

Original :English

**RESOLUTION (1)
OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION
OF THE COMCEC**

(İstanbul, 20-23 October 2003)

The Nineteenth Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC), held in Istanbul from 20 to 23 October 2003,

Recalling the relevant Resolutions of the OIC Summit Conferences and the Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers;

Recalling in particular the emphasis laid by the 10th Islamic Summit Conference, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia from 16 to 18 October 2003, on further enhancing economic cooperation among the OIC Member States;

Recalling the Strategy and Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, approved by the Tenth Session of the COMCEC and endorsed by the Seventh Islamic Summit Conference;

Taking into consideration the resolutions adopted at the previous Sessions of the COMCEC and the recommendations made at the Nineteenth Meeting of its Follow-up Committee;

Reaffirming the commitment to removing all obstacles to closer economic and commercial cooperation among OIC Member States;

Having considered the current international situation and its economic and financial repercussion on the OIC Member States;

Taking into consideration the Resolution adopted at the Tenth Session of the COMCEC calling for holding an exchange of views at the annual COMCEC sessions on important world economic developments concerning Member States;

Taking cognizance of the need to follow up the outcome of the exchange of views sessions and coordinate the positions of Member States in relevant international fora in the areas covered at these sessions;

Reaffirming the commitment of Member States to the strengthening of the intra-regional trading system through mutual economic cooperation and progressive trade liberalization for the development of economic infrastructure; and **recalling** the related decisions of the COMCEC that the subject be on its agenda as a permanent item;

Recognizing in this respect the need for more cooperation and coordination among OIC Member States to ensure an increase in their share of the world trade;

Noting the background and progress reports, working papers, studies submitted by the OIC General Secretariat, the COMCEC Coordination Office, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on the agenda items;

**I. Reports and Studies by the General Secretariat and Other OIC Bodies:
(Agenda Item: 3)**

**(i) *Background Report by the OIC General Secretariat:
(Agenda Item: 3.i)***

1. **Expresses its appreciation** for the Background Report by the OIC General Secretariat (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D(1)) on the progress achieved by Member States and OIC institutions in the field of economic and commercial cooperation;

2. **Notes with satisfaction** that the Export Financing Scheme and the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investments and Export Credit established by the Islamic Development Bank in pursuance of a decision of the First Session of COMCEC are functioning successfully; and **urges** Member States that have not yet done so to make use of these facilities;

3. **Also notes with satisfaction** that IDB is operating the OIC Information System Network (called “OIC-Exchange” which is accessible through the website www.OIC-Exchange.com) and **invites** Member States to make necessary arrangements to draw maximum benefit from;

4. **Appreciates** that the ICDT has reviewed the structure of the Trade Information Network for Islamic Countries (TINIC) that is accessible through the Internet, **recommends** to Member States to make full use of it and **requests** Member States to provide ICDT with data relating to trade, investment statistics and regulations;

5. **Urges** Member States that have not yet done so to sign and/or ratify at an early date the various OIC Agreements and Statutes in the field of economic cooperation with a view to providing the necessary framework for such cooperation;

6. **Appreciates** the efforts made by the OIC institutions working in the area of economic and commercial cooperation, namely, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), and the Organization of Islamic Ship-owners Association (OISA), and **appeals** to Member States to give the needed support and assistance and to meet their financial obligations to these institutions so that they may continue to perform their functions effectively;

(ii) *World Economic Developments with Special Reference to OIC Member States: (Agenda Item: 3 ii)*

7. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to SESRTCIC for preparing, in accordance with the decision of the 12th Session of the COMCEC, annual economic reports on the OIC countries (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D(09)) containing recent information on economic and related developments concerning Member States within the context of international economic developments;

8. **Takes note** of the Report of SESRTCIC regarding the recent world economic developments and the implications for the OIC Member States, which has drawn the following salient conclusions:

- i. As a result of the global slowdown in world economic activity in 2001, a relatively slight improvement was observed in 2002 which is expected to continue in 2003 but at a lower pace than the earlier expectations.
- ii. The economies of some of the OIC countries have become, on average, more vulnerable as compared to the other developing countries due to the intense competition and unpredictable fluctuations in international trade, and instability in financial and monetary flows.
- iii. There is need to improve and enhance the capacities and efficiency of the OIC financial institutions with respect to prevention, management and resolution of financial crises in a timely and effective manner.
- iv. There is need to further coordinate the OIC countries' efforts aimed at making the necessary contacts with the concerned international parties and organisations so as to safeguard their economic interests.

9. **Entrusts** SESRTCIC to continue to monitor world economic developments and their implications for the OIC Member States and report to the annual sessions of the COMCEC ;

*(iii) Supporting the Reform of the International Financial Architecture:
(Agenda Item: 3.iii)*

10. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to SESRTCIC for preparing, in line with the Resolution No. 2/30-E adopted at the 30th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, the report on the International Financial Architecture, particularly from the point of view of its implications for the OIC Member States (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D(9));

11. **Takes note** of the Report of SESRTCIC regarding the International Financial Architecture and its implications for the OIC Member States, which has drawn the following salient conclusions:

- i. Since the reform of the international financial architecture is still in process, harmonisation of the interests of both the developed and the developing countries should be guaranteed at all stages.
- ii. As the policies of the international financial institutions are dominated by the developed countries, efforts should be made to acquire an active and higher degree of participation of the developing countries, including the OIC countries, in the process of decision making.
- iii. Monetary and financial consultation, cooperation and coordination among the OIC Member Countries need to be enhanced and intensified to achieve optimal use of the resources that exist in the OIC countries. In this regard, consultation and cooperation among the central bank and monetary authorities of the OIC countries needs to be encouraged.
- iv. The international rating agencies need to be urged to perform their analysis on a more transparent, objective and sound basis.

12. **Entrusts** SESRTCIC to continue to follow-up and study developments on the subject and their implications for the member states and report to the next Session of the COMCEC ;

(iv) Report of the Follow up Committee: (Agenda Item: 3iv)

13. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for hosting of 19th Meeting of the Follow up Committee;

14. **Also thanks** the COMCEC Coordination Office for preparing, and disseminating the Report of the Follow up Committee (OIC/COMCEC-FC/19-03/REP) to the member states and the relevant OIC institutions;

15. **Endorses** the recommendations made by the Follow up Committee at its 19th Meeting;

(v) ***Review of Implementation of the Plan of Action: (Agenda Item: 3.v)***

a) ***Report by the OIC General Secretariat***

16. **Appreciates** the report titled Review of Implementation of the Plan of Action (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D2) submitted by the OIC General Secretariat and **requests** the OIC General Secretariat to continue to submit to the Annual Sessions of the COMCEC a periodical review of the implementation of the Plan of Action;

17. **Requests** the Member States that have already offered to host sectoral experts group meetings to expedite the convening of the said meetings; and expressed the view that the Member States offering to host the EGMs are to do so within a specified time period of two years, on the end of which it can be open to other Member States willing to host the same meeting.

18. **Appeals** to Member States to come forward with proposals for hosting Expert Group Meetings in the priority areas of the Plan of Action, where no EGM has so far not been held;

19. **Renews** its appeal to the Member States that were the proponents of projects to expedite the formation of the project committees as envisaged in the Plan of Action

with a view to implementing the projects proposed at the sectoral experts group meetings;

20. **Reaffirms** the importance of the need to develop regionally-based projects by a group of Member States in a particular region to get the support of the regional institutions and, accordingly, **Stresses** the importance to ensure the active involvement of regional institutions such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the and Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) in future experts group meetings.

21. **Reaffirms** also the need to involve the private sector in developing cooperation projects for consideration by the expert group meetings.

22. **Welcomes** the offers of Member States to host the following meetings under the auspices of the COMCEC and requests the Member States to communicate the exact dates for these meetings as early as possible:

- i. The offer of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt to host sectoral experts group meetings in the areas of “Transportation” and “Food, Agricultural and Rural Development”.
- ii. The offer of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host experts group meetings in the areas of “Health and Sanitary Issues” and “Tourism”
- iii. The offer of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the Expert Group Meeting on the Islamic Common Market, the dates for its convening having been changed from December 2003 to June 2004.
- iv. The offer of Government of the Republic of the Sudan to host sectoral experts group meetings on “Energy and Mining” and “Human Resources Development”.
- v. The offer of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia to host an international workshop on “Employment and Manpower Exchange”.

- vi. The offer of the Government of the Republic of Turkey to host the first round of trade negotiations under the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System in April 2004 in Antalya, Republic of Turkey
 - vii. The offer of the Government of the Republic of Tunisia to host an expert group meeting on “Promoting the Activities of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises” in the field of production and exports.
 - viii. The offer of the Government of the Republic of Senegal to host the Fourth Islamic Conference of Ministers of Tourism in 2004.
23. **Invites** Member States to host, where appropriate, sectoral or inter-sectoral expert group meetings in areas of cooperation listed in the Plan of Action;
24. **Calls upon** the concerned OIC institutions working in the field of economic and commercial cooperation under the auspices of the COMCEC to continue to extend the necessary assistance to Member States, and **appreciates** the assistance already offered by them;
- b) Report by the COMCEC Coordination Office*
25. **Emphasizes** the need to urgently implement the revised Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation Among Member States of the OIC, in compliance with the principles and operational modalities of the Strategy and the procedures set forth in its chapter on Follow-up and Implementation.
26. **Stresses** the importance of the recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting for Accelerating the Implementation of the Plan of Action.
27. **Endorses** the supplementary mechanism, as annexed herewith, developed by the COMCEC Coordination Office, in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat,

SESRTCIC, ICDT, IUT, IDB, ICCI and OISA, in pursuance of the relevant recommendation of the Experts Group Meeting.

28. **Agrees** that the Sessional Committee of the COMCEC is the appropriate body under the supervision of which the concerned OIC institutions are to function and coordinate their activities in fulfilling their mandate with regard to the implementation of the OIC Plan of Action; and, accordingly, **adopts** the necessary modifications, in Article 11 of the Statute and Rules of Procedures of the COMCEC .

29. **Adopts** the Rules of Procedure of the COMCEC Sessional Committee to regulate and coordinate the activities of the OIC specialized institutions in the field of commercial and economic cooperation to implement the OIC Plan of Action, as proposed in the supplementary mechanism; and **Requests** the OIC General Secretariat to submit the said Rules of Procedure to the 31st Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers prior to their submission to the 11th Islamic Summit Conference.

(vi) ***Promotion of Cooperation among the Stock Exchanges of the OIC Member States: (Agenda Item 3.6)***

30. **Notes with appreciation** the Report submitted jointly by SESRTCIC and ICDT on the “Establishment of a Union of Stock Exchanges and Clearing Houses Among the OIC Member Countries” (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D6);

31. **Takes note** in particular of the following conclusions reached in the joint report:

- i. It is an important project for enhancing investment opportunities in the OIC countries with the existing stock exchanges, clearing houses and related financial institutions coordinating their policies, rules and procedures in an effort to bring them in line with those of the rest of the world.

- ii. A step-by-step approach may be undertaken for the establishment of the proposed alliance among the OIC stock exchanges and clearing houses in the private sector in the OIC Member States.

32. **Entrusts** SESRTCIC and ICDT to undertake the necessary studies on creating a mechanism for cooperation among the OIC Member States in the areas of financial markets and clearing of stocks and bonds without such studies leading to the creation of any new bodies but the activation of the existing mechanisms in such fields.

II. Reports by IDB and ICDT on the Expansion of Intra-OIC Trade: (Agenda Item 4)

33. **Appreciates** the reports submitted by IDB and ICDT on the expansion of intra-OIC trade (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D21) and (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D9);

34. **Appreciates** the steps taken by IDB through its operational plans to mobilize the needed resources under four schemes, namely the Import Trade Financing (ITFO), the Export Financing Scheme (EFS), the Islamic Bank Portfolio (IBP), the Unit Investment Fund (UIF) and the two mechanisms (two steps murabaha and syndication); and appreciates also the continuous efforts of IDB in this regard enabling it to finance an amount of US\$ 4 billion in favor of intra-trade from 1420H – 1423 (1999-2002) constituting 78% of its trade financing operations totaling an amount of US\$5 billion.

35. **Expresses** its appreciation for the parallel efforts of IDB to increase intra-OIC trade through financing trade-related projects and technical assistance; and further urged Member States to subscribe to the EFS and to accede to the programs of ICIEC and to other schemes designed to boost intra-OIC trade.

36. **Appreciates** the efforts of IDB to allocate a total amount of US\$1.05 billion through Two Step Murabaha (2SMF) and syndication mechanisms since 1420 H with

about US\$362 million having been approved in 1423H alone under the two mechanisms, of which US\$160million was mobilized from other Islamic banks and financial institutions for the purpose of financing intra trade among OIC/IDB Member States.

37. **Appreciates** the approvals aggregating US\$1.89 billion made by IDB in 1423 H (2002-2003) under its four trade financing schemes and about US\$16.58 billion or 87.5% of the total amount of US\$18.94 billion approved by IDB under ITFO and EFS since inception.

38. **Takes note with appreciation** of the ICDT's Annual Report on "Trade Between the OIC Member States 2002-2003" and, while noting that the intra-OIC trade recorded positive results for the third consecutive year as the share of intra-OIC trade in total trade of the Member States increased from 11% in 1999 to 12% in 2001, and the value of this trade reached approximately US \$ 53 billion, expresses the hope that greater efforts will be exerted to further strengthen the volume of intra OIC trade with a greater margin.

39. **Requests** Member States to provide ICDT regularly with data relating to trade and investment statistics and trade regulations so as to enable ICDT to strengthen its databank to service Member States.

40. **Urges** the appointed focal points of trade to play a more active role in promoting the trade financing program of the IDB, and **requests** Member States, who have not yet done so, to expedite the nomination of focal points of trade;

41. **Requests** Member States to encourage the appointed National Agents for the Export Financing Scheme (EFS) to play a more active role in assisting IDB in promoting its trade financing facilities, in general, and the EFS, in particular;

42. **Urges** financial institutions, including insurance companies, in Member States to support IDB's efforts, among others, by according more favorable terms to transactions that promote direct trade among Member States;

43. **Thanks** Member States who have actively assisted in identifying viable trade operations for financing by the IDB, and **urges** other Member States, who have not done so, to actively support IDB in its efforts to increase intra OIC trade financing;

44. **Requests** IDB to consider provision of technical assistance for capacity building of the focal points in Member States;

45. **Entrusts** IDB and ICDT to continue to monitor the expansion of intra-OIC trade and report it to the COMCEC;

III. Reports by ICDT and COMCEC Coordination Office on Launching the First Round of Trade Negotiations of the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System Among the OIC Member States (TPSOIC). (Agenda Item 5)

46. **Notes with satisfaction** that the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States has entered into force following its ratification by the required number of Member States .

47. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to the ICDT for organizing under the auspices of the COMCEC, from 24-26 June 2003 in Casablanca, an Expert Group Meeting to prepare the launching of the First Round of trade negotiations under the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among Islamic Countries.

48. **Urges** the OIC Member States that have not yet signed or ratified the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System to do so at their earliest convenience to enable them to take part in the first round of the forthcoming trade negotiations.

49. **Adopts** the Ministerial Declaration of the COMCEC on the launching of the first round of trade negotiations and the Rules of Procedure of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) as annexed herewith; and **requests** the OIC Secretary General to circulate the above mentioned documents to the OIC Member States.

50. **Expresses its gratitude** to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for offering to host the first round of the trade negotiations which will be held in April, 2004 in Antalya under the Framework Agreement, and **urges** the Member States which have already ratified the Framework Agreement to participate actively in the forthcoming trade negotiations to be carried out under the auspices of the COMCEC;

51. **Welcomes** the launching of the first round of trade negotiations under the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC member countries which have ratified the Framework Agreement of the TPS-OIC and will be participating in the first round of trade negotiations to confirm their participation and the names of their delegates no later than February 1st, 2004, to the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiating Committee.

IV. Matters Relating to WTO Activities: (Agenda Item 6)

52. **Expresses** thanks and appreciation to IDB and ICDT for their reports on matters related to the World Trade Organization (WTO) activities (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D22) and (OIC/COMCEC/ 19-03/D12);

53. **Takes note with appreciation** of the Report by the ICDT on the fifth Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in Cancun from 10th-14th September 2003 and **expresses** its concern over the lack of progress in the negotiations on the issues of vital interest to the developing countries.

54. **Emphasizes** in line with the operative paragraph 2 of Resolution 3/9-E(IS) adopted at the 9th OIC Summit Conference held in Doha, State of Qatar, in order to uphold the universality of WTO encompassing all countries to participate in the organization's decision making process to benefit from multilateral trading system, the need to ensure that politically motivated considerations and non trade related issues should not be an impediment to the accession of any country to the organization, and, in this regard, urges the Member States that are members of WTO to address the issue, where deemed appropriate and possible, at the relevant sessions of the WTO.

55. **Commends** IDB on its report on the activities of the WTO-related technical assistance programme extended to the OIC Member States.

56. **Expresses** its appreciation to the IDB on its efforts to organize consultative meetings in order to enable Member States to exchange its views and coordinate its stands whenever feasible on all issues of common interest with the aim to prepare for the WTO ministerial meetings and evaluate the results of these meetings; and **appreciates** IDB's efforts for providing technical assistance to enhance the capacity-building of OIC Member States in human resources development and institutional sectors such as organizing trade policy courses, seminars, workshops on the main topics and providing specific direct technical assistance to the OIC Member States.

57. **Commends** IDB on its efforts in preparing for the 5th WTO Ministerial Meeting (10-14 September 2003) through holding three consultative meetings for Member States to exchange their views with a view to arriving, whenever possible, at a unified stand on all issues on the Agenda of the WTO Ministerial Meeting, the latest consultative meeting being held in conjunction with the 5th WTO Ministerial Meeting at Cancun (on 9-9-2003) which was attended by 130 participants from 24 Member States including 16 concerned ministers in addition to various regional institutions.

58. **Welcomes** the readiness of IDB to hold a consultative meeting for the representatives of the permanent missions of OIC Member States in Geneva in order to evaluate and discuss the conclusions of the 5th WTO Ministerial Meeting and to study the measures that can be taken to arrive at a common vision by the OIC Member States to coordinate a common stand before the convening of the WTO General Council on the 15th December 2003 to discuss the undecided issues.

59. **Calls on** IDB, ICDT and other related institutions to keep on extending their assistance to the Member States in the context of the multilateral trade negotiations;

60. **Calls on** IDB and ICDT to pool and coordinate their efforts to reinforce the human and institutional capacities of OIC Member States, so as to facilitate their full integration into the multilateral trading system on equitable and fair basis;

61. **Entrusts** IDB and ICDT to monitor matters relating to WTO activities and report thereon to the annual sessions of the COMCEC and other concerned fora;

V. Report by ICCI on the Ninth and Tenth Private Sector Meetings among the OIC Member States: (Agenda Item 7)

62. **Appreciates** the efforts made by ICCI to organize annual Private Sector Meetings, prior to the annual COMCEC sessions and calls for their continuation;

63. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to the United Arab Emirates for hosting, and to ICCI for organizing the Ninth Private Sector Meeting from 21-23 December 2002, in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sharjah and the UAE Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry and with the assistance of IDB;

64. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting, and to ICCI for organising the Tenth Private Sector Meeting from 04-06 October 2003, in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran in collaboration with the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines with the assistance of IDB;

65. **Takes note with appreciation** of the reports submitted by ICCI on the Ninth and Tenth Private Sector Meetings (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D(17) and (15)).

66. **Takes note with appreciation** of the recommendations contained in the Reports of the Ninth and Tenth Private Sector Meetings focusing on steps to be taken to strengthen the role of the private sector in economic cooperation among Member States; and **appeals** to Member States to give due consideration to these recommendations.

67. **Commends** the efforts of the ICCI in initiating activities other than the private sector meeting such as Investment Conferences to provide platforms for the private sector to meet, strengthen and expand their business ties;

68. **Takes note** that the ICCI will organize the 1st Forum on the Private Sector on Tourism in Saudi Arabia in 2004, the 11th Private Sector Meeting in the Kingdom of Bahrain in 2004, the 13th Private Sector Meeting in Senegal in 2006 and Business Woman's Forum in the United Arab Emirates in 2004. (The venue of the 12th Private Sector Meeting is not yet determined)

69. **Calls upon** the IDB in cooperation with the ICCI to inform the private sector in Member States, of the availability of IDB's lines of financing for trade, investment and its mechanism;

70. **Welcomes** the setting up of regional offices of the ICCI in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Turkey, Egypt and Cameroon to further expand the network of the ICCI within Member States through their respective National Chambers and took note of the setting up of the Islamic Chamber Research Centre in Tehran within the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines.

71. **Encourages** the federations and national chambers of commerce and industry of Member States to develop a framework for closer cooperation with the Islamic Chamber and contribute to its programs aimed at enhancing trade and investments among Islamic countries;

72. **Appreciates** the offer made by the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry to host the 11th Private Sector Meeting in 2004 and calls on Member States to encourage their private sectors to actively participate in the Meeting;

VI. Report of the ICDT on Islamic Trade Fairs (Agenda Item 8)

73. **Notes with appreciation** that the Ninth Trade Fair of Islamic Countries was organized successfully in Sharjah, State of the United Arab Emirates from 21st-26th December 2002, by the State of the United Arab Emirates and ICDT, under the theme “Free Trade and Sustainable Development”.
74. **Notes with appreciation** the progress report submitted by ICDT on the organization of the 10th Trade Fair of the Islamic Countries to be held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, from 9-14 December 2004 under the theme, “Intra-OIC Trade and Strategic Partnership for the Development of Africa”; **urges** the OIC Member States to actively participate in the Fair; and **welcomes** the initiative of Member States to hold these Fairs, in future, concurrently with some high level meetings as far as possible.
75. **Takes** note of the proposal made by the Kingdom of Bahrain to consult with the fraternal Republic of Guinea on the hosting of the 10th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States to coincide with the 11th Private Sector Meeting, **urges** the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Guinea to arrive at an agreement in this regard before the end of 2003; and **requests** the Islamic Center for Development of Trade to submit a report on the outcome of these consultation to the OIC General Secretariat and the COMCEC Coordination Office.
76. **Notes with appreciation** the Progress Report submitted by ICDT on the organization of the forthcoming first Tourism Fair of Islamic Countries to be held in the Republic of Turkey in 2004, and urges the OIC Member States to actively participate in this fair;
77. **Welcomes** the offer made by the Republic of Senegal to host the 11th Trade Fair of OIC Member Countries in 2006, and the offer of the Republic of Iraq to host the 12th Trade Fair of OIC Member Countries in 2008;
78. **Welcomes** the offer made by the Republic of Lebanon to host the Second Tourism Fair of Islamic Countries in 2005, and the offer of the Arab Republic of Egypt to host the Third Tourism Fair of Islamic Countries in 2007;

79. **Requests** ICDT to prepare regularly a progress report on the Trade Fairs of Islamic Countries as well as the Tourism Fairs and submit them under a separate agenda item to the COMCEC Sessions;

VII. Exchange of Views on “Impact of Electronic Commerce and Use of Information Technology in the Promotion and Development of Intra-OIC Trade ” (Agenda Item 9)

80. **Expresses** its thanks and appreciation to the Republic of Tunisia for hosting the Workshop on the Impact of Electronic Commerce and the Use of Information Technology in the Promotion and development of Intra-OIC Trade among Member States in Tunis from 10-12 June, 2003.

81. **Expresses its appreciation** to ICDT for the preparation and submission of the report and recommendations of the aforesaid Workshop organised by the Government of the Republic of Tunisia and the ICDT in collaboration with IDB, SESRTCIC and IUT, and **expresses** appreciation for papers submitted by some OIC institutions such as ICDT, SESRTCIC, ICCI, IUT and ITC on various aspects of the subject;

82. **Requests** OIC institutions, in particular the Islamic Center for the Development of Trade, the Islamic Development Bank, SESRTCIC and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry to take the step needed to implement the recommendations of the above-mentioned Workshop.

83. **Takes note with appreciation** of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Workshop as annexed herewith;

84. **Invites** Member States that have more advanced e-commerce and ITC systems to share their experiences with the other Member States and, where possible, to extend technical cooperation for the other Member States upon their request.

85. **Refers** to the decision of the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, to support the initiative of H.E. President Abdoulaye

WADE of Senegal about the “Digital Solidarity World Fund; and **urges** Member States to actively participate in the implementation of this important project.

86. **Requests** ICDT to follow-up the implementation of the recommendations of the aforesaid workshop and present its report on the subject to the Session of COMCEC.

87. **Requests** the Government of Malaysia and the IDB to expedite the operationalization of the OIC Network with a view to enhancing intra-OIC trade among Member States.

VIII. Report of the Sessional Committee (Agenda Item 11)

88. **Takes note** of the Report of the Sessional Committee on the Activities of the OIC Institutions (OIC/COMCEC/SC-03/REP), which was held during the Nineteenth Session of the COMCEC, and the recommendations thereon;

89. **Notes** that the OIC institutions engaged in the activities under the purview of the COMCEC have taken tangible steps towards increased cooperation and coordination among themselves and with Member States in order to avoid any possible duplication of work;

90. **Renews its appeal** to Member States to take the measures needed for a greater involvement in the activities of the OIC subsidiary organs and affiliated and specialized institutions;

IX. Date of the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC (Agenda Item 12)

91. **Decides** that the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC be held from 23 to 26 November 2004, and the Twentieth Meeting of the Follow-up Committee be convened from 11 to 13 May 2004, respectively in Istanbul;

92. **Decides** that “Trade and Transport Facilitation Among the OIC Member States” be the theme for the exchange of Views at the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC, and **requests** ICDT, ICCI and OISA to organize a workshop on this topic in

collaboration with related OIC institutions, namely, SESRTCIC and IDB and other international Organizations, prior to the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC and submit its report to the Session;

93. **Welcomes** the offer made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the workshop on the “Trade and Transportation Facilitation among OIC Member States” in 2004 in coordination with the ICDT, ICCI and OISA;

94. **Invites** Member States to send to the OIC General Secretariat, sufficiently in advance of the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC, country reports reflecting their experiences on the subject matter for the exchange of views;

95. **Requests** the Follow-up Committee, at its Twentieth Meeting, to draw up the draft agenda of the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC and recommend alternative themes on which exchange of views would take place during the subsequent COMCEC sessions;

96. **Requests** the OIC General Secretariat to communicate to Member States the dates of the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC and the Twentieth Meeting of the Follow-up Committee;

X. Any Other Business (Agenda Item 13)

97. **Takes note** of a statement by H.E. Ambassador Erdiñç Erdün, the Director General of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (Ankara Centre) informing that the Centre is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year and thanking all the Member States for providing their continuous support and encouragement to the Centre.

98. **Congratulates** the Ankara Centre on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, **expresses** its satisfaction, **appreciates** its activities and **reaffirms** the importance of its role in enhancing the cooperation among the Member States.

