

15th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission

Address by H.E. Mehmet ARABACI
President, Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat)
Chair of the 14th Session of the OIC-StatCom
Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
29 September 2026

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

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

It is my great pleasure to be with you today at the 15th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission.

First of all, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the General Authority for Statistics for hosting us here in Jeddah and their warm welcomes.

I would also like to thank H.E. (Her Excellency) Ms. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk, Director General of SESRIC and the entire SESRIC team for their dedicated efforts and close cooperation during Türkiye's Chairmanship.

My thanks also goes to the OIC General Secretariat, the Islamic Development Bank, all Member States and our international and regional partners for their valuable support and cooperation.

Let me also take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the kind messages and warm wishes I received following my appointment as President of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat). I am truly grateful for your thoughtful support and goodwill extended to me on this occasion. I greatly value these expressions of friendship and look forward to further strengthening our cooperation and fostering our longstanding institutional ties in the period ahead.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The 14th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission was held in Ankara in October 2025, when Türkiye assumed the Chairmanship on behalf of the OIC Asia Group.

Throughout Türkiye's Chairmanship, TurkStat has actively supported the work of the Commission in close cooperation with SESRIC, Member States and partner organisations.

During this period, our work has focused on strengthening statistical capacity, sharing knowledge and experience and enhancing cooperation among national statistical offices.

Capacity building has remained an important part of these efforts. Throughout 2026, under SESRIC's Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme, TurkStat shared its experience with OIC Member Countries in areas such as social protection statistics, transport statistics and the use of geographic information systems in population and housing censuses.

These activities have supported the exchange of knowledge, expertise and good practices among our Member States.

Distinguished Delegates,

Türkiye has also worked to enhance the visibility of OIC statistical cooperation at the international level.

In March, Türkiye chaired the Follow-up Meeting of the 14th Session of the OIC-StatCom on the margins of the 57th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in New York.

The following day, a thematic side event was held at the Turkish House, focusing on agricultural censuses and the exchange of experiences among OIC Member Countries.

Together, these activities helped bringing the priorities and experiences of the OIC statistical community to a wider international platform.

This spirit of cooperation will also be carried forward at the United Nations World Data Forum 2026 in Riyadh, where TurkStat and its partners will take part in discussions on data-driven climate action and the use of environmental data in policymaking.

Excellencies,

The longstanding cooperation between TurkStat and SESRIC covers a broad range of areas, including statistical capacity building, technical cooperation and knowledge sharing.

In June, I had the pleasure of welcoming H.E. Ms. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk to TurkStat in Ankara. We discussed our ongoing cooperation, Türkiye's Chairmanship and preparations for this Session.

Distinguished Delegates,

As Türkiye concludes its Chairmanship of the 14th Session, I would like to thank SESRIC and all Member States for their support and engagement during this period.

As we hand over the Chairmanship from the OIC Asia Group to the OIC Africa Group, TurkStat will remain committed to the work of the OIC-StatCom and will contribute actively to the Commission's future work.

We may have different statistical capacities and priorities, but many of our challenges are common, making the exchange of experience and expertise an important part of our cooperation within the OIC-StatCom.

We also take this opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with the Palestinian people during these difficult times.

As I conclude my remarks, I wish the 15th Session of the OIC Statistical Commission every success and fruitful deliberations. I would also like to extend my best wishes to the incoming Chair of the 15th Session and to assure them of TurkStat's continued support and close cooperation in the period ahead.

I am confident that, through our shared commitment, mutual trust and spirit of solidarity, we will further strengthen statistical cooperation across the OIC community and continue working together for the prosperity and well-being of our peoples.

Thank you.