



Organisation of Islamic Cooperation  
Statistical, Economic and Social Research and  
Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)



## “Youth Hold the Key to Green Future: Initiatives and Practices in the OIC Region”

Side Event of 2022 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM  
18 April 2022, Virtual - Istanbul, Republic of Türkiye

Address by

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



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

**Very Good day to all of You.**

- It is a great pleasure for me to join you today and welcome you all to this side event on “Youth Hold the Key to Green Future: Initiatives and Practices in the OIC Region”, which SESRIC is co-hosting with the ICYF on the margins of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum 2022.
- I would like to express my thanks to the president of ICYF H. E. Mr. Taha Ayhan and his team for co-hosting this event with us to discuss the critical role that youth play in protecting and championing a green and sustainable future for the world. I would also like to extend my commendations to all contributors and participants of this event.
- We have come together because we understand that youth are a critical human resource for development; key agents for social change, economic growth, and technical innovation.

### **Distinguished Participants,**

- Islam, as a religion, instructs all Muslims to protect and preserve the nature. A multitude of teachings in the Holy Qur’an guide us towards living in an ecological equilibrium based on peace and harmony. According to Sahih Al-Bukhari (3:513), the Hadith of

**Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) go so far as to declare certain acts of environmental preservation as a form of charitable gift.**

- **Today, young people constitute a significant part of the Muslim population around the world. The OIC countries alone are home to almost 340 million youth, which is 28% of the world's total youth population.**
- **These young people are creative; they are innovative, and socially aware in a way that we could not have predicted. They are especially aware of their responsibility towards the environment, understanding that a 'green' future is not just a buzzword but rather a change in lifestyle and communal choices.**
- **This makes me hopeful that youth in OIC countries can effect positive and concrete change in the future when it comes to green development in industry, innovation, and growth.**
- **Yet, young people in many OIC countries face a number of challenges that obstruct their effective participation in the**

potential for sustainable development. Lower economic participation, higher unemployment, youth inactivity, and limited political and social participation are among the factors that hinder the ways in which young people can engage with the environment.

- And more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the negative impact of such a list of factors on the young people's well-being. However, the pandemic has also given OIC countries an opportunity to “build back better”. It is now the ideal time to invite youth's involvement and engagement in green growth through proactive and affirmative policies and programmes.

### **Distinguished Participants,**

- Our youth is the key to a prosperous and sustainable future. I believe that young people should be the forefront of every local and national sustainability initiatives.
- I am heartened by the fact that many OIC countries are actively implementing policies, programmes, and initiatives designed to empower young people in their countries. I am also pleased to see that many of these policies, programmes and initiatives are

in line with the OIC Youth Strategy, which was adopted in 2018 by the 4<sup>th</sup> Islamic Conference of Youth and Sport Ministers held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

- However, still there is a room for further improvements. We should start at the grassroots, by giving youth the education and skills they require to ensure a green future. Raising awareness about sustainability, environmental protection, and green practices should be a community-wide effort that young people can lead.
- We should also listen to their voices and offer them representation so that they can confidently share their ideas for a green future. If young people to be responsible for the environment in the near future, so it is justifiable that they take part in decision-making processes.
- More importantly, to ensure a green future, young people need access to vital infrastructures and resources to execute their ideas. Young people cannot only boost sustainable development, but can also assist in recovery from the pandemic and in building resilience to future crises.

## **Distinguished Participants,**

- Before concluding, I would like to say that I really hope that this virtual event will encourage similar dialogues within the framework of the OIC on the potential of empowering young people to ensure a greener and more sustainable future.
- I would like to assure you that, as SESRIC, we will continue to support and contribute to the efforts of OIC member countries and OIC organs and institutions towards promoting and enhancing the capacities of young people as well as facilitating intra-OIC cooperation in this important area.

Thank you for your kind attention.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته