statistical indicators, classification, concepts, definitions and measurements;
4. Developing holistic multidirectional approach to statistical institutions, with the aim of strengthening their core production functions;

5. Providing greater spectrum of the OIC population with a statistical service that promotes their effective and efficient involvement in policy making as well as promoting active socio-economic development.

In conclusion, let me assure you of our constant support at the level of the General Secretariat of this endeavor. The outcome of your deliberations today would create a new momentum of action-oriented programme for the over-all interest of the Muslim Ummah as well as add to the various achievements, which we have recorded towards improving welfare of the peoples of OIC countries.

In this spirit, I wish you all a very fruitful meeting.

I thank you for your attention, and

Assalamu alaikum warahamatullahi wabarakatuhu