

14th Meeting of the OIC Steering Committee on Health

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Statement by

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Distinguished Members of the OIC SCH,

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Dear Colleagues,

السّلام علیکم ورحمة الله وبرکاته

It is a great pleasure for me today to address your Esteemed Steering Committee at its 14th Meeting.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to the current Chair of the Islamic Conference of Ministers of Health, the State of United Arab Emirates, representing by its Ministry of Health and Prevention, for their efforts in closely following up the situation of health in our MCs during these difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic.

My thanks and appreciation are also extended to the OIC General Secretariat for organizing this important and timely meeting in a hybrid format to enable the participants who are not able to travel due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions to attend virtually.

Dear participants,

As a subsidiary organ of the OIC, and within the framework of its three mandated areas of statistics, research and training, SESRIC continued to implement various activities and programmes in the domain of health for the benefit of our MCs. These programmes and activities are usually in line with the resolutions adopted by the various relevant OIC fora, particularly in line with the resolutions adopted by the various sessions of the Islamic Conference of Health Ministers.

In the domain of statistics, currently, the SESRIC main statistical database (the OIC-Stat database), includes around 1512 indicators under 27 categories. Out of these indicators, 250 indicators are health-related indicators.

In the domain of statistics, I would also like to inform your august Committee that in April 2020 SESRIC has developed and launched the OIC MCs COVID-19 Pandemic Database. This Database, which is available at the Centre's website in 3 languages, provides data on COVID-19 registered cases, deaths, and people vaccinated and fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in OIC MCs.

These data are updated on a daily basis and go back to 25 January 2020 for the COVID-19 cases and deaths, back to 23 December 2020 for people vaccinated (one dose), and back to 10 January 2021 for people fully vaccinated (2 or more doses).

In addition, and within the framework of SESRIC Statistical Outlook Series, we prepared 3 OIC Statistical Outlook Reports, namely “COVID-19 Pandemic in the OIC MCs”, “The Status of Core Health Capacity of OIC MCs”, and “Trade in COVID-19 Medical Supplies in OIC MCs”. These 3 reports are available in our website.

In the domain of research, SESRIC is regularly preparing the OIC Health Report as one of the main technical background reports of the OIC Islamic Conference of Health Ministers. This report presents a comprehensive analysis of the state of health in OIC MCs by looking into the latest comparable data and trends on key health indicators. SESRIC is currently working on the latest edition of this report to be published this year and submitted to the upcoming 8th Session of the Conference of Health Ministers.

In addition, and upon a request of the General Secretariat, SESRIC prepared in May 2020 a comprehensive research study, which analyzes the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in OIC MCs by looking into the major social-economic development indicators. The study also highlighted the national best practices in public health and safety measures, economic policy response and social policy measures.

This study, which has been submitted to the OIC General Secretariat for circulation to all MCs, is also available at the Centre's website in 3 languages. And, we have just last week finalized the new updated version of this study in English. Once the translation into Arabic and French is completed, we will share it with the OIC General Secretariat to circulate it to all the MCs and make it available at the Centre's website.

Dear Participants,

In the domain of training and capacity building, given the social distancing and travel measures imposed during COVID-19 pandemic, holding physical training courses and capacity building activities were not feasible. Therefore, and with a view to responding to this extraordinary situation, SESRIC undertook the necessary preparations to utilize the available digital platforms for virtually conducting its various training and capacity building activities and programs.

In this context, and since the 7th ICHM, we organized 10 training courses, 5 webinars and one training workshop in the domain of health for the benefit of our MCs. These activities were conducted within the framework of our health-related capacity building programs namely, Ibni-Sina Health Capacity Building Programme, Tobacco Free OIC Capacity Building Programme, Occupational Safety and Health Capacity Building Programme and Statistical Capacity Building Program.

Among others, the training courses include a training course on “Epidemiology of Communicable Diseases and the Management of Epidemics”, “SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) Indicators”, and “Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Care in Sub-Saharan Africa”. These training courses were provided in collaboration with the Ministries of Health of Türkiye and Morocco.

In addition, SESRIC hosts and manages two web portals in the domain of health, namely the OIC Health Portal and the Tobacco-Free OIC Portal. These two portals act as information-sharing platforms to facilitate coordination and cooperation projects and activities in these two areas.

In this context, we have jointly organized with the General Secretariat a virtual training session on “Content Management and Use of the OIC Health Portal” on 12 November 2020. This virtual training session was attended by nominated focal points from Health Ministries of 22 OIC MCs as well as representatives from relevant OIC institutions. The training aimed at briefing the participants on the rationale and structure of the OIC Health Portal and its relevance to the OIC Strategic Health Programme of Action (OIC-SHPA) 2014-2023.

In the area of tobacco control, SESRIC has continued to implement the statistical project titled “Integration of the Tobacco Questions for Surveys (TQS) into the National Surveys in OIC Member States” since 2014 in collaboration with CDC and CDC Foundation.

The project aims at encouraging the NSOs of OIC MCs to integrate the TQS questions into their national surveys with the objective of supporting developing and implementing appropriate national policies for tobacco control.

So far, 14 OIC MCs have successfully implemented the TQS project. In 2019, we amended the agreement with our partner (the CDC Foundation) to include the integration of TQS-Youth into the national youth survey to address the challenge of youth tobacco control in our MCs.

Currently, our Centre is in contact with new 5 MCs for integrating the TQS questions and another 5 MCs for integrating the TQS-Youth questions into their ongoing related national surveys.

On the other hand, in its capacity as the OIC Technical Coordinator of the OIC Occupational Safety and Health Network (OIC-OSHNET), SESRIC has implemented 7 capacity building activities jointly with the national OSH institutions members in the Network and in line with the OIC-OSHNET Work Plan 2021-2023.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Participants,

Before concluding, I would like to express our readiness and willingness at SESRIC to further strengthening our cooperation with all the Ministries of Health and related institutions in our MCs with a view to working together for more effective, modern and sustainable health systems in the OIC MCs.

I wish you all the success and thank you for your kind attention.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته