

**Training Webinar on “Prospects of Sustainable Tourism in OIC  
Member Countries”**

01 - 02 June 2022, 01:00 PM, Türkiye Time

Opening Statement of H.E. Mr. Nebil DABUR  
Director General of SESRIC

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

**Excellences, Dear Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

السّلام علیکم ورحمة اللّٰه وبرکاته

**Very Good Day to all of you**

**I am pleased to welcome you all to the Training Webinar on “Prospects of Sustainable Tourism in OIC Member Countries”. We organise this training webinar in collaboration with the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) within the framework of SESRIC’s Tourism Capacity Building Programme (Tourism-CaB) and ICDT’s Tourism Development Program (TOURDEV) and in line with the relevant Ministerial Policy Recommendations of the COMCEC.**

**Let me, at the outset; express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Her Excellency Mrs. الطيفة Latifa البوعبدلاوي EL BOUABDELLAOUI, Director General of ICDT and her team for their close cooperation and collaboration with SESRIC in organising this important training webinar.**

**I would also like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the distinguished speakers from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the National University of Bangladesh, as well as representatives from the relevant national institutions in charge of tourism in the OIC MCs for accepting our invitation and contributing to this important training webinar by making relevant presentations on different aspects of sustainable tourism concept and sharing their country experiences.**

**Dear Participants,**

**Tourism is one of the main economic activities that contribute to the development of countries as an important source of foreign exchange earnings, economic growth and employment.**

**In 2019, just before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the latest edition of the SESRIC report on “International Tourism in the OIC Countries”, the tourism sector in the OIC MCs accounted for 8.1% of their total GDP and 7.5% of all jobs. In the same year, the OIC MCs hosted 259 million international tourists who generated 216 billion \$ as tourism receipts.**

**However, in the following two years, the tourism sector in the OIC MCs, likeelsewhere, was dramatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the strict containment measures such as curfews, lockdowns, border closures, and cancellation of international flights.**



**This has been resulted in significant losses in terms of both tourist arrivals and tourism receipts. For example, in 2020, the OIC countries hosted only 70 million international tourists who generated only 78 billion \$ as tourism receipts.**

**To mitigate the negative impacts of this unprecedented and unfortunate situation and revive the tourism sector, several countries, including the OIC MCs, have recently initiated new policies and strategies to support the recovery of the tourism sector.**

**These policies and strategies target the transition to a more sustainable tourism model, considering that the resilience of tourism depends on the sector's ability to balance the needs of people, environment and prosperity.**

**Dear Participants,**

**According to the definition of the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism is one that “takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities”.**

**Therefore, these impacts and needs have to be taken into consideration in the planning, development, and operation of the tourism industry with a view to making the tourism sector more sustainable.**

**It is, therefore, essential that all the relevant stakeholders in the tourism sector, including policymakers, tour operators, owners of tourism facilities, etc., come together to collectively develop effective and inclusive sustainable tourism strategies at the national and local levels.**

**It is also important that relevant stakeholders continuously monitor the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism and take adequate and corrective measures whenever necessary.**

**Dear Participants,**

**Within the scope of its mandated areas of statistics, research and training, our Centre (SESRIC) has, over the years, initiated and implemented many programmes and activities in the domain of tourism.**



**In the area of training,** we organise several capacity building activities within the framework of our Tourism Capacity Building Programme, which we initiated in 2015. Since then, we have organized 22 activities, including training courses, training workshops, and seminars on various topics based on the needs of our MCs and relevant resolutions adopted by the OIC tourism-related fora.

**In the area of research,** we prepare various technical background reports and research studies to analyse the current situation of the tourism sector at the OIC level and to suggest appropriate policy actions that need to be taken to face the challenges and strengthen the intra-OIC cooperation in this important domain.

**In this context, SESRIC has been regularly since the year 2000 preparing the technical background report on the state of international tourism in OIC MCs, which is titled “International Tourism in the OIC Countries: Prospects and Challenges”.**

**The 2022 edition of this report, which will be submitted to the upcoming 11th ICTM to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, during the last week of this month.**

**The report, among others, highlights and analyses the key emerging issues of the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the sustainable recovery from the pandemic and building resilience in the tourism sector. The report also presents a set of policy recommendations for consideration by the MCs.**

**In the area of statistics,** we continued to make serious endeavours towards ensuring the availability of the necessary statistical data and information on our MCs in the domain of tourism that would make them better informed of each other's potentials, needs and capacities in order to facilitate their elaboration on cooperation projects.

**In this context, the Centre's main statistical database, the OIC Statistics (OICStat) Database, currently contains data on 1.512 socio-economic indicators classified under 27 categories for the 57 member countries dating back to 1970. Out of these indicators, 12 are tourism-related indicators under the Tourism category.**

**Meanwhile, we continued to contribute to enhancing the technical capacities of the NSOs of the MCs through SESRIC Statistical Capacity Building Programme (StatCaB). Within the framework of this training program, so far, we have organized 26 tourism-related statistical training activities on topics such as “Tourism Statistics”, “Tourism Satellite Accounts”, and “SDG 8.9 (Sustainable Tourism Statistics) Indicators”.**



**Dear Participants,**

**Before concluding, I would like to assure you that within the framework of its three mandated areas of statistics, research, and training, SESRIC will continue to support and contribute to the efforts of our MCs towards developing a sustainable tourism sector.**

**I believe that this training webinar will contribute and add value to the knowledge and experience of the participants on the prospects of sustainable tourism and its potential for the development of the economies of their countries, as well as strengthen their capacities to better understand different aspects of the sustainable tourism concept and develop relevant policies and strategies.**

**I wish you all a fruitful exchange of experiences and successful training throughout the upcoming days.**

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