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The authorities, however, were of the opinion that, for one reason or another exchange of information and technical activities between Lebanon and the Centre were gather limited.

# UPDATE ON ANKARA CENTRE ACTIVITIES

# THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S COUNTRY VISITS TO MOROCCO AND LEBANON

Director General Ambassador Erdinç Erdün and the Centre's delegation paid official visits to the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Lebanon in October. In Morocco, they called upon the Deputy Foreign Minister and the Director General of the Central Statistical Office. They explained in detail the mandate of the Centre and its activities. The authorities visited expressed their appreciation and support of the Centre and its activities. They also expressed the desire and hope that cooperation between the Centre and the various government units would be enhanced in a more structured manner. There was a clear emphasis on the necessity of enhancing cooperation in the area of Training and Technical Cooperation. The Director General assured them of the readiness of the Centre to intensify and develop cooperation with Morocco in all relevant fields within the limits of the financial and human resources available to the Centre.

The main purpose of the visit to Lebanon was to explore the possibilities of securing the settlement of Lebanon's arrears to the budget of the Centre and of enhancing cooperation between Lebanon and the Centre. A visit was also made to ESCWA Headquarters to intensify the already existing cooperation between the two institutions.

In the contacts made, The Director General and Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin, Head of the Research Department of the Centre, explained in detail the mandate of the Centre and its activities. The Lebanese authorities expressed their appreciation of the Centre and its activities. They commended the pivotal role played by the Centre in enhancing cooperation among OIC Countries through its widely disseminated publications and documentation in the areas of Research and Statistics. The Training and Technical Cooperation activities of the Centre were equally appreciated.

They, hence, expressed the desire and hope that cooperation between the Centre and the various government units would be enhanced in a more structured manner. There was a

clear emphasis on the necessity of enhancing cooperation in the area of Training and Technical Cooperation. The Director General assured the Lebanese authorities of the readiness of the Centre to intensify and develop cooperation with Lebanon in all relevant fields within the limits of the financial and human resources available to the Centre.

Regarding the payment of contributions of Lebanon to the budget of the Centre, the Delegation expressed its concern that Lebanon has not paid a single contribution to the Centre since its inception. The State Minister of Finance expressed commitment of Lebanon to settle its arrears and contributions to the Centre. The fact that no payment has been made so far was due to the devastating civil war period and the acute economic and financial problems that the country encountered during the reconstruction period. The Centre's Delegation expressed its understanding of the problems facing the country. The Delegation, however, explained to the Minister that the degree to which the Centre could increase and diversify its services to the Member Countries is very much dependent on the financial support provided by these countries to the Centre. They requested the authorities to positively reconsider the issue. The Minister agreed to settle the arrears and start paying regularly in accordance with the formula and procedures adopted towards the settlement of their arrears to the OIC General Secretariat. No definite date, however, was fixed.

In addition to the meetings with the Lebanese authorities, the Delegation held a meeting with the Director General of ESCWA. The ways and means to enhance cooperation between the two institutions were discussed.

Director General Ambassador Erdinç Erdün also attended the Fifteenth Session of the Board of Directors of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, between 1-2 December 1998, in Casablanca, Morocco. He was invited to this Meeting by ICDT as an observer.

#### INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL PLANNING IN CAIRO HOLDS JOINTLY ORGANISED SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS IN AGRICULTURE POLICY **ANALYSIS AND PLANNING**

The Training Seminar to Strengthen Sustainability Issues and Environmental Considerations in Agriculture Policy Analysis and Planning, Focus on Water, took place at the Institute of National Planning in Cairo, Egypt, from 27 September to 8 October 1998.

The Seminar was jointly organised by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Institute of National Planning (INP), and the SESRTCIC. Twenty-two participants from 15 Islamic countries took part in the Seminar. The OIC countries represented were Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Yemen.

The seminar aimed to achieve a triple objective: to strengthen the integration of environmental factors and sustainability issues in the formulation, planning and analysis of agricultural and rural investment projects especially in the area of land and water; to disseminate knowledge and practical skills to analyse the impact of agricultural policies on the environment, and to design development policies that improve the sustainability of the agro-rural sector; and to provide an analytical framework for using economic instruments along with traditional approaches in environmental and natural resource management.

A core team of trainers of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), The College of Advanced Science (TCAS) of FAO and AOAD staff conducted the Seminar through lectures, exercises, case studies, and the application of specialised computer software.

Dr Mahmoud RAIS, Director of Publications Department, represented SESRTCIC at the Seminar.

## **OIC NEWS**

ICDT, IDB AND SESRTCIC ORGANISE WORKSHOP ON "INTRA-OIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC STABILISATION AND STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES" IN CASABLANCA, MOROCCO

Considering the growing importance of enhancing Intra-OIC trade and investments and the far-reaching implications of Stabilisation and Structural Adjustment Programmes for the OIC countries, especially amidst the turmoil causing havoc with the international financial system, the COMCEC decided in its 13th Session, held in November 1997, to devote the Exchange of Views Session of its 14th Session (1-4 November 1998) to "Intra-OIC Trade and Investment and Economic Stabilisation and Structural Reforms in OIC Member States". In compliance with this resolution, the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) and SESRTCIC with the collaboration of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) organised a workshop on that topic in Casablanca, Morocco, from 30 September to 2 October 1998.

The Workshop was attended by senior government officials from member countries, prominent scholars and experts universities and research centres as well as from international organisations dealing extensively with the subject. The Workshop was structured around three major issues, namely, Intra-OIC Trade, Investment Flows to OIC Countries and Intra-OIC Investments and Stabilisation Economic and Structural Reforms in the OIC Member States.

The Workshop addressed a number of vital questions in order to properly understand those questions and to respond appropriately to the challenges they give rise to. In cognisance of the generally unfavourable environment created by the financial, economic and social ills sweeping the globe

and in particular the OIC Members, it was felt that it was time now to critically evaluate the latter's experiences with the structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilisation programs and policies and to think about them critical further. Such evaluation and rethinking would also include the issues and state of trade and investment flows in and between the OIC countries.

Hence, Intra-OIC trade and investments constituted one of the primary objectives of this Workshop. The investments issue has become the central point of debate of the world trade liberalisation. As a matter of fact, the Marrakech Agreement (the Final Act of the Uruguay Round) gave an important place to the investments issue. First, the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) has retained the commercial presence as being the major supply mode of services, then the agreement on TRIMS (Trade Related Investment Measures) abolished all investment measures that cause trade distortions such as local content requirements, the prescriptions relating to sales in the domestic market or prescriptions relating to exports. Finally the first Ministerial Meeting of the WTO, held in Singapore, set up a working group to study the relations between trade and investment, thus following the OECD countries which were negotiating a Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI) whose cornerstone is the well-known provision on non-discrimination between national and foreign investors, the violation of which may result in an action against the implicated government.

Another main objective of the Workshop was to shed more light on the stabilisation experiences of the OIC countries and the difficulties and problems they face in this new environment. There were certain aspects of the issue which could be learnt from the experiences of the other countries. In doing so, it was important not to lose sight of the major issues in the world economy that directly relate to the issues being taken up by the Workshop in the area of stabilisation and structural reforms.

Finally, the Workshop made some policy recommendations that would help the OIC countries cope with these developments in a manner that would be conducive to the creation of the necessary conditions for a growing, prosperous, stable and equitable world economy that would include them as active partners.

#### FIFTH PRIVATE SECTOR MEETING AND SEVENTH ISLAMIC TRADE FAIR **HELD IN TRIPOLI, LEBANON**

The 5th Private Sector Meeting took place in Tripoli, Republic of Lebanon, from 12 to 14 October 1998. The Meeting was attended by around 300 delegates from 36 OIC Member Countries, as well as from the OIC General Secretariat, the subsidiary, specialised and affiliated OIC institutions.

On the sidelines of the Meeting an important Seminar entitled "New Vision of the OIC Countries in the Next Millennium" was convened. The Seminar was addressed by ministers from Malaysia, Indonesia and Cameroon.

At rhe end of its proceedings, the Meeting issued the "Tripoli Economic Declaration". It contained about twenty-two recommendations covering all aspects of cooperation among OIC countries, including measures to enhance the role of the private sector, ways and means to intensify contacts between businessmen and establish joint ventures between them, and the like.

A seminar was also convened by the trade promotion organisations, as part of the activities of the 7th Islamic Fair. The Centre presented a paper dealing with the role of the Ankara Centre in OIC economic cooperation endeavours and activities.

### FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE OIC STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION (COMCEC) MEETS IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY

The Fourteenth Session of the OIC Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) was held in İstanbul, Turkey from 30 October to 5 1998. November Director General Ambassador Erdinc Erdün, Mr. İlhan Uğurel, Head of the Statistics and Information Department, Mr. Oker Gürler, Economist and Mr. Selim İlkin, Acting Head of the Technical Cooperation Department represented SESRTCIC in this Meeting.

The Centre's delegation participated in the following:

- (1) Pre-coordination Meeting of COMCEC XIV on 31 October
- (2) Senior Officials Meeting of COMCEC XIV on 1-2 November
- (3) Ministerial Meeting of COMCEC XIV on 3-4 November
- (4) OIC Post Mortem on Decisions of COMCEC XIV on 4 November

The delegation participated also in the work of the Drafting Committee of the Senior Officials Meeting that took place on the night of 1 November.

SESRTCIC had prepared five documents for the Session:

(a) Report on the World Economy and OIC Countries (in English, Arabic and French)

- (b) Monitoring Report on WTO (in English, Arabic and French)
- (c) Final Report of the Workshop on Intra-OIC Trade and Investments, Stabilisation and Restructuring (in English and Arabic) (See InfoReport 35/December 1998).
- (d) Papers and Proceedings of the above Workshop (in English).
- (e) Director General's Report on the activities of the Centre (in English, Arabic and French).

The presentations of the Centre to COMCEC were referred to with appreciation by quite a number of delegations during the Senior Officials Meeting, the COMCEC itself and especially the exchange-of-views session.

Developments of interest in general and those

which are relevant to the Centre are:

- (a) Approval of the statute of the OIC Institute for Standardisation and Metrology,
- (b) Selection of Human Resource Development as the theme of the next Exchange-of-Views Session,
- (c) Offers to hold Sectoral Expert Group Meetings under the OIC Plan of Action by

Egypt (Agriculture and Transport), Sudan (Energy and Mining, and Human Resource Development), and Palestine (Environment and Labour and Social Issues) and information that Iran is offering to hold a Ministerial Meeting on Health and Sanitary Issues and that Indonesia formally withdrew its earlier offer to hold a Ministerial Conference on Tourism.

# OIC CULTURE MINISTERS LAUNCH CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The Second Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers took place in Rabat, Morocco, from 12 to 14 November 1998. Director General Ambassador Erdinç Erdün attended this Conference upon the invitation of the Secretary General of the OIC.

After two and a half days of deliberations, a Final Communiqué was adopted and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) was entrusted with the task of implementing the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World.

Three documents were brought back from this Conference: the Final Communiqué, the Cultural Strategy for the for the Islamic World

and the Implementation Mechanisms of the Muslim World Cultural Strategy.

# THE GOVERNORS OF THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK HOLD THEIR 23rd ANNUAL MEETING IN COTONOU, BENIN

The Twenty-third Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) took place in Cotonou, Benin from 17 to 18 November 1998. The Meeting was attended by the 52 members of the IDB. Togo, which recently became a member of the OIC, also joined the Bank and attended as its 53rd member. Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin, Head of the Research Department of SESRTCIC, represented the Centre at this Meeting.

The Meeting took up the regular Agenda items relating to the approval of the accounts of the Bank and some other procedural matters. However, more important for SESRTCIC was the Ninth IDB Annual Symposium entitled "Preparing the 'UMMAH' for the 21st Century: Promotion of Information Technology for Development."

A background paper on the subject was presented by H.E. Magued Diouf, Minister of Energy, Mines and Industry of Senegal. The paper tackled the topic from various angles, which included:

- The Salient Features of the Development of the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICT),
- The Ummah's Challenges in the Face of the Information Society,
- The Development of New Information and Telecommunication,
- Role of NICT in Economic Development,
- The Current State of Affairs of the New Technologies in IDB Member Countries,
- Promotion of New Technologies in IDB Member Countries.

To be able to face those challenges, member countries have to cooperate intensively through the implementation of important capacity building projects, such as the establishment of a "Higher Islamic Council for the Promotion of Information Society" and through scientific and technical cooperation programmes.

A number of important recommendations were made during the deliberations, relating to the development dimensions of the Information Technology (IT) and the role of IDB. With regard to the development dimension, emphasis was put on IT production, utilisation, development plans and project development. Regarding the IDB's role, it was recommended that IDB may establish a special "IT Development Programme". This programme may provide support to the Islamic Countries in the area of information and projects (infrastructure and IT production and utilisation).

## OTHER MEETINGS

### **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA HOLDS SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL** AND NATURAL RESOURCE ACCOUNTING IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

The Economic and Social Commission for Africa's (ECA) Seminar on Environmental and Natural Resource Accounting was held from 26 to 28 October 1998 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Mr. Candan Baysan, Administrator of the Centre represented SESRTCIC in this Seminar.

The Seminar took up the issue of organising statistical structures that would accommodate the environmental and natural resource aspects. Especially, for a certain group of countries (mainly from Africa). where the bulk of economic activity, including agriculture, involved exploitation of natural resources, a higher level of income meant a higher level of depletion of the natural resources. Whether

this was a negative or positive development required a re-consideration of various traditional economic concepts and formulation of new statistical ways and methods.

The discussions which took place during the Seminar were very lively and pertinent and they enriched the contents of the presentations enormously. In the course of the Seminar, Mr. Bartelmus of UNSD made two presentations in his own name, and a number of others on behalf of people who were to attend the Seminar but could not make it.

Mr. Baysan officially met with Prof. P.K. Makinwa-Adebuoye, Chief of FSSDD of ECA, Mr. Salah El Serafy from UNEP, Mr. Peter Bartelmus of UNSD, Mr. Henri C.

Cassehouin, Mr. M. Ahmed Adoum Al Mougadam and Mr. Elamin Elfaki Geimain. He also met with participants from Benin, Chad and the Sudan whose attendance was financed by the Centre.

#### ITALIAN ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE HOSTS CONFERENCE ON EXTERNAL DEBTS AND FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

The Conference entitled "External Debts and Foreign Investments: Present Situation and Future Prospects in Islamic Countries" was held in Rome, Italy from 18 to 20 November 1998. Mr. İlhan Uğurel, Head of SESRTCIC's Information Department Statistics and represented the Centre and made a rather extensive presentation, complete with tables and transparencies.

The Conference was held at the Conference Hall of the Italian Islamic Cultural Centre. It was organised by the Centre and a contact group of Italian Parliamentarians within the context of the Jubilee 2000 celebrations. A number of inaugural speeches were made by members of the Italian Senate and House, as well as by the responsible officials of the Centre during a relatively long initial phase. The Archbishop of Jerusalem also spoke on the theme of peace, forgiveness and the need for better dialogue among the three major religions especially in Palestine.

In the light of the tone set in the beginning and given the mixed nature of the audience, Mr. Uğurel spoke for an hour on the OIC and its member countries, the main theme of SESRTCIC's paper and its salient futures and what should be done in the future, without going too much into the technical details of the issues involved. Mr. Uğurel emphasised the importance of providing more structural and longer term assistance particularly to the Least Developed Islamic Countries to enable them to increase the viability of their economies and strengthen them, so that, in the longer run, they would borrow only for their development needs, be able to service these debts with their own export earnings and become attractive destinations for private foreign capital.

An Italian law professor also made a presentation dealing mostly with the legal aspects of debt accumulation, difficulties in debt servicing and international obligations.

Various people from the audience spoke after the presentations, including a representative of the Vatican and Former Prime Minister Andreotti, appreciating the presentations and making additional recommendations relating to the solution of the present financial and economic crises.

The organisers of this Conference indicated that they would continue with similar initiatives in the future. They also intend to publish or distribute the presentations and speeches made to a wider audience.

### STATE INSTITUTE OF STATISTICS HOSTS FIRST MEETING OF ECO'S NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS ON STATISTICS AND RESEARCH

The First Meeting of the National Focal Points of the Directorate of Economic Research and Statistics (DERS) of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) took place in Ankara, from 14 to 16 December, 1998. Mr. Selim İlkin, Acting Head of the Technical Cooperation Department and Mr. Candan Baysan, Web-Administrator of the Centre, participated in the Meeting as representatives of the Centre.

The Meeting was organised by the Economic Cooperation Organisation and hosted by the State Institute of Statistics. Representatives of the National Focal Points in the ECO such Iran. Kazakhstan. countries as Kyrghzstan and Turkey were present in the Meeting and the rest of the countries were represented by their embassies in Ankara. The Meeting took up the work programme of DERS and agreed on certain principles concerning the cooperation of the focal points in the countries. In terms of SESRTCIC, the meeting was interesting in that it enabled it to obtain some statistical publications that were not sent to the Centre by the involved national statistical organisations but were brought along for display during the Meeting. It also enabled it to ascertain the focal point names in the ECO countries, all of which are also OIC members. Mr. İlkin's and Mr. Baysan's presence was requested by the ECO Secretariat and they offered certain clarifications and/or explanations as far as the work of DERS was concerned, especially in the areas touched upon by SESRTCIC's earlier report.

# CENTRE'S AGENDA FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1999

SESRTCIC will participate in the following activities during the first quarter of 1999:

#### **JANUARY**

 23-26 January: 22nd Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

#### **FEBRUARY**

- 6-10 February: 27th Session of the Permanent Finance Committee of OIC in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- 11-14 February: Director General's Country Visit to the Sultanate of Oman

#### **MARCH**

- Seminar on Human Resource Development and Poverty Alleviation (IIT) in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Third Session of ESCWA Statistical Committe, 16-18 March 1998.

# ANKARA CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

#### Latest Publications

**Journal of Economic Cooperation**, Vol.19, issue 3 for July 1998 (English)

Statistical Yearbook of the OIC Countries, 1998 (English)

**Statistical Pocketbook of the OIC Countries, 1998** (English)

**Training Opportunities in OIC Countries, 1999** (trilingual edition in English, French and Arabic)

Documents for the 22nd Session of the Islamic Commission for Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs (A set of two volumes in English, French and Arabic)

**InfoReport**, issue no.35 for September 1998, in three editions, English, French and Arabic

## WHAT'S NEW IN THE CENTRE LIBRARY

## **Latest Acquisitions**

The following is a selection among the publications acquired by the Centre during the last quarter of 1998:

AL-MASHAT, Rania A. and David A. Grigorian, Economic Reforms in Egypt: Emerging Patterns and Their Possible Implications. Policy Research Working Paper, 1977. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, September 1998.

BREDIE, Joseph W.B. and Girindre K. Beeharry, School Enrollment Decline in Sub-Saharan Africa: Beyond the Supply Constraint. World Bank Discussion Paper, 395. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, August 1998.

Central Product Classification (CPC) Version 1.0. Statistical Papers Series M, No.77, Ver.1.0. Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division. New York, United Nations, 1998.

CSAKI, Csaba and John Nash, The Agrarian Economies of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Situation and Perspectives, 1997. World Bank Discussion Paper, 387. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, June 1998.

ESKELAND, Gunnar S. and Chingying Kong. Protecting the Environment and the Poor: A

**Public Goods Framework Applied to Indonesia**. Policy Research Working Paper, 1961. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, August 1998.

FRANCIS, Paul A. and (et al.), **Hard Lessons: Primary Schools, Community, and Social Capital in Nigeria**. World Bank Technical Paper, 420, Africa Region Series. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, October 1998.

International Capital Markets:
Developments, Prospects, and Key Policy
Issues. World Economic and Financial
Surveys. Wash., D.C., International Monetary
Fund, September 1998.

NASH, John and Wendy Takacs (Editors by), Trade Policy Reform: Lessons and Implications. World Bank Regional and Sectoral Studies. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, September 1998.

TYBOUT, James, Manufacturing Firms in Developing Countries: How Well Do They Do, and Why? Policy Research Working Paper, 1965. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, August 1998.

VENKATESAN, Venkatachalam and Jacob Kampen, Evolution of Agricultural Services in Sub-Saharan Africa: Trends and Prospects. World Bank Discussion Paper, 390, African Regio Series. Wash., D.C., the World Bank, July 1998.

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