

**Virtual Training Workshop on Data Collection and Analysis of  
Trade-in-Services among the OIC Member States**

23 March 2021, (Opening Session - 12:00 - 12:30 Ankara time)

**OPENING REMARKS OF H.E. MR. NEBIL DABUR  
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SESRIC**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Her Excellency مدام لطيفة البوعبدلاوى  
Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

I wish you all a very Good Day!

I am pleased to welcome you all and thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in this Virtual Training Workshop on “Data Collection and Analysis of Trade-in-Services among the OIC Member States”. We have the honour at SESRIC to organise this workshop in collaboration with the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB).

Let me, at the outset, express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Her Excellency مدام لطيفة البوعبدلاوى, Director General of ICDT as well as the senior management of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group for their cooperation in the organisation of this important workshop.

**Dear Participants,**

**As we all know, the services sector plays an increasingly important role in the global economy and the growth and development of countries. It is also a crucial component in poverty reduction policies where access to basic services, including education, water and health services is a basic requirement.**

**The services sector has emerged as the largest segment of the global economy, contributing to increasing shares in GDP, trade and employment. According to the 2020 editions of the World Bank's World Development Indicators and United Nations' National Accounts Main Aggregates Databases, the services sector accounted on average for 68% of the global value-added during the 2010-2018 period.**

**The services sector has been expanding more rapidly than the other two main sectors of the economy, namely agriculture and industry. According to UNCTAD, with a significant share of global foreign direct investment (FDI) flowing into the services sector, the sector accounts for more than 50% of employment worldwide and for more than 20% of the world trade of goods and services.**

**As for the OIC countries, according to the last year's edition of SESRIC "OIC Economic Outlook Report", the services sector continued to play a major role in the economies of many OIC countries as the most important source of economic activity. The average share of the services sector in the total GDP of OIC**

**countries increased from 50.8% in 2010 to 53.8% in 2018. This share was recorded at 56.4% and 75% in the case of non-OIC developing countries and developed countries, respectively in the same year.**

**As a group, the OIC countries continued to be net importers of services. According to the WTO statistics, exports of services of the OIC countries reached US\$ 427 billion in 2019, the highest level recorded so far. On the other hand, the total imports of services of the OIC countries recorded at US\$ 525 billion in 2019, which means that the group has recorded a trade in services deficit of US\$ 98 billion. Only 10 OIC countries, for which the data are available, recorded net positive trade balance in services in 2019.**

#### **Distinguished Participants,**

**As you know, SESRIC is the only OIC institution mandated the work directly in the domain of statistics since 1978. In this connection, I would like to inform you that we at SESRIC host and regularly update the most comprehensive statistical database on the OIC countries (the OIC-Stat Database) in the three languages of the OIC in one place. Currently, OIC-Stat Database contains around 1200 socio-economic statistical indicators classified under 26 different categories dating back to 1970. Out of these indicators, 121 indicators are available on trade under 8 different sub-categories.**

**SESRIC maintains and updates the OIC-Stat Database periodically with a view to always ensuring the availability of the necessary and needed statistics and information on the OIC countries, which help them to know about each other's needs, capacities and potentials, and, thus, facilitate the formulation of appropriate cooperation mechanisms.**

**SESRIC also assumes the role of the Secretariat of the OIC Statistical Commission, the only OIC cooperation fora in the domain of statistics similar to the UN Stat-Com. SESRIC organizes the annual sessions of this important Commission at the level of the Heads of the NSOs of the OIC countries and the representatives of the relevant statistical international institutions. The Commission plays an important role in facilitating the technical cooperation among the NSOs of the member countries with a view to improving their National Statistical Systems.**

**In this context, SESRIC contributes to the efforts of the NSOs towards enhancing the technical capacities of their staff through the Centre's flagship Statistical Capacity Building Programme (Stat-CaB), which has been initiated in 2007.**

**Through this Programme, SESRIC regularly identifies the technical needs and capacities of the NSOs of the member countries and based on that, the Centre organizes various statistical capacity building activities through matching the needs and capacities of**

**these institutions using different modalities, such as training courses, training workshops and study visits.**

**Within the framework of SESRIC Stat-CaB programme, we have conducted 400 statistical capacity-building activities since 2007. Out of these activities, 256 short-term training courses, 65 study visits, and 79 workshops, and out of these activities, 17 were related to trade statistics.**

**Dear Participants,**

**Since the break out of the COVID-19 pandemic in the early last year, SESRIC has acted quickly to respond to this extraordinary situation. We have transformed our physical activities into virtual ones. In this connection, I am pleased to inform you that we have organized 14 online statistical training courses as well as 11 webinars. I am also glad to announce that we will organize, next month, one webinar on International Trade in Goods Statistics and another webinar on International Trade in Services Statistics for the benefit of the NSOs of OIC member countries.**

**Before concluding, I would like to thank all the participants for their active participation and cooperation in this important Workshop. I believe that the exchange of knowledge and sharing of experiences among our member countries, especially during these difficult times are important more than ever before.**

**Thanking you once again, I wish you fruitful discussions and productive exchange of experiences throughout the upcoming days.**

**Thank you all. والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.**