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**REPORT**  
**OF THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE STANDING**  
**COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND**  
**COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE OIC**  
**(Istanbul, 22-25 November 2005)**

1. The Twenty-first Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC) was held in Istanbul, from 22 to 25 November 2005.

2. The Meeting of Senior Officials of COMCEC that preceded the Session on 22-23 November 2005 was held under the Chairmanship of H.E. Dr. Ahmet TIKTIK, Undersecretary of the State Planning Organization of the Republic of Turkey, to consider items of the Draft Agenda and prepare Draft Resolutions for consideration by the Ministerial Session.

3. The Session was attended by the representatives of the following Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC):

1. Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan
2. Republic of Albania
3. Peoples Democratic Republic of Algeria
4. Republic of Azerbaijan
5. Kingdom of Bahrain
6. People's Republic of Bangladesh
7. Brunei Darussalam
8. Republic of Cameroon
9. Union of Comoros
10. Republic of Cote d'Ivoire
11. Arab Republic of Egypt
12. Republic of Gambia
13. Republic of Guinea
14. Republic of Indonesia
15. Islamic Republic of Iran
16. Republic of Iraq

17. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
18. Republic of Kazakhstan
19. State of Kuwait
20. Kyrgyz Republic
21. Republic of Lebanon
22. Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
23. Malaysia
24. Republic of Maldives
25. Republic of Mali
26. Kingdom of Morocco
27. Republic of Mozambique
28. Federal Republic of Nigeria
29. Sultanate of Oman
30. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
31. Palestinian National Authority
32. State of Qatar
33. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
34. Republic of Senegal
35. Republic of Sierra Leone
36. Democratic Republic of Somalia
37. Republic of Sudan
38. Republic of Suriname
39. Syrian Arab Republic
40. Republic of Tajikistan
41. Republic of Tunisia
42. Republic of Turkey
43. Republic of Turkmenistan
44. Republic of Uganda
45. State of the United Arab Emirates
46. Republic of Uzbekistan
47. Republic of Yemen

4. Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the Russian Federation and the Kingdom of Thailand participated in the Session as observers and the Republic of Macedonia as guest.

5. The OIC General Secretariat and the following subsidiary organs, specialized and affiliated OIC institutions attended the Session:

1. Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC)
2. Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT)
3. Islamic University of Technology (IUT)
4. Islamic Research Center for History, Culture and Art (IRCICA)
5. Islamic Development Bank (IDB)
6. Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI)
7. Islamic Shipowner Association (OISA)

6. Representatives of the following international organizations attended the Session as well:

1. Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
2. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
3. Developing Eight (D-8)
4. Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC)
5. Federation of Islamic Countries' Contractors (FICC)
6. Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC)

(A copy of the List of Participants of the Twenty-First Session of the COMCEC is attached as Annex 1).

### **Opening Session**

7. The Opening Ceremony of the Twenty-first Session of COMCEC was held on 24 November 2005 under the chairmanship of H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of the COMCEC.

8. In his inaugural statement, H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER, in welcoming the delegates, expressed his pleasure for being once again with the representatives of the Member States of the OIC at the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of

COMCEC. H.E. SEZER drew attention to the fact that the Organization of Islamic Conference was the second biggest political organization worldwide in terms of population and geographical size just next to the United Nations. President SEZER expressed his satisfaction that the First Round of the Trade Negotiations had successfully been concluded and the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPSOIC finalized for signing by the Member States. He also pointed out the role of tourism in promoting the economic welfare of the OIC Member States. Regarding the recent earthquake in Pakistan, H.E President SEZER, extended his condolences to the Pakistani people and called upon the Member States and international community to continue to support Pakistan by increasing their aid efforts. He concluded his statement by wishing success and fruitful results for the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

(A copy of the text of the Inaugural Statement of H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER is attached as Annex 2).

9. H.E. Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İHSANOĞLU, Secretary General of OIC made a statement at the Opening Session. He expressed his deep appreciation to H.E. Mr. Ahmet Necdet SEZER, President of the Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the COMCEC, for his kind support and keen interest in the activities of the COMCEC. He extended his condolences to the Pakistani people for the recent earthquake and urged the OIC Member States to show solidarity with Pakistan and its people affected by the earthquake. He also expressed his hope that this Session would significantly contribute to the economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC countries.

(A copy of the address of H.E Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İHSANOĞLU, Secretary General of the OIC is attached as Annex 3).

10. The Heads of Delegations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Cameroon, and the Republic of Azerbaijan made statements on behalf of the Arab, African, and Asian groups of Member States, respectively. Extending their thanks to the Republic of Turkey for its hospitality extended on the occasion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC, they stressed the importance of the signing and ratifying the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme that was adopted by the Special Session of the Trade Negotiating Committee and thereafter by the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC. They also stressed the role of

the COMCEC in the development of the African Member States of the OIC. They stated that the OIC Community has enough financial and economic resources, which if mobilized through increasing cooperation among them, could well increase the level of living standards within the Community.

11. H.E. Ahmed Mohammed ALI, the President of the Islamic Development Bank, also addressed the Opening Session. H.E. ALI gave a summary of developments related to the various activities of the IDB. He stated that fruitful cooperation between COMCEC and IDB has continued. The President informed the audience that IDB has maintained its long-term credit rating of AAA and short-term of A -1 +, according to Standard & Poor's, for the third consecutive year.

(The text of the Statement of the President of IDB is attached as Annex 4).

12. H.E. Shaikh Saleh Bin Abdullah KAMEL, the President of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), also made a statement, in which he analyzed the obstacles before the development of the Islamic Countries and offered some practical solutions to them. H.E. Shaikh Saleh Kamel shared his vision of how to develop economic cooperation among the Islamic Countries with the participants of the Session of the COMCEC, and he called upon the OIC Community to act promptly towards this end because waiting meant losing.

(The text of the speech of the President of ICCI is attached as Annex 5).

13. Following the Opening Ceremony, H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER received the Heads of Delegation.

### **Ministerial Working Session**

14. The Ministerial Working Session of the Twenty-First COMCEC was held on 24 November 2005, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Assoc. Prof. Abdüllatif ŞENER, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey.

15. The Session expressed deep condolences at the demise of King Fahad Ibn Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud, one of the preeminent leaders of the Islamic World and Custodian of the two Holy Mosques, and wished mercy for him from Allah Almighty.

16. The Session adopted the Draft Agenda of the Twenty-First Session of the COMCEC.

(The Agenda of the Session is attached as Annex 6).

17. A signing ceremony was held. The Heads of Delegations of Arab Republic of Egypt, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Republic of Turkey signed the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS).

18. The COMCEC took note of the request by the representative of the Republic of Cameroon that his country be given the LDC status within the framework of the TPS-OIC.

19. The representative of Egypt briefed the Session on the activities undertaken by his government in relation to cooperation with OIC countries on poverty alleviation, and also informed that his country was having consultations with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) organize a Plenary Meeting on the Second Generation of Poverty Reduction Strategies, to in Cairo, in the spring of 2006.

20. An Exchange of Views on “Role of Tourism in the Promotion of Economic Cooperation among the OIC Member States” was held under agenda item 9. H.E. Dr. Ahmet TIKTIK, Undersecretary of the State Planning Organization of the Republic of Turkey and the Chairman of the Senior Officials Meeting, made a brief presentation regarding the outcome of the deliberations of the senior officials on “Role of Tourism in the Promotion of Economic Cooperation among the OIC Member States”.

(The text of presentation of H.E. TIKTIK is attached as Annex 7).

21. In the Exchange of Views Session, the Heads of Delegations of the United Arab Emirates, the State of Kuwait, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Tunisia, the Republic of Guinea, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Arab

Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Cameroon, the Sultanate of Oman, the Republic of Lebanon, the Republic of Turkey, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and Islamic Republic of Iran made presentations on the developments of the tourism sector in their respective countries.

(Country reports on the subject submitted in writing are available separately).

22. The Session thanked the Republic of Turkey for having successfully organized the First Tourism Fair of the OIC Member States in conjunction with the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of COMCEC.

23. The Session then adopted Resolution OIC/COMCEC/21-05/RES(1) and Resolution OIC/COMCEC/21-05/RES(2).

(Resolution OIC/COMCEC/21-05/RES(1) and Resolution OIC/COMCEC/21-05/RES(2) are attached as Annexes 8 and 9, within the context of the Resolution (1);

- Recommendations of the Workshop on “Role of Tourism in the Promotion of Economic Cooperation among the OIC Member States” is attached as Annex 10).

24. The Session also adopted the Report OIC/COMCEC/21-05/Sc.Rep. of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sessional Committee, which was held on 21 November, 2005.

(The Report OIC/COMCEC/21-05/Sc.Rep. of the Sessional Committee is attached as Annex 11).

### **The Special Session of the Trade Negotiating Committee**

25. The Trade Negotiating Committee set up under the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among the Member Countries of the OIC (TPS-OIC) held a special session on the sidelines of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC, in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 November 2005.

26. The Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS), was finalized by the Trade Negotiating Committee and submitted to the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC for adoption.

(The Report of the Special Session of the Trade Negotiating Committee and the text of the PRETAS are attached as Annex 12 and Annex 13 respectively).

### **Closing Session**

27. The Closing Session of the Twenty-First Session of the COMCEC was held on 25 November 2005 under the chairmanship of H.E. Assoc. Prof. Abdüllatif ŞENER, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey.

28. H.E. Syed Iftikhar Hussain SHAH, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Turkey and Rapporteur of the Meeting, presented the Resolutions adopted at the Ministerial Session. In his presentation H.E. SHAH summarized the proceedings of the Drafting Committee highlighting some of the points of agreement.

29. H.E. Mr. Oker GÜRLER, Director of Economic Affairs Department of OIC General Secretariat, read out the message of H.E. Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İHANOĞLU, the Secretary General of OIC. In his message H.E. İHSANOĞLU, expressed his deep appreciation for the adoption of the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS). In this connection, he also invited all Member States to sign and ratify the Framework Agreement on TPS-OIC and PRETAS, who have not yet done so.

(The text of the Message by H.E. Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İHSANOĞLU, is attached as Annex 14).

30. H.E. Mr. Muhammed AZAM, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Commerce of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan made a statement on behalf of all participating Member States, in which he thanked H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER, the President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Assoc. Prof. Abdüllatif ŞENER, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey, the

OIC General Secretariat, and all the concerned parties contributing to the work of the Session.

31. H.E. Assoc. Prof. Abdüllatif ŞENER, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State of the Republic of Turkey, also made a statement at the Closing Session. H.E. Assoc. Prof. ŞENER. He concluded his statement by expressing his feelings of deep gratitude to all delegations which had contributed to the success of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the COMCEC.

(The text of the Closing Statement of H.E. ŞENER is attached as Annex 15).

32. At the signing ceremony held during the Closing Session, the representative of the Kingdom of Bahrain signed the Framework Agreement on TPS-OIC, and the representative of the Republic of Tunisia signed the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC.

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