

# **14th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-StatCom)**

## **Opening Remarks**

*H.E. Dr. Erhan ÇETİNKAYA*  
*President, Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat)*  
*Chair of the 14th Session of the OIC-StatCom*

*Ankara, 1 October 2025 at 09:30 AM*

## **Bismillahirrahmanirrahim**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Esteemed Representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, SESRIC  
and the Islamic Development Bank,  
Esteemed Colleagues from International and Regional Organisations,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,**

It is a great honour and privilege, on behalf of the Turkish Statistical Institute, to **welcome you all to Ankara for the 14th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-StatCom).**

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere **thanks to H.E. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk and the SESRIC team** for their tireless efforts in convening this Session and ensuring that all the necessary arrangements are in place for our deliberations.

I also wish to place on record our deep gratitude to **H.E. Yousuf Mohamed Al Riyami, Director General of the National Center for Statistics and Information of the Sultanate of Oman**, for his devoted and effective leadership during his tenure as **the Chair of the 13th Session of the Commission.**

His stewardship and **Oman's commitment** have advanced our collective work and left us with a solid foundation to build upon.

Furthermore, I extend my thanks to **the OIC General Secretariat** and **the Islamic Development Bank Group** for their continuous support to the Commission since its establishment in 2011. Their presence and partnership are indispensable in strengthening our shared statistical agenda.

And of course, I warmly thank all **distinguished delegates, esteemed representatives of OIC, international and regional organisations**, for joining us here in Ankara. Your active participation adds great value to this Session and reflects the importance you attach to our common platform.

### **Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,**

As **Türkiye** assumes the **Chairmanship of the 14th Session, on behalf of the OIC Asia Group**, we do so with a deep sense of responsibility. We are determined to strengthen data cooperation and enhance statistical capacities across our Member States. We are fully aware that the challenges before us — whether in advancing education, accelerating digital transformation, or monitoring progress toward sustainable development — require timely, harmonised, and high-quality data.

As you know, at the **51st Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC**, held in Istanbul in June 2025 under the theme “*The OIC in a Transforming World*”, Türkiye outlined **three priorities** for its Chairmanship:

- **Enhancing cooperation among Member States and with international partners,**
- **Protecting the rights of Muslim minorities and communities worldwide, and**
- **Strengthening capacity-building and knowledge sharing.**

These priorities will continue to guide our work both at the political level of the **Council of Foreign Ministers** and at the technical level of **the OIC-StatCom**, with the clear objective of reinforcing solidarity and translating commitments into concrete actions.

In this spirit, I would like to highlight the close cooperation between **TurkStat and the Secretariat of the OIC Statistical Commission, SESRIC.**

Since the signing of our **Memorandum of Understanding in 2024**, we have implemented a number of joint capacity-building activities. In 2025 alone, these included:

- **An online training course on Information Society and Digitalisation**, conducted by TurkStat experts in April;
- **An in-person training on Labour Statistics** for the Gambia Bureau of Statistics in August;
- **An online training on Sustainable Development Statistics** for OIC Member States in September;
- **The participation of a TurkStat expert in the Regional Workshop on Implementing the 2025 SNA and Compiling Digital Supply and Use Tables**, held in Abu Dhabi in September; and
- **A study visit on Geospatial Data**, to be hosted by TurkStat for the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in October.

Additionally, this year, **for the first time, TurkStat, in partnership with SESRIC, UNSD and ESCWA**, co-organised a thematic side event at **the Turkish House in New York** in the margins of the **56th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, building on the resolution of the 13th Session of OIC-StatCom.**

**Recognised as the first thematic side event convened under the umbrella of the OIC Statistical Commission**, in addition to its regular Follow-up Meetings, it successfully highlighted the statistical priorities of OIC Member States at the global stage.

Looking ahead, **we are committed to continue, on a regular basis, the organisation of such thematic side events** in the margins of future **UN Statistical Commission sessions**, with themes to be determined in line with the recommendations of the OIC-StatCom for each forthcoming session.

These examples reflect our strong commitment to contribute to the collective efforts of the OIC-StatCom. I extend my gratitude to the Member States that actively participated in these activities and to the **dedicated experts of TurkStat and SESRIC** who made them possible.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are determined to further expand our cooperation with **Member States, SESRIC, and relevant international and regional organisations** to multiply the impact of our joint work.

### **Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,**

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was founded in 1969, in response to the criminal attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque. More than five decades later, the OIC continues to uphold the same values of **unity, solidarity, and justice** that inspired its foundation.

Today, these values compel us to reaffirm, in the strongest terms, **our firm solidarity with the people of Palestine**, who continue to endure occupation, injustice, and unimaginable hardship. Their plight is not only a political question but also a humanitarian tragedy that affects every aspect of life, from health and education to livelihoods and dignity.

As **national statistical institutions**, we bear a special responsibility. It is our duty to ensure that such realities are made visible through **credible and timely statistics**. By doing so, we provide the evidence base that can **inform policy, mobilise international support, and hold the global community accountable to its commitments**.

**Reliable data** is therefore not only a technical necessity; it is a **moral obligation** to give voice to those who are suffering and to ensure that their needs are translated into concrete action.

### **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we begin this Session, I am confident that our deliberations will **further strengthen the role of the OIC-StatCom** as a vital platform at the OIC level for advancing statistical cooperation, promoting

innovation, and ensuring that reliable and timely data remain at the heart of evidence-based policymaking.

On behalf of TurkStat, I thank you once again for your presence, and **I wish us all a fruitful, productive, and successful 14th Session.**

Thank you for your kind attention.

**Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu**