

Opening Statement by Mr. Mehmet Fatih Serenli, Director of Training and Technical Cooperation Department of SESRIC at the Second Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu

I am honoured to address the Second Meeting of the Monitoring and Advisory Committee of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries. Let me, at the outset, express my sincere appreciation and thanks to all of you for accepting the invitation and designating time to attend this very important meeting, which we have the honour to organise it. Our special thanks go to the COMCEC Coordination Office for the logistic support provided to us in facilitating this important event.

The main objective of this meeting is to review the progress that has been achieved since the First Meeting of MAC held in Izmir last year, and to discuss ways and means of cooperation and collaboration among national focal points of the Programme in implementing pilot projects in OIC Member Countries. In this meeting we expect to solidify the existing relationships between national focal points in order to help them produce a better outcome in providing vocational education and training to the individuals in their countries. Therefore, we hope that our gathering here today will take place in a fruitful and most productive atmosphere. The OIC-VET Programme emphasises the importance of coordination and cooperation among all Member States to improve the quality of vocational education and training in the public and private sectors with the aim of supporting and enhancing the opportunities for individuals to develop their knowledge and skills and thus to contribute to the development and competitiveness of the economies of their countries.

As we all aware, vocational education and training is one of the most crucial development tools in present information age where economic transformation is taking place rapidly. Vocational education and training has a vital role in improving knowledge and skills of people to contribute significantly to their domestic economies against the global challenges. Thus, the OIC-VET Programme is designed to establish closer cooperation among member countries in vocational education and training in meeting today's developmental challenges by providing opportunities

for organisations involved in vocational education and training to build OIC partnerships, exchange best practices, increase the expertise of their staff and develop the skills and competencies of the participants. We believe that through close cooperation and networking among member countries, the OIC-VET Programme will establish a larger community of beneficiaries. Our ultimate desire is that all OIC Member Countries could benefit from this significant Programme which could in fact be realised by the implementation of the objectives of this significant programme.

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may recall the OIC-VET Programme was launched by Abdullah Gül, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of COMCEC during the COMCEC Economic Summit held in Istanbul on 9 November 2009 with the participation of the heads of states and governments. It is indeed noteworthy that in the same Summit, H.E. Gül, articulated his belief towards the vision of this Programme to improve the quality of human capital resources and realise socio-economic development in OIC Member Countries, and called upon OIC Member Countries to support and actively participate in the Programme. The said Economic Summit recognised the importance of vocational education and training in socio-economic development of the OIC member countries and welcomed the launch of the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries (OIC-VET). Marked by this event, the SESRIC also launched OIC-VET Portal in order to increase awareness of the OIC-VET Programme in the Member Countries and to make the process of the implementation of the OIC-VET Programme more functional.

Since then as the Executive OIC Organ of the OIC-VET Programme, SESRIC has been working towards the successful implementation of the pilot application phase of the OIC-VET Programme. To this end, in consultation with the NFPs of the Programme and with the relevant OIC institutions a number of pilot projects have already been prepared and being implemented by SESRIC. Pilot projects cover a wide range of sectors from agriculture to tourism and e-commerce that would be to the immediate benefit of the Member Countries through establishing strong partnerships among the most relevant entities of different nature and generate more awareness about the significance of vocational education and training. As we present to you some pilot projects today we will seek your feedback and suggestions towards implementing them in other countries, and look forward to hearing your proposals of pilot projects.

Vocational training is becoming more recognized as a tool for promoting new opportunities for individuals whether they work in the labour market, are university students or professionals in

various sectors of the economy. Therefore, the OIC-VET Programme not only serves as a platform for enhancing human resources of the OIC Member Countries but also a channel for strengthening the education and social network in our countries. I would like to take this opportunity to inform that the OIC-VET Partners Database, which has been developed with the aim of providing information on potential partners who are able and keen to effectively participate in project implementations within the framework of the OIC-VET Programme, will be instrumental for promoting necessary cooperation among NFPs during the implementation of the OIC-VET Programme as well as draw a new direction in promoting their activities in this field.

Therefore, it is indeed heartening that representatives of National Focal Points of the OIC-VET Programme and the concerned OIC organs are participating in this meeting to discuss key issues regarding vocational education and training. It is my hope that open and inclusive dialogue will be the hallmark of this meeting and its concrete outcome will provide guidance for more coordinated action.

I am confident that the work you are about to accomplish would, ultimately, approximate and contribute significantly to the collective welfare for the Islamic Ummah. As we all look forward to the successful outcome of this meeting, I wish you all the success in your deliberations.

Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu

Thank you for your kind attention.