

**Training Workshop on
“Tourism Destination Marketing Strategies”**

02 March 2021, 01:00 PM, Turkey Time

Opening Statement

H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR, Director General of SESRIC

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

مدام لطيفة البوعبدلاوى

Director General of the ICDT

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Very Good Day to All of You

- **I am pleased to welcome you all to this virtual training workshop on “Tourism Destination Marketing Strategies” that we organize jointly with the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) within the framework of SESRIC’s Tourism Capacity Building Programme and in line with the relevant resolutions on tourism development adopted by the 47th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC and the 36th Ministerial Session of the COMCEC, both held in November last year.**

- **Let me, at the outset; express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Her Excellency (مدام لطيفة البوعبدلاوى) Mrs. Latifa ELBOUABDELLAOUI, Director General of the ICDT and her team for their close cooperation and collaboration with SESRIC in the organisation of this important training workshop.**
- **I would also like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the representatives of the institutions who will provide the training namely; the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, the Dinar-Standard and the International Institute for Halal Research and Training of Malaysia. We thank them for accepting our invitation and nominating prominent speakers to contribute to this training workshop for the benefit of participants from the National Tourism Authorities of the OIC member countries.**
- **We organise this virtual training workshop with a view to supporting and contributing to the efforts of our member countries towards enhancing the human resources capacities of their National Tourism Authorities during this critical time in which the world is severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Dear Participants,

- **As we all know, in recent decades, tourism has become one of the main economic activities and an important source of foreign exchange earnings, economic growth and employment in many countries around the world where almost 10% of the world total GDP is generated by this sector.**
- **According to the last year's edition of SESRIC report on "International Tourism in the OIC Countries", tourism earnings in OIC member countries were evaluated at 182 billion USD in 2018. The contribution of international tourism to the total GDP of the OIC member countries as a group recorded, on average, at almost 9% in 2018. However, this trend has been disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic with an anticipated loss of 39 to 58 billion USD in the total tourism receipts of the OIC member countries.**

Dear Participants,

- **In fact, the OIC countries, as a group, have a significant potential for the development of a sustainable tourism sector**

due to their rich and diverse natural, historical, cultural, and religious tourism attractions.

- **However, many OIC countries are still facing a number of challenges that hinder the development of sustainable tourism sector. These challenges range from political and security instability to the lack of adequate tourism investment and efficient tourism infrastructures, including the weak promotion policies and tourism destination management and marketing strategies.**
- **Given such a state of affairs, promotion and marketing strategies of tourism destinations should be given a high attention by the tourism policy makers. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the principles and procedures of tourism product development at the national level defined by UNWTO and European Travel Commission (ETC), identified “marketing and promotion” as the ultimate step of development of a grand tourism development strategy.**
- **For marketing and promotion of tourism destinations strategies to be successfully designed and implemented, a number of steps**

should be first completed such as carrying out market research to understand profiles, having stakeholder's consultation to join forces with the business sector, development of product and investment plan, and investing into human resource development.

- While developing tourism destinations marketing strategies, these procedures should be taken based on an adequate assessment of the particular destination because there is no one-size-fit strategy for all tourism destinations in OIC member countries.**
- In fact, the development of effective tourism destinations marketing strategies is a challenging task given the increasing competition in tourism sector among countries. An effective tourism marketing strategy usually consists of tourism product development, branding, pricing, positioning, and promotion. Therefore, identifying the right mix of these items is essential for defining an effective tourism marketing strategy.**

Dear Participants,

- **Considering the importance and the high potential of tourism sector in the socio-economic development of our member countries, SESRIC has initiated in 2015 the Tourism Capacity Building Programme (Tourism-CaB) to contribute to the efforts of our member countries towards enhancing the technical capacities of their national institutions working in the domain of tourism. Since the inception of this programme, SESRIC organized many capacity-building activities for the benefit of our member countries in this important domain using various modalities such as training courses, study visits and training workshops like this one.**
- **SESRIC also prepares various technical background reports and research studies to analyse the current situation of tourism development at the OIC level and to suggest appropriate policy actions that need to be taken in order to face the challenges and strengthen the intra-OIC cooperation in tourism sector.**
- **In this context, I would like to inform you that SESRIC prepares the regular technical background report titled “International Tourism in the OIC Member Countries: Prospects and**

Challenges”, which is submitted to the Sessions of the OIC Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers every two years since the first Conference in 2000.

- **SESRIC also prepared the “Strategic Roadmap for Development of Islamic Tourism in OIC Member Countries”, a technical document which was adopted by the 10th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2018. It is worth mentioning here that this document identifies “Marketing and Promotion of Islamic Tourism Products and Services” and “Destination and Industry Development” among the five key thematic areas of cooperation for development of Islamic tourism in OIC member countries.**
- **It is also worth mentioning here that the OIC initiative to celebrate every year an OIC city of Tourism is a good example on promoting tourism destinations in OIC member countries. Within this framework of this initiative, SESRIC organised many activities such as Commemoration Programme for Dhaka, the OIC 2019 City of Tourism and Training of Trainers (ToT) Course on “Promoting Entrepreneurship for Tourism Industry Competitiveness” to commemorate Gabala, as the OIC 2020 City of Tourism.**

Dear Participants,

- **Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to thank all the National Tourism Authorities in the OIC member countries for their active participation and cooperation with SESRIC in this important domain. 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. Therefore, I hope that this training workshop would contribute to our efforts in this regard**
- **Before concluding, I would like to assure you that SESRIC will continue to take an active role in enhancing intra-OIC cooperation and dialogue in this important domain through supporting the tourism development efforts of our member countries to gain higher share in the global tourism market.**
- **Thanking you once again, I wish you a fruitful discussions and productive exchange of experiences throughout the upcoming days.**

Thank you all for your kind attention. والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.