

Original :English

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

(İstanbul, 23-27 November 2004)

The Twentieth Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC), held in Istanbul from 23 to 27 November 2004;

Expressing deep condolences at the sad demise of H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, Amir of Abu Dhabi and President of the United Arab Emirates and H.E. Mr. Yasser ARAFAT, President of the State of Palestine.

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 Twentieth 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;

Expressing its satisfaction at the entering into force of the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member Countries (TPSOIC) and the launching of the First Round of Trade Negotiations;

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. Background Reports **(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/20-04/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 are functioning successfully; and urges Member States that have not yet done so to benefit from these programmes.
3. **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.
4. **Emphasizes** the importance of OIC Agreements and Statutes in the area of economic and commercial cooperation. In this connection, **urges** Member States, that had not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Agreements as early as possible, particularly the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System Among Member States of the OIC (TPSOIC) so as to facilitate the participation of member states in the on-going first round of trade negotiations.
5. **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 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)

6. **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/20-04/D(2) containing recent information on economic and related developments concerning Member States.
7. **Takes note** of the Report of SESRTCIC on the recent world economic developments and the implications for the OIC Member States, which has drawn the following salient conclusions;

- i. While global recovery now appears under way in almost all regions, its pace and nature in individual countries and regions vary significantly, reflecting differing degrees of policy stimulus,
- ii. The average economic performance of the group of OIC countries, as a group, remained below that of all the developing countries as a group showing more vulnerability to the adverse external shocks in the world economy such as the financial crises, fluctuations in international trade and instability in financial flows,
- iii. A number of serious challenges are still confronting the OIC countries' efforts to enhance their economic progress and increase their share in the world economy which range from high levels of external debt to high levels of poverty,
- iv. There is a need in many OIC countries for creating a more practical, equitable and transparent development strategies and economic structural reforms with the active participation of the private sector and the civil society.

8. **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)*

9. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to SESRTCIC for preparing, in line with the Resolution No. 2/30-E adopted at the 31st 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/20-04/D(5)).

10. **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 process of the international financial architecture is still underway, the OIC countries should be more involved in that process, particularly the criteria formation process at the international level such

as the capital measurement undertaken by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision,

- ii. In order to enhance the soundness and supervision capacities of their financial systems, as a prerequisite for maintaining financial stability, the OIC member countries are recommended to become more attentive to the international standards in this regard such as the Basel Core Principles framework,
- iii. As the stability of the global financial architecture requires continuous access to external funds for financing the physical investments and growth in the individual economies, the OIC member countries are recommended to adopt and implement the appropriate measures that enable them to increase their public and private investments,

11. **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: 3.iv)

12. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for hosting the 20th Meeting of the Follow up Committee.

13. **Also thanks** the COMCEC Coordination Office for preparing and disseminating the Report of the Follow up Committee (OIC/COMCEC-FC/20-04/REP) to the Member States and the relevant OIC institutions.

14. **Endorses** the recommendations made by the Follow up Committee at its 20th Meeting.

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

a) Report by the OIC General Secretariat

15. **Appreciates** the Report entitled Review of Implementation of the Plan of Action (OIC/COMCEC/20-04/D(7)) submitted by the OIC General Secretariat and

requests the OIC General Secretariat to continue submitting at the Annual Sessions of the COMCEC a periodical review on the implementation of the Plan of Action.

16. **Requests** the Member States that have already offered to host sectoral experts group meetings to expedite the convening of the said meetings; and further requests the Member States offering to host the Experts Group Meetings do so within a specified time period of two years, at the end of which it can be open to other Member States willing to host the same meeting.

17. **Appeals** to Member States to come forward with proposals for hosting sectoral or inter-sectoral Expert Group Meetings in the priority areas of the Plan of Action, where no EGM has so far been held.

18. **Takes note** of the review undertaken by the Sessional Committee at its fourth and fifth meetings on the project proposals listed as annexure to the Report of the implementation of the Plan of Action and **approves** in principle the deletion of the projects listed in paragraph 16 of the Report of the 5th Sessional Committee Meeting as contained in document No.OIC/COMCEC/20-04-SC.REP.

19. **Further makes provision** for the Member States that were proponents of project proposals that are proposed to be deleted may wish if they so desire to communicate to the COMCEC Coordination Office prior to the next follow-up Committee Meeting their wish to maintain their project proposals giving details in the format of project profile.

20. Also **takes note** of the presentation of the project proposals by the concerned institutions of the Republic of Turkey in the prescribed format of project profile and **requests** the Republic of Turkey as the proponent of these projects to form the project committees as envisaged in the Plan of Action.

21. **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), and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) in future experts group meetings.

22. **Reaffirms** also the need to involve the private sector in developing cooperation projects for consideration by the expert group meetings to be held under the various priority areas identified in the Plan of Action.

23. **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.

24. **Expresses thanks** to the Republic of Turkey and the IDB for having successfully organized the OIC Economic Conference in conjunction with the 20th Session of COMCEC.

25. **Takes note** of the Final Communiqué of the OIC Economic Conference and **calls for** its implementation.

(vi) Promotion of Cooperation among the Stock Exchanges of the OIC Member States (Agenda Item: 3.vi)

26. **Notes with appreciation** the Report submitted jointly by SESRTCIC and ICDT on the “Stock Exchange Alliances and Cooperation Among the OIC Member States” (OIC/COMCEC/19-03/D(8)).

27. **Takes note** in particular of the following conclusion reached in the joint report: “The creation of a mechanism for cooperation among the stock exchanges of the OIC countries is an important project which is vital for OIC economic cooperation, in general, and for enhancing investment opportunities in the OIC countries, in particular”.

28. **Requests**, İstanbul Stock Exchange (ISE), upon the offer of the Representative of the Republic of Turkey, to hold a meeting of representatives of the stock exchanges from Member Countries to prepare the ground for launching a framework of cooperation among the Stock Exchanges in the OIC countries in close cooperation with the IDB, SESRTCIC, ICDT and ICCI.

29. **Entrusts** SESRTCIC and ICDT 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.

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

30. **Appreciates** the reports submitted by IDB and ICDT on the expansion of intra-OIC trade (OIC/COMCEC/20-04/D(10) and (OIC/COMCEC/20-04/D(4)).

31. **Notes with satisfaction** 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 \$5.03 billion in favour of intra-OIC trade from 1420H-1424 H (1999-2003) constituting 76% of its approved trade financing operations totaling an amount of US \$6.57 billion.

32. **Expresses** its appreciation for the parallel efforts of IDB to increase intra-OIC trade through financing trade-related projects and technical assistance; and further **urges** 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.

33. **Welcomes** the efforts of IDB to mobilize a total amount of US\$1.58 billion through Two Step Murabaha (2SMF) and syndication mechanisms since 1420 H (1999) with about US\$427 million having been mobilized in 1424H (2003) alone under the two mechanisms, of which US\$200 million was raised from other Islamic banks and financial institutions for the purpose of financing intra trade among OIC/IDB Member States.

34. **Appreciates** the approvals aggregating US\$2.03 billion by IDB in 1424H (2002-2003) under its four trade financing schemes and about US\$18.04 billion or 87% of the total amount of US\$20.74 billion approved by IDB under ITFO and EFS since their inception.

35. **Takes note with appreciation** of the ICDT's 2004 Annual Report on "Trade Between the OIC Member States" and noted with satisfaction that the intra-OIC trade recorded positive results since the share of intra-OIC trade in total trade of the Member States increased from 10% in 2000 to 12.8% in 2002, and the value of this trade reached approximately US \$ 60 billion.

36. **Requests** Member States to provide on a regular basis ICDT with data relating to trade and investment statistics and regulations.

37. **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.

38. **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.

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

40. **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.

41. **Requests** IDB to continue provision of technical assistance for capacity building of the focal points in Member States.

42. **Entrusts** IDB and ICDT to follow up the expansion of intra-OIC trade and report to the COMCEC and to other OIC fora.

III. Proposal on Gold based Trade Payment Arrangements (GTPA) for the Promotion of Intra-OIC Trade (Agenda Item: 5)

43. **Takes note** of the Background Note by the OIC General Secretariat on GTPA.

44. **Considers** the merits of GTPA as complementary for existing schemes for trade payment as elaborated in the report of the EGM, which can be resorted to by the Member States on a voluntary basis.

45. **Notes** that, as a follow-up to the decision reached at the Experts Group Meeting organized by IDB and held in Jeddah in September 2003, Malaysia had initiated bilateral negotiations with interested OIC countries on the technical details of the GTPA, which are on-going and that Malaysia would like to conduct such bilateral negotiations with the other interested OIC countries.

IV. Report of the Trade Negotiating Committee for Establishing Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (Agenda Item: 6)

46. **Expresses its thanks and appreciation** to the Republic of Turkey for hosting successfully and conducting efficiently the first and the second meetings of the Trade Negotiation Committee (TNC) held in Antalya on 6- 9 April and from 7 to 10 September 2004.

47. **Expresses its thanks and appreciation** to the COMCEC Coordination Office and the ICDT for fulfilling, in an excellent manner, their task as the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiating Committee on the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among Islamic Countries.

48. **Expresses its thanks** to the IDB for providing financial support for the First Round of the Trade Negotiating Committee.

49. **Takes note of the** results of the first and the second meetings of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) and invites participating States to communicate their final views on the Negotiation Strategy for TPS-OIC and “the Revised Proposed Tariff Reduction Modality under TPS-OIC” before the third meeting of the TNC to be held in January 2005.

50. **Calls upon** the participating states to actively take part in remaining meetings of the first round of trade negotiation; to empower their representatives in the TNC meetings with full powers so as to enable them to take the necessary decisions in the TNC meetings with a view to substantially increasing trade and investment, and to redouble their efforts in the negotiation process so that it could be concluded within a specific time frame.

V. Matters Relating to WTO Activities (Agenda Item: 7)

51. **Expresses** thanks and appreciation to IDB and ICDT for preparing, in accordance with the decision of the 14th Session of the COMCEC, monitoring reports on the World Trade Organization (WTO) matters (OIC/COMCEC/20-04/D(15) and (OIC/COMCEC/20-04/D(16)).

52. **Takes note with appreciation** of the Report submitted by the ICDT on the recent developments of trade negotiations within the framework of the Doha Development Agenda (especially, the July Package) and urges the OIC Member States to participate actively in these negotiations by preparing a positive agenda for the issues of high interest for their economies.

53. **Welcomes** the progress made in the efforts aiming at phasing out agricultural subsidies which has negative impact on the producers of developing countries; and **calls on** the international community to implement it expeditiously.

54. **Welcomes** the progress and efforts exerted to gradually eliminate agricultural subsidies that have a negative impact on the producers of the African Least Developing Countries (LDCS), members of the OIC, and calls upon the international community to put it into effect as soon as possible.

55. **Notes with satisfaction** that the Government of Burkina Faso is organizing “a meeting on the transformation of cotton of African countries” in OUAGADOUGOU on 4-5 April 2005, in close cooperation with IDB, ICDT and ICCI (in accordance with the resolution of the 31st ICFM) and **appeals** to the Member States transformers of cotton, to the private sector and to financial institutions to actively participate in this meeting on cotton in OUAGADOUGOU.

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

57. **Emphasizes** that, in order to uphold the universality of WTO encompassing participation of all countries, there is a need to ensure that politically motivated considerations and non-trade issues should not be an impediment to the accession of any country to the organization, and urges the Member States that are members of

WTO to address the issue, where deemed appropriate, facilitating accession of all Member States of OIC, particularly those that have already applied for membership of the WTO.

58. **Calls on** the General Council of WTO to find a comprehensive solution to all outstanding requests by the inter-governmental organizations for observer status in the WTO bodies in the light of the letter addressed by the Chairman of the OIC to the Chairman of the General Council in 1999.

59. **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.

60. **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.

61. **Commends** the IDB for organizing a Workshop on 10-11 May 2004 on the impact of the termination of the WTO Agreement on Textile and Clothing among the Member States and on the challenges that will confront these States at the beginning of the year 2005 as a result of the annulment of the quota system. The Committee also **lauds** IDB's initiative for convening a consultative meeting for the permanent missions of Geneva based Member States (13 October 2004-Geneva) for brainstorming and exchange of views on the framework agreement reached by the WTO (July 2004 package) and how to prepare for the forthcoming stage in the Doha negotiations, particularly in the field of agriculture and Non Agriculture Market Access.

62. **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.

63. **Takes note** of the OIC caucus in the WTO remaining as forum for discussion and, wherever possible, having common positions on issues affecting all OIC Member

States. In cases where such common positions are not feasible, like minded Member States should render support to each other.

64. **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.

VI. Report by ICCI on the Eleventh Private Sector Meeting among the OIC Member States (Agenda Item: 8)

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

66. **Notes** that, as per the mandate given to the ICCI by the COMCEC to hold the Private Sector Meeting (PSM) annually, the 11th Private Sector Meeting, which was to be held in 2004, will now be held on 5-7 February 2005 with the theme of “Role of Private Sector in the Economic Integration Among the Islamic Countries” in accordance with the request of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade to host the 11th Private Sector Meeting concurrently with the Islamic Trade Fair.

67. **Expresses thanks and appreciation** to the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry for hosting, as well as the ICCI for organizing the 11th Private Sector Meeting to be held on 5-7 February 2005 in Manama under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman AL-KHALIFA, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain and **calls on** Member States to encourage their private sectors to actively participate in the Meeting.

68. **Thanks** the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the ICCI for having proposed to organize the first Private Sector Forum on Tourism in Riyadh in April 2005, in collaboration with the Supreme Commission on Tourism of Saudi Arabia and the Council of Saudi Chambers.

69. **Welcomes** the holding of the First Business Women Forum of OIC Countries by the ICCI in Sharjah from 15-17 January 2005, in collaboration with the Federation of UAE Chambers and the Business Women Association of UAE. Also **welcomes** the offer by the State of Qatar to host the Second Business Women Forum of OIC Countries in Qatar in 2006.

70. **Notes with appreciation** that, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ICCI and the Union of Turkish Chambers, the ICCI regional office in Istanbul for Central Asian Republics and Europe has been officially opened on 24 November 2004 at the time of the 20th Session of the COMCEC and thanks the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Union of Turkish Chambers of Commerce for their efforts.

71. **Appreciates** the efforts made by ICCI in organizing events such as the 4th OIC Task Force Meeting for SMEs from 24-27 January 2005 in Thailand and the OIC-China Forum in Beijing-China on 20-22 April 2005 for the development of the private sector.

VII. Report of the ICDT on Islamic Trade Fairs (Agenda Item: 9)

72. **Welcomes** the agreement between the Republic of Guinea and the Kingdom of Bahrain, under which the Kingdom of Bahrain is to host the 10th Islamic Trade Fair on 5-9 February, 2005 in place of the Republic of Guinea, which earlier offered to host it and calls upon the Member States to actively participate in the event.

73. **Notes with appreciation** the Progress Report submitted by ICDT on the organization of the 10th Trade Fair of Islamic Countries to be held in MANAMA, Kingdom of Bahrain from 5th to 9th February 2005, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain under the theme of “The Role of Private Sector in the Economic Integration of the Islamic Countries”, **urges** the OIC Member States to actively participate in this fair, and **welcomes** initiatives of Member States to hold these fair, to the extent possible, concurrently with some high level meetings in the future.

74. **Further welcomes** the offers of the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Iraq and the Republic of Guinea to host the 11th, 12th and 13th of Trade Fairs of Islamic Countries in 2006, 2008 and 2010 respectively.

75. **Notes with appreciation** the Progress Report submitted by ICDT on the organization of the first Tourism Fair of Islamic Countries to be held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey from 22 to 25 September 2005, and **urges** the OIC Member States to actively participate in this fair.

76. **Takes note** of the preparations of ICDT for the organisation of the First Agri-food Industries Exhibition of the OIC Countries (AGRO-EXPO-OIC) to be held in Algiers on 14-17 April 2005 and **invites** Member States to participate actively in this event.

77. **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.

VIII. Exchange of Views on “Trade and Transport Facilitation among the OIC Member States ” (Agenda Item: 10)

78. **Expresses** its thanks and appreciation to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the Workshop on the Trade and Transport Facilitation among the OIC Member States in Islamabad from 14-16 September, 2004.

79. **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 Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the ICDT in collaboration with IDB, SESRTCIC and ICCI, and **expresses** appreciation to IDB for its financial support as well as for the papers submitted by some OIC countries and OIC institutions such as ICDT, SESRTCIC, ICCI, IDB on various aspects of the subject.

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

81. **Indicates** the importance of modern information and telecommunications technologies in strengthening the climate of trade and investment and facilitating commerce and transport procedures between OIC Member States.

82. **Affirms** the importance of intensifying and coordinating the efforts of the Organization’s countries in order to benefit from various international and regional mechanisms and conferences in this field and hence, emphasizes the significance of the forthcoming second session of the World Summit on the Information Society which Tunisia will host during the period of 16-18 November 2005. It will also enable the establishment of an international partnership in this field based on a common concept of solidarity and development that will succeed in bridging the digital gap and **urges** OIC Member States to participate actively and effectively in this endeavour.

83. **Entrusts** ICDDT to monitor matters relating trade and transport facilitation among the OIC Member States and report them to the annual sessions of the COMCEC and other concerned fora.

IX. Report of the Sessional Committee (Agenda Item: 12)

84. **Takes note** of the Report of the Sessional Committee (OIC/COMCEC/SC-04/REP), which was held during the Twentieth Session of the COMCEC, and the recommendations thereon.

85. **Notes** that the OIC institutions engaged in 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.

86. **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.

X. Organizational Matters

87. **Elects** Qatar, Indonesia and Sierra Leone as Vice-Chairman of the Bureau of the COMCEC to represent the Arab, Asian and African Regions, respectively, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as Rapporteur, to assume their posts as of the 21st Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC; as a result of the election, the composition of the Follow-up Committee is as follows:

Republic of Turkey	: Chairman (Permanent)
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	: Vice Chairman (Permanent)
State of Palestine	: Vice Chairman (Permanent)
Malaysia	: Vice Chairman (Current Chairman of the Summit)
Qatar	: Vice Chairman (Representing the Arab Region)
Indonesia	: Vice Chairman (Representing the Asian Region)

Sierra Leone : Vice Chairman
(Representing the African Region)
Pakistan : Rapporteur
State of Kuwait : Member of the Previous Bureau
Islamic Republic of Iran : Member of the Previous Bureau
Federal Republic of Nigeria : Member of the Previous Bureau

88. **Decides** that the Twenty First Meeting of the Follow-up Committee be convened from 10 to 12 May 2005 and the Twenty First Session of the COMCEC be held from 22 to 25 September 2005, respectively in Istanbul.

89. **Decides** that “Role of Tourism in the Promotion of Economic Cooperation Among the OIC Countries” be the theme for the exchange of Views at the Twenty First Session of the COMCEC, and **requests** ICDT, SESRTCIC and ICCI to organize a workshop on this topic in collaboration with IDB and any other international organization, prior to the Twenty First Session of the COMCEC and submit its report to the Session.

90. **Welcomes** the offer made by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco to host the workshop on the “Role of Tourism in the Promotion of Economic Cooperation Among the OIC Countries” in 2005 in coordination with the ICDT, SESRTCIC and ICCI in collaboration with IDB.

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

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

93. **Requests** the OIC General Secretariat to communicate to Member States the dates of the Twenty First Session of the COMCEC and the Twenty First Meeting of the Follow-up Committee.

