

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

His Excellency Naci Koru, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey
Distinguished participants and project owners,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

At the outset, I would like to introduce myself. I was the former Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and former President of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA). I have just been appointed as the Director General of SESRIC; today is my second working day of my new post. It is a great pleasure for me to be here on this occasion.

I would like to briefly refer to the COMCEC Strategy which has been adopted by the Fourth Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference held in August 2012 in Makkah Al-Mukarramah. The Strategy of COMCEC is indeed an excellent innovative approach for enhancing cooperation among the member countries. With its three core principles of enhancing mobility, strengthening solidarity, and improving governance, the COMCEC Strategy addresses the most fundamental and persistent problems and challenges of the member countries in the economic domain.

Through the effective utilization of its implementation instruments, namely COMCEC working groups and Project Cycle Management (PCM), and within the framework of the well-identified financial and monitoring mechanism, the COMCEC Strategy will no doubt contribute significantly to strengthening and enhancing the level of cooperation among the member countries in the six priority areas of cooperation identified in it. Over the time, the COMCEC Strategy will significantly facilitate the production and dissemination of knowledge among the member countries. It will also facilitate the exchanging and sharing of experiences and best-practices among them.

Overall, the Strategy will contribute to the process of developing a common language of understanding and approximate policies in the identified cooperation areas with a view to ensuring stronger involvement and ownership of the member countries, and, ultimately find practical solutions to the challenges faced by the member countries in these areas.

In this context, I would like to congratulate the efforts of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) towards the timely and accurate implementation of the Strategy. Also, I would like to congratulate the projects owners for their valuable projects under different cooperation areas of the Strategy.

Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At SESRIC, we are pleased to have another successful project this year among the 17 final-listed projects entitled to receive grants within the framework of COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism following the two successful projects which we have successfully completed in the first round last year.

Our project is accepted as a second phase of our last year's project under the area of "poverty alleviation" titled "Enhancing National Capacities in Poverty Statistics of COMCEC Member Countries".

The overall objective of this project is to build and enhance the statistical capacities of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of the member countries in the compilation, production and dissemination of poverty statistics, and ultimately, to contribute to the National Statistical Systems (NSS). The project will be implemented through conducting a series of 10 short-term capacity building and training programmes on poverty statistics in addition to organizing one comprehensive training workshop with the participation of all the stakeholders.

The project aims at improving the capacities and technical knowledge of about 300 poverty statisticians working in relevant government agencies, mainly in the NSOs, of selected 10 member countries based on their capacities and needs in the area of poverty statistics, which have been identified as one of the outcomes of the last year's project. This will contribute to the improvement of the quality of the poverty statistics in the selected member countries and, ultimately, raising awareness of decision makers in these countries towards evidence-based policy making on poverty alleviation.

Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Before concluding, I would like to, once again, congratulate the CCO and the project owners and wish all of us successful and timely implementation of these projects, of which the outcome will, undoubtedly, contribute significantly to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy in the concerned areas.

As we all look forward to the successful implementation of these projects, I wish you all the success and pray to Allah the Almighty to help us all and guide our steps to achieve prosperity and welfare for the Islamic Ummah.

Wassalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu