



In this Issue

Ankara Centre Update

- SESRTCIC Meeting with the National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) 2
- The Director General of SESRTCIC Visits the UNECA 4
- Statistical Capacity Building Session for OIC African Member Countries 4
- SESRTCIC and TİKA Join Hands in Cooperation 5
- Training Course on 'Labor Statistics' in Morocco 5

OIC News

- The 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers 6
- First Islamic Conference of Health Ministers 7
- Thirty-fifth Session of the Permanent Finance Committee (PFC) 7
- Seminar on University Ranking in the OIC Member Countries 8
- Experts Group Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building 8
- Second Experts Group Meeting on Tourism Development 9
- Twenty-third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC 10

- IFSD Forum 2007 on 'Islamic Microfinance Development: Challenges and Initiatives' 11
- The Third Meeting of the Second Round of Trade Negotiations on TPS-OIC (PRETAS) 11
- International Scientific Conference on the Role of Tourism in Economies 13

Other Meetings

- Third Arab Forum for Capacity Building and Development 13
- Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy 14

Upcoming Events

ankara centre Update

SESRTCIC Meeting with the National Statistical Organizations (NSOs) of the OIC Member Countries

The Centre organised a special meeting with the Heads and representatives of the National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) of the OIC Member Countries on 28th June 2007 on the sidelines of the Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy, which was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 27-30 June 2007.

Heads and representatives of NSOs from 21 OIC Member Countries attended the meeting. The representatives of the IDB and other regional and international institutions also attended the meeting.

The meeting aimed at informing the NSOs of the Member Countries about the recent and future statistical activities of the Centre and exploring their views on these activities and on the best possible ways and means of strengthening and enhancing cooperation between the Centre and the NSOs in the Member Countries.

At the outset, a welcome speech was made by Dr. Savaş Alpay, the Director General of the Centre. In his address, the Director General mentioned that the Centre introduced new measures and took new actions for the implementation of its various statistical activities.

Dr. Alpay also mentioned that, in an attempt to enhance cooperation with the NSOs of the Member Countries and keep

them informed on the statistical activities of the Centre, the Centre recently started to organise special meetings with the representatives of those organisations on the sidelines of different regional and international conferences.

Following the address of the Director General, Mr. Nabil Dabour, Senior Researcher at the Centre, made a detailed presentation on the current and future statistical activities of the Centre. In his presentation, Mr. Dabour mentioned that the Centre's statistical databases were enriched in terms of both the coverage and content, where new areas of statistics were covered and the number of indicators and variables were increased. He also mentioned that the rate of dissemination of these data, particularly in the electronic format, was greatly increased due to the successive improvements the Centre has made on the technical capacities and design features of its web site. Among other things, Mr. Dabour informed the meeting that the Centre has recently initiated a training programme for statistical capacity building in the NSOs of the Member Countries. The Programme aims at exploring the possibility of matching the needs and capacities of the NSOs in the Member Countries and investigating the most practical ways of sharing their existing capacities.

In her presentation, Dr. Sidika Basci, Senior Researcher at the Centre, explained the details of the Statistical Data Collection and Dissemination Software System that the Centre was currently developing, in collaboration with the Turkish Statistical Institution. This system is a new searchable and dynamic system whereby up-to-date statistical data on over 200 indicators will be electronically collected from the NSOs in the 57 Member Countries. It will enable permitted users of the Centre's web site to perform graphics or raw data-based cross-searches on the Centre's Statistics Database.

She also informed the meeting that the Centre also designed a new version of its web site, which would facilitate the development of the above-mentioned Software System and allow enriching and frequently updating the Centre's statistical directories such as those of universities, statistical experts, research institutions, etc.

Following these presentations, the participants discussed some possible ways and means of strengthening and enhancing cooperation between the Centre and the NSOs in the Member Countries and the following recommendations were agreed upon:

(A) Provision of Statistics and Published Statistical Documents

- The NSOs will continue to cooperate with the Centre by providing all statistical data and information required by the Centre both electronically through the Centre's computerised system and website, and by promptly responding to the questionnaires it circulates to them.

- The NSOs will continue to cooperate with the Centre by providing published material and documents to the Library of the Centre both in hard copies and in electronic format, and by providing the Centre with full and free access to their databases.

- The mechanism proposed by the Centre for enhancing the mutual cooperation and coordination between the Centre and the NSOs of the OIC Member Countries is highly appreciated. Each NSO may, therefore, assign at least one well-trained personnel to work as a channel for flow of information between the two parties.

- The NSOs agreed to provide the Centre the same data they provide to other international institutions. In this respect, the Centre is encouraged, if needed, to collaborate with other international organisations on the collection and dissemination of statistical data.

(B) Training and Capacity Building

- The NSOs encourage and recommend the Centre to intensify its endeavours to continue with its training programmes for statistical capacity building in the NSOs of the Member Countries and call upon the IDB to provide the Centre with the necessary technical and financial support for these programmes.

- The NSOs will, in collaboration with the Centre, open their own statistical training courses to participants from other Member Countries and send experts to their counterparts to provide technical assistance.

- The NSOs may organise, in collaboration with the centre, joint training programs on topics of common interest to the Member Countries and

exchange information on their training and capacity building activities.

- The NSOs encourage and recommend the Centre to continue organising

meetings with the NSOs at the regional level, while considering the possibility of organising, when necessary, a general meeting with the participation of the NSOs in all the Member Countries, in collaboration with the IDB.

Director General of SESRTCIC visits the UNECA

The Director General of the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC) Dr. Savaş Alpay met with the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the ECA Mr. Abdoulie Janneh at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on 1st May 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

During the meeting, the Director General of the SESRTCIC and the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the ECA held talks on bilateral relations and discussed the SESRTCIC's activities towards the region. Dr. Alpay informed the Executive Secretary about the future activities of SESRTCIC and expressed the willingness of the SESRTCIC to expand the existing cooperation and collaboration with the ECA through joint programmes and technical cooperation activities with a

view to achieving the UN MDGs related to Africa.

Dr. Alpay presented the Center's study titled "Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Situation in the OIC Member Countries" to the Executive Secretary. Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, welcomed the activities of the SESRTCIC and expressed the willingness of the ECA to develop cooperation and partnership with the SESRTCIC in the areas of common interest. He also expressed his desire to facilitate the achievement of the MDGs and possibility of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the SESRTCIC and suggested to set up a coordination group towards that end.

The Director General expressed his deep appreciation to the Executive Secretary for the warm hospitality accorded to the SESRTCIC delegation by the ECA.

Statistical Capacity Building Session for OIC African Member Countries

The SESRTCIC in cooperation with the UNECA organized a special Session on Statistical Capacity Building in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4 May 2007 as part of

the 5th Session of the Committee on Development of Information (CODI-V) event organized by the United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The meeting was attended by senior officials from the National Statistical Organisations of the OIC African Member Countries (Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal,

Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, The Gambia, Tunisia, Uganda), other African Countries (Malawi, Liberia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa) as observers and the representatives of the African Development Bank, the UNECA, Paris21, the AFRISTAT, and the FAO. Details are available at the Centre's web site: www.sesrtcic.org.

SESRTCIC and TİKA Join Hands in Cooperation

SESRTCIC and the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TİKA) finalized their talks on joint activities successfully. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 24th of May 2007 by the Director General of Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries Dr. Savaş Alpay, and President of the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, Dr. Hakan Fidan.

At the signing ceremony, Dr. Alpay mentioned that the two parties identified a number of priority areas for further co-operation. Dr. Alpay also added that in the areas of common interest, the MoU would open new venues for a long and successful collaboration between the SESRTCIC and the TİKA in the areas of common interest so as to facilitate the

attainment of the goals of both institutions.

The President of the TİKA, Dr. Hakan Fidan emphasized the importance of mutual cooperation on various fields. He also mentioned that the two institutions would initiate joint programmes and technical cooperation activities in line with the signed MoU and increase existing collaboration between TİKA and SESRTCIC to achieve the common goals.

Under the MoU, the SESRTCIC and the TİKA will inform each other about their work programmes and consider the collaboration possibilities in development projects. The two institutions will also share their publications on development and training activities on a regular basis.

Training Course on 'Labor Statistics' in Morocco

In accordance with the response of the Statistics Directorate of Morocco to the Centre's questionnaire on statistical capacity building, the Centre organised this course at the Statistics Directorate of

Morocco on 11-13 June 2007. The course was provided by an expert from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The objective of the course was to complement the efforts of the Statistics

Directorate of Morocco on Statistical Capacity Building on 'Labor Statistics'. The course subjects included the improvement of collection and the processing of statistics on wages and labor incomes, treatment of non-

responses; “Deseasonalization” (elimination of the seasonal variations) of series. The course was attended by the Staff of the Statistics Directorate of Morocco.

OIC news

The 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Islamabad)

The 34th Islamic Conference for Foreign Ministers was held in Islamabad, Pakistan, on May 15-17, 2007. The SESTRCIC participated in the Conference as a subsidiary organ of the OIC, and Dr. Savaş Alpay, Director General, represented the Centre thereat.

The Conference focused on the OIC reforms, including its restructuring and revising of its Charter, as well as strengthening its specialized and affiliated organs. The Conference also welcomed the activation of the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 and called for the establishment of an independent Palestine State. The Foreign Ministers demanded also a peaceful settlement of the US-Iran nuclear standoff and reaffirmed in their declaration the inalienable right of the Member Countries to acquire and use atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

The Conference highlighted the need to focus on addressing socio-economic disparities through enhancing education and science and technology and thus generating knowledge-based economies and societies. Beside that, the unification

of the OIC Member Countries was reiterated to meet the challenges facing the Islamic Ummah.

The Islamabad Declaration affirmed, on one hand, its respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity in the OIC countries and regions and condemned, on the other hand, the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan. It also supported the process of settling the Cyprus issue and to put an end to the unjust isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. It also condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and supported the strengthening of the cooperation among the Member Countries in the fight against terrorism. It also called to strenuously pursue social and economic development in the Islamic countries through eradication of poverty and promotion of investment and trade. The Ministers also agreed upon the intensification of the efforts towards capacity building in science and technology.

The Conference declaration called for a comprehensive reform of the UN to respond to the challenges facing the

humanity and for enlarging the membership of the UN Security Council in a democratic manner, ensuring adequate representation of the OIC Member Countries. It also urged the

Human Rights Council to adopt a Universal Declaration to criminalize the defamation of religions.

First Islamic Conference of Health Ministers

The First Islamic Conference of Health Ministers was held on 12 - 15 June 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The SESRTCIC presented a study on "Tobacco Control in OIC Member Countries" thereat.

The Conference included different health issues of significant importance to the OIC Member Countries. Among others, the subjects discussed during the Conference included vaccine production, polio eradication, malaria control programs, women and children health, human influenza pandemic preparedness and avian influenza control, health programs for pilgrims and tobacco control.

The Health Ministers' Declaration calls upon the Member Countries to promote collective self-reliance in vaccine production and supply through strengthening National Regulatory Authorities and improving capacity for vaccine production and distribution in the OIC Member Countries. The Declaration strongly affirms that polio eradication is an urgent priority for all OIC Member Countries, and urges all OIC political and

religious leaders to help raise awareness about the safety and benefits of polio vaccination. It also calls upon the OIC Member Countries to intensify their cooperation with the World Health Organization and other international organizations to combat global health concerns including tuberculosis and Malaria. Moreover, it supports the efforts of the OIC Member Countries to strengthen health systems in a way to enable an increase in the proportion of births which are to be carried out by skilled health personnel with the aim of reducing preventable maternal and child mortality.

Finally, the Ministers' Declaration endorses the SESRTCIC's study on Tobacco Control as a reference study for OIC Member Countries and urges them to introduce stronger tobacco control legislation to protect present and future generations from the devastating health, social and economic consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke. The Centre's study on Tobacco Control is available at the Centre's web site: www.sesrtcic.org.

Thirty-fifth Session of the Permanent Finance Committee (PFC)

The Thirty-fifth Session of the Permanent Finance Committee (PFC) of the OIC convened in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 17-

19 April 2007 with the participation of delegates from Member Countries in addition to the General Secretariat of the

OIC and its five subsidiary organs, namely SESRTCIC, ICDT, IFA, IRCICA and IUT.

At the inaugural Session, H.E. the Secretary General of the OIC delivered a statement in which he outlined the role entrusted to the PFC to ensure that the financial resources made available by the Member Countries to the General Secretariat and the subsidiary organs are efficiently utilised on activities and programmes that uphold the objectives and priorities of the organisation and contribute to the joint Islamic action and solidarity.

During the session, the focus was placed on the positive results achieved from the incentive measures provided by the resolution adopted on the payment of

arrears by the Tenth Islamic Summit in 2003.

Because of the financial transitional period, the Committee recommended extending the discount period for another six months up to the 31st December 2007.

The Committee then reviewed the audited final accounts of the OIC General Secretariat and the subsidiary organs for the financial year 2005/2006 and endorsed their proposed budgets for the transitional period July/December 2007.

The Committee recommended requesting the 34th ICFM to authorize the 36th PFC on an exceptional basis, to examine and approve, on behalf of the conference, the proposed 2008 budgets of the General Secretariat and its subsidiary organs.

Seminar on University Ranking in the OIC Member Countries

A seminar on the ranking of universities in the OIC Member Countries was held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, on 29-30 April 2007 under the title: "Global Repositioning of OIC Universities". The objectives of the seminar included identifying the methodology for the ranking of the OIC universities so that the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action target of facilitating the placement of OIC universities among the top 500 universities in the world could be

realized. Different aspects of various international university ranking systems were discussed together with the national experiences in university ranking in several OIC Member Countries during the seminar with the participation of delegations from the Member Countries. The Centre presented a paper titled: "Academic Ranking of Universities in the OIC Countries". Details are available at the Centre's web site: www.sesrtcic.org.

Experts Group Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building

The Experts Group Meeting on Statistical Capacity Building was organized in Jeddah Saudi Arabia on 29th April 2007. The objectives of the EGM were primarily to identify gaps in statistical

capacity building across institutions in Member Countries and at the OIC level, and to find ways and means to coordinate data collection activities so as to harmonize and streamline statistical

information for translating, monitoring and evaluating the goals and targets set in all the OIC/IDB initiatives. Additionally, it also aimed to develop a common framework for statistical capacity building programs.

Dr. Sıdıka Başçı, Senior Researcher at the Statistical Department of the Center attended the meeting and made a presentation titled "Statistical Capacity Building Activities for the OIC Member Countries".

Second Experts Group Meeting on Tourism Development

The Republic of Turkey hosted and organized the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on Tourism Development in Istanbul on 9-11 May 2007 with the participation of 24 Member Countries, the General Secretariat of the OIC, COMCEC Coordination Office, SESRTCIC, ICDT, IRCICA, IUT, ISESCO and ICYF. The participants discussed and accepted the "Draft Strategic Plan for Tourism Development in the OIC Member Countries", which was proposed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey.

The Plan identifies certain means and modalities of implementation of the "Programme of Action" specified under the "Tourism" area of the Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among Member Countries of the OIC. Mr. Nabil Dabour, Senior Researcher, represented the Centre at the Meeting and presented a paper titled "International Tourism in the OIC Countries: Prospects and Challenges".

After adopting the agenda and the work programme of the Meeting, The representative of Malaysia (focal point for tourism marketing) reported to the Meeting on the activities related to tourism marketing in the OIC countries. Similarly, the representatives of Indonesia and the Islamic Republic of Iran reported to the Meeting on the activities related to tourism facilitation and tourism research and training in the OIC countries,

respectively as focal points of these two areas.

Background reports and papers on tourism in the OIC countries were presented by the representatives of the OIC General Secretariat and those of the following subsidiary, specialised and affiliated institutions of the OIC: SESRTCIC, ICDT, IRCICA, IUT, ISESCO and ICYF.

Following these presentations, the Meeting discussed the Turkish Government proposal of "Draft Strategic Plan for Tourism Development in the OIC Member Countries". After having a general debate and discussion on the different items of the Plan, the participants accepted the said document, which mainly identifies certain means and modalities of implementation of the "Programme of Action" specified under the "Tourism" area of the Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among Member Countries of the OIC.

The Strategic Plan will be submitted to the 23rd Session of the COMCEC, which will be held in Istanbul in November 2007, for consideration by the OIC Ministries of Economy and Trade, and then for the 6th Islamic Conference of Ministers of Tourism, which will be held in Damascus, Syria in 2008 for approval and adoption.

Twenty-third Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of COMCEC

The 23rd Meeting of the Follow-up Committee of the COMCEC was held on 29-31 May 2007 in Ankara, Turkey with the participation of 11 Member Countries of the Committee and Azerbaijan as observer.

The OIC General Secretariat and the following subsidiary, affiliated and specialised organs (SESRTCIC, ICDT, IDB, and ICCI) attended the Meeting. The representative of the UNIDO Regional Office in Ankara also attended the Meeting. Mr. Nabil Dabour and Mr. Suleyman İslamoğlu represented the Centre thereat.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the progress achieved in the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of the 22nd COMCEC Session, which was held in November 2006 in Istanbul. It also prepared the Draft Agenda of the 23rd COMCEC Session, which will be held in Istanbul in November 2007.

In so doing, the Committee reviewed and discussed a set of common economic matters with a view to enhancing economic and commercial cooperation among the Member Countries. These include, among others, the expansion of intra-OIC trade and investment, the results of the 2nd Round of Trade Negotiations for Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member Countries (TPS-OIC), Cooperation among the stock exchanges of the OIC Member Countries, the capacity building programme for poverty alleviation, preparation for the exchange of views on

“Micro-Credit Financing and Poverty Alleviation in Member States”.

In its capacity as a coordinator institution for the exchange of views sessions of the COMCEC, the Centre presented the following two documents to the meeting: (1) Draft Proposal on “Workshop on Micro-Credit Financing and Poverty Alleviation in Member States”, (2) Draft Proposal on “A New Mechanism for the Preparation and Implementation of the Exchange of Views Sessions of the COMCEC”.

After the deliberations, the Committee proposed the following themes for the next Exchange of Views Session to be evaluated during the 23rd Session of the COMCEC, scheduled for 13-16 November 2007:

Theme 1: E-government
(Implementation)

Theme 2: Improving Investment Climate

Theme 3: Economic Impact of Vocational Training

Theme 4: The Impact of Exchange Rate Policies and Currency Harmonisation on Intra-OIC Trade

In this context, the Committee requested SESRTCIC, in its capacity as the coordinator institution of the exchange of views sessions, to explore the Member Countries' views on each subsequent theme through regular circulation of a special questionnaire to the Member Countries and analysis of their responses on the subject matter.

Under the Agenda Item "Any Other Business", the Centre briefed the Committee on its Proposal on Vocational Education and Training Action Programme for the OIC Member Countries.

Taking note of the said proposal, the Committee requested SESRTCIC to prepare a full-fledged report on the proposal and submit it to the 23rd Session of the COMCEC for consideration by the Member Countries.

IFSD Forum 2007 on 'Islamic Microfinance Development: Challenges and Initiatives'

The SESRTCIC has participated in the IFSD Forum 2007 on "Islamic Microfinance Development: Challenges and Initiatives" which was held on 27 May, 2007 in Dakar, Senegal.

The IDB Group, in collaboration with the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB), the General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions, organized the Forum. It concentrated on the strategic objectives towards poverty alleviation and enhancing the economic cooperation among the OIC Member Countries with a focus on different issues.

In order to make financial services accessible and affordable to the masses, the IFSD Forum 2007 takes a holistic stock of the various challenges facing the development of Islamic microfinance services with a view to promoting

dialogue among the stakeholders, integrating Islamic microfinance services in national financial sector development policies; discussing the prospects of integrating Zakah, Awqaf and Islamic financial contracts in the financial sector development strategies; facilitating policy, financial infrastructure and financial institution development and promoting cooperation and knowledge-sharing in the development of Islamic microfinance services. A document titled: "A Framework for Developing Islamic Microfinance Services" was presented and the role of microfinance in poverty alleviation and recent developments in microfinance activities were some of the subjects discussed in the forum. The Centre presented a study on training opportunities related to the improvement in the microfinance services.

The Third Meeting of the Second Round of Trade Negotiations on TPS-OIC (PRETAS)

The Third Meeting of the Second Round of Trade Negotiations was held in Ankara on 19-22 June 2007 with the participation of delegates from 18 countries of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC). Eight OIC Member Countries attended the meeting as observers, as well as

representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, COMCEC Coordination Office, ICDT, IDB and SESRTCIC.

In the first working session, a presentation was made by the TNC Secretariat on the background and the issues to be discussed

during the Second Round of Trade Negotiations. The Secretariat stated that the TNC had to finalize the Draft TPSOIC Rules of Origin before November 2007 if the target date of January 2009 to establish the TPS-OIC was to be adequately met. The Secretariat pointed out the necessity of finalizing ratification of the PRETAS and the Rules of Origin by mid 2008 to give room for final adjustments. The Secretariat considered the Draft of the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin. Except for articles 2, 5, 12 and 33, the Draft TPSOIC Rules of Origin was adopted by the TNC, which agreed to submit it for signature to the Second Meeting of Ministers of Commerce, which will be held in September 2007. It was decided that the articles stated above would be finalized during the Fourth Session of the TNC, which will precede the Ministerial Meeting in September 2007.

The Committee decided not to open the articles that were adopted for further discussion. The Committee also asked the Member Countries to assign delegations with full authorization to the Fourth and last Session with a view to presenting the TPS-OIC Rules of Origin for signature to the ministers. The Committee reiterated the mandate given by the Ministers of Commerce of the Member Countries of the TNC for finalizing the TPSOIC Rules of Origin before the 23rd COMCEC in November 2007.

The Committee observed that none of the participating Countries had submitted data regarding Para-Tariff and Non-Tariff measures since the Second Meeting held in March. It was agreed by the Committee

members that the data would be presented to the TNC Secretariat before the next meeting. The Committee took note of proposals made by Jordan and Turkey and the presentation made by the ICDT on the method of eliminating Para-Tariff and Non-Tariff Measures.

The Committee considered the status of signature and ratification of the TPS-OIC Agreements namely: Framework Agreement and PRETAS. The State of Qatar was welcomed as a new member. The Committee requested the OIC General Secretariat to circulate information to the Member Countries and the TNC Secretariat regarding new accessions to the agreements.

The Committee requested the ICDT to organize a seminar in cooperation with the OIC General Secretariat, the COMCEC Coordination Office and IDB for the benefit of the West African Monetary and Economic Union (WAMEU) countries and to encourage the members of WAMEU to join the TPSOIC as a group.

In the closing session the Committee adopted the report of the Third Meeting of the Second Round of Trade Negotiations. The participating Countries expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the TNC Secretariat.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that the Fourth TNC Seminar was planned to be held in the first half of September in Ankara.

International Scientific Conference on the Role of Tourism in Economies of OIC Countries

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, current Chairman of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers, has organized an International Conference on the Role of Tourism in the Economies of OIC Countries on 21-22 June 2007 in Baku.

The Conference was devoted to exchanges of views and opinions on how tourism influences economy and its spheres, as well as which concrete strategies should be applied to manage the sector in a successful manner.

The Centre was represented at the Conference by Mr. Nabil Dabour, Senior Researcher, who presented a paper titled "International Tourism in the OIC

Countries: Prospects and Challenges". This paper attempts to assess the performance and the economic role of the international tourism sector in the OIC Member Countries. It examines the traditionally used indicators in measuring international tourism (i.e. international tourist arrivals and international tourism receipts). The analysis is made at both the individual country and the OIC regional levels.

The paper also sheds light on some issues and problems of tourism development and cooperation in the OIC countries and proposes a set of recommendations to serve as policy guidelines to which the attention of the Member Countries needs to be drawn.

Other Meetings

Third Arab Forum for Statistical Capacity Building and Development

One of the regional pre-meetings of OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy, Istanbul, was held on 19 April 2007 in Sana'a, Yemen, for the Middle East and North African Countries. Nabil Dabour, Senior Researcher at the Economics Department of the Center and Dr. Sıdıka Başçı, Senior Researcher at the Statistics Department of

the Center attended the Forum. Dr. Sıdıka Başçı made a presentation titled "What is real progress?". Moreover, Nabil Dabour made two interventions where he described our training programme to the participants. The Centre was involved in the organization of this meeting.

Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy

The SESRTCIC has partnered with the OECD, the State Planning Organization of Turkey and the Turkish Statistical Institute in organizing the Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy in Istanbul, Turkey 27-30 June 2007.

A consensus is growing around the need to develop a more comprehensive view of progress. This approach takes into account social, environmental and economic concerns – rather than focusing mainly on economic indicators like Gross Domestic Product. Taking into account this development, the Forum focused on "Measuring and Fostering the Progress of

Societies". Within this context, it provided opportunities for in-depth discussions about the measurement of progress, as well as some of the most important concerns facing the world today, such as climate change, health, and economic globalization.

More than 200 participants had the opportunity to express their opinions at the World Forum and approximately 1200 people comprised of Ministers, Parliamentarians, senior public servants heads of statistical offices, eminent academics, leaders of civil society, senior business leaders and representatives from the media participated in the forum.

Centre's Activities for the third quarter of 2007

August

Training Course on 'Statistical Data Analysis', August 2007, Bangladesh

56th Session of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), 22-29 August 2007, Lisbon, Portugal

Workshop on 'Integrating Global Census Micro-data', 25 August 2007, Lisbon, Portugal

"International Conference on Islamic Capital Markets", 27-29 August 2007, Jakarta, Indonesia

September

28th Session of the Finance Control Organ OIC Headquarters, 1-14 September 2007, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Meeting of the Regional Working Group of ESCWA Statistical Committee, 2 September 2007, Cairo, Egypt

10th Session of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA), 10-12 September 2007, Madrid, Spain

Twenty-ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors, 10- 11 September 2007, Ankara, Turkey

Task Force Training of MEDSTAT, 10-11 September 2007, Budapest, Hungary

Symposium on “Islamophobia and the Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century” 20-21 September 2007, Washington, USA

UN General Assembly, 62nd Session, 25 September - 5 October 2007, New York, USA

Editorial Office: Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC).

Address: Attar Sokak, No. 4, 06700 G.O.P., Ankara, Turkey.

Tel: (90-312) 468 61 72 **Fax:** (90-312) 467 34 58

E-mail: oi ankara@sesrtcic.org

Web site: www.sesrtcic.org

Info report İslam Ülkeleri İstatistiksel, Ekonomik ve Sosyal Araştırma ve Eğitim Merkezi tarafından yılda dört defa yayımlanır.

ISSN: 0257-9480

Postmaster: If undelivered, please return to

**SESRTCIC
Attar Sokak, No. 4
06700 G.O.P.
Ankara, Turkey**

**PRINTED MATTER
MATBUA
BY AIR MAIL
UÇAK İLE**

Visit our e-library at www.library.sesrtcic.org