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UPDATE ON ANKARA CENTRE ACTIVITIES

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL PAYS AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE STATE OF BAHRAIN

Director General Ambassador Erdiñç Erdün and Assistant Director General Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin made an official visit to the State of Bahrain. During their visit, they had talks with the Under-secretary at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Vice President for Planning and Community Service at the University of Bahrain, the Assistant Secretary General for the Research Programmes of the Bahrain Centre for Studies and Research, the Director of Economic Relations at the Ministry of Finance, the Acting Director of the Economic Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Director of Statistics at the Central Statistics Organisation and

the Director of the Bahrain Training Institute.

The main purpose of the visit was to explore ways and means of enhancing co-operation between Bahrain and the Centre. In the contacts made, the mandate of the Centre and its activities were explained in detail and the necessary documentation was supplied. The Bahraini authorities expressed their appreciation and support to the Centre and its activities. They also commended the efforts it is

making to enhance it is making to enhance co-operation among OIC Countries through its widely disseminated publications and documentation in the areas of Research and Statistics. The Training and Technical Co-operation activities of the Centre were equally appreciated.

The authorities expressed the desire and hope that co-operation between the Centre and the various government units in Bahrain would be enhanced in a more structured manner, within the limits of the financial and human resources available to the Centre.

SESRTCIC, FAO AND IDB ORGANISE A TRAINING PROGRAMME ON “THE IMPACT OF MACRO-ECONOMIC AND SECTORAL POLICIES ON RURAL POVERTY” IN ANKARA

A training workshop on the “Impact of Macro Economic and Sectoral Policies on Rural Poverty” was hosted by SESRTCIC in Ankara from 28 February to 8 March 2000. The workshop was jointly organised by the Regional Office for the Near East of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

The workshop was attended by twenty-five government officials from various ministries as well as other development agents dealing with agricultural policies and rural development from Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen.

The training workshop was inaugurated by H.E. Ambassador Erdinç Erdün, Director General of SESRTCIC, who addressed the meeting. H.E. Mr. Fouad Yaseen, Ambassador of Palestine to Turkey and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, and

Mr. Maharaj K. Muthoo, the FAO Representative in Turkey, also delivered speeches during the inauguration.

The first lecture of the workshop was delivered by Prof. Halis Akder from the Middle East Technical University (METU) on the topic of “Rural Poverty in Turkey”. All the other lectures were given by Prof. J. Mohan Rao from the University of Massachusetts.

The workshop aimed at enhancing the trainees’ abilities to:

- 1) understand and analyse the characteristics and dimensions of rural poverty;
- 2) analyse the impact of economic reform policies and development strategies on rural poverty and different types of rural households;
- 3) analyse the impact of agricultural and rural development policies on poverty and on different types of households;

4) identify and formulate policies for poverty reduction with particular reference to the agricultural and rural sectors.

The main issues covered were as follows:

1) Poverty assessment and measurement:

- What is poverty, who are the poor, what are the causes of poverty?
- Measuring poverty with household survey data and qualitative methods and tools;
- Poverty monitoring.

2) Strategies and policies for poverty alleviation:

- policies already implemented in some countries and considered a precondition for poverty alleviation;
- the notion of enabling environment (macro-economic and sector policy reforms);
- investment in human capital (basic health, education);
- basic infrastructure such as farm-to-market roads, water supply, electrification;
- investment in social capital (animation, group formation, community-based organisations, service providers, etc.).

The participants also reviewed policies expected to favour and support the livelihood strategies of the poor by:

- reducing vulnerability (to drought, crop failure, famine, war, natural calamities and external shocks) and increasing resilience;
- reinforcing coping strategies (at individual and community levels);
- maintaining and increasing productive assets as a hedge against emergencies.

Finally, specific policies and programmes for poverty alleviation were proposed with special focus on targeted investment in productive sectors that are the poor's main source of livelihood:

- smallholder agriculture;
- off-farm activities, informal sector and micro-enterprise development;
- labour-intensive rural works;
- community self-help initiatives (rural infrastructure).

By all accounts, the workshop was very successful. The trainers praised the professional qualities of the participants. The participants appreciated the opportunity they had to deepen their knowledge of the subject of poverty and thanked the organisers for the arrangements made to ensure the smooth running of such a useful training programme.

OIC NEWS

THE 23RD SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS APPROVES THE BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CENTRE FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2000/2001

The 23rd Session of the Islamic Commission was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 22 to 26 January 2000. Director General Ambassador Erdiņ Erdün and Assistant Director General Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinalabdin represented SESRTCIC at the Meeting.

In its capacity as the Joint General Assembly of the Subsidiary Organs, the Commission took up the activities of the Subsidiary Organs and their budgets. As the General Assembly of the Centre, it first expressed its appreciation for the Centre's success in realising its work programme, and adopted the Report of the Director General on the Activities of the Centre for the year 1998/1999. It then considered the closing accounts of the Centre for the Financial Year 1998/1999 and recommended their submission to the Permanent Finance Committee. Finally, it approved the Budget of Financial Year 2000/2001 at the level of \$2,000,000, together with the Work Programme, and recommended its submission to the Permanent Finance Committee for onward submission to the 27th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM).

Furthermore, pursuant to Para 4 of Article 8 of the Framework Statute of the Subsidiary Organs, the General

Assembly elected Bangladesh, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen as members of the Board of Directors of the Centre for a three-year term.

The Commission then resumed its proceedings as the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs. In this capacity, it adopted draft recommendations on economic, cultural and social affairs and on science and technology in preparation for their submission to the 27th ICFM.

In the economic field, the Commission took up a number of issues relating to the emerging world economic order, the multilateral trading system, the severe financial crisis which hit the major economies of the world and a number of OIC countries, and debt and poverty problems.

It also assigned a new task to the Centre: to study, follow up and submit periodic reports to the annual session of the Standing Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation (COMCEC) and thereafter to the ICFM on the issue of

“Supporting the Reforms of the International Financial Architecture”, particularly from the point of view of its implications for the Member States.

THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND STRUCTURAL REFORMS OF THE OIC URGES THE MEMBER STATES TO PAY THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Administrative and Structural Reforms of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference was held at the headquarters of the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 12-13 February 2000. Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin, Assistant Director General, and Mr. Oker Gürler, Director of the Research Department at SESRTCIC, represented the Centre at this Meeting. The Meeting was

attended by the representatives of the twenty Member States and the OIC General Secretariat. H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Saleh Zaimi, Director of the Cabinet of the Secretary General opened the proceedings by welcoming the participants and wishing them success in their mission.

At the end of the deliberations, the Meeting adopted certain amendments to the OIC Personnel Regulations.

28TH SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FINANCE COMMITTEE TAKES UP THE STUDY PREPARED BY THE ANKARA CENTRE AMONG OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

The 28th Session of the Permanent Finance Committee of the Organisation of the Islamic Organisation was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 19 to 23 February 2000. Director General Ambassador Erdiñ Erdün and Assistant Director General Dr. Abdelrahman Zeinelabdin represented SESRTCIC at the Meeting.

The Meeting considered a number of agenda items including:

- The 2000/2001 budget proposals of the OIC General Secretariat and the Subsidiary Organs.

- The study prepared by the Ankara Centre on the “Percentage Shares of Mandatory Contributions of the Member States to the Budgets of the OIC General Secretariat and the Subsidiary Organs”.

The budgets of the OIC General Secretariat and the Subsidiary Organs were recommended for submission to the 27th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) at the same level as that of the 1999/2000 budgets.

CENTRE'S AGENDA FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2000

MAY

- 21-22 May 2000: Workshop on “Strengthening Small and Medium Enterprises Facing Globalisation and Liberalisation” in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- Multilateral Trade Negotiations in Agriculture for the GCC Countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates” in Muscat, Oman.

JUNE

- 3-7 June 2000: Training Seminar on “Uruguay Round and Future
- 27-30 June 2000: Twenty-seventh Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

ANKARA CENTRE PUBLICATIONS

Latest Publications

Inforeport, January 2000 (English, French and Arabic editions).

Journal of Economic Cooperation (Arabic), year 2000.

Journal of Economic Cooperation (English), issue no.1, vol.21.

Statistical Yearbook 2000.

Statistical Pocketbook 2000.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE CENTRE LIBRARY

Latest Acquisitions

The following is a selection of publications acquired by the Centre during the first quarter of 2000

Bongini, Paola, Stijn Claessens and Giovanni Ferri, **The Political Economy of Distress in East Asian**

Financial Institutions, Policy Research Working Paper 2265, Wash., D.C., The World Bank, January 2000.

Cities of the World, fifth edition, 4 Volumes, United States of America, Gale Research, 1999.

Claessens, Stijn, Simeon Djankov and Larry H.P. Lang, **East Asian Corporation: Heroes or Villains?** World Bank Discussion Paper No. 409, Wash., D.C., The World Bank, January 2000.

Ghani, Ejaz and Vivek Suri, **Productivity Growth, Capital Accumulation, and the Banking Sector: Some Lessons from Malaysia**, Policy Research Working Paper No. 2252, Wash., D.C., The World Bank, December 1999.

Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries. The World Bank, Wash., D.C., December 1999.

Greuning, Hennie and Sonja Brajovic Bratanovic, **Analyzing Banking Risk: A Framework for Assessing Corporate Governance and Financial Risk Management**, The World Bank, Wash., D.C., November 1999.

Hoekman, Bernard and Hanaa Kheir-El-Din (Editors), **Trade Policy Developments in the Middle East and North Africa**, Wash., D.C., The World Bank, February 2000.

International Monetary Fund, **Annual Report 1999**, Wash., D.C., IMF, 1999.

Lazreg, Marnia, **Making the Transition Work for Women in Europe and Central Asia**, World Bank Discussion Paper No. 411, Europe and Central Asia Gender and Development Series, The World Bank, Wash., D.C., December 1999.

Reinikka, Ritva and Jakob Svensson, **Confronting Competition: Investment Response and Constraints in Uganda**, Policy Research Working Paper No. 2242, Wash., D.C., The World Bank, November 1999.

World Economic and Social Survey 1999: Trends and Policies in the World Economy, New York, United Nations, 1999.

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