

STATEMENT BY MR. SELÇUK KOÇ
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Assalamu 'Alaikum Warahmatullah Wabarakatuhu

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address this august gathering on the occasion of the Fourth Session of the OIC Statistical Commission. I would like to thank Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group for organizing this important session.

Availability of reliable and accurate data bears utmost importance for developing sound policies to address the development challenges of our countries. Policy makers can only make right policy choices and establish appropriate implementation mechanisms based on correct, reliable, up to date and sound statistics. Similarly statistics are crucial for setting realistic, achievable targets and measuring the progress.

I believe effective cooperation in the area of statistics is of particular importance for our countries where there is still lack of reliable data for developing sound policies. In this regard this Commission remains as the main platform in this field for the Member Countries for sharing knowledge and exchanging experiences and best practices. In this respect this Commission has been serving to enhance the cooperation among the Member Countries in this field. I would like to congratulate the Secretariat of the Commission for organizing training programmes on various topics of Statistics in the Member Countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

COMCEC is the main platform for economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member Countries. Since 2012, COMCEC activities gain a new momentum with the adoption of a new vision document, namely the COMCEC Strategy. The COMCEC Strategy aims to deepen cooperation among the Member States through working groups in six main cooperation areas namely trade, agriculture, transport, tourism, poverty alleviation and financial cooperation. The COMCEC Strategy envisages enhanced data collection, compilation, processing and data analyzing capacity in the Member Countries as its several output areas. In this respect the third Meeting of the COMCEC Agriculture Working Group was devoted to the Agricultural Statistics. The Meeting was recently held on April 3rd, 2014 with the theme of “Improving the Statistical Capacity of the Agriculture Sector in the COMCEC Region.” The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the Member States, as well as OIC and international institutions. The Representatives of the Member States have shared their experiences, achievements and challenges regarding agricultural statistical capacity in their respective countries. An Analytical Study was also commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for the Meeting. The Study reviewed and analyzed the state of agricultural statistics in the COMCEC Region, with respect to organization, coverage, methodology and availability, and identified the main constraints and proposed steps and policies for improvement. The Study pointed out that poor organization, lack of resources and limited scope of statistics are some of the main weaknesses of the agricultural statistics systems in COMCEC Member Countries.

I believe that your valuable efforts will facilitate active cooperation and coordination with the COMCEC towards producing reliable and comparable statistics in the Member States. It goes without saying that we will also be one of your main supporters. COMCEC Coordination Office will, Insha'Allah, continue to cooperate with the OIC Statistical Commission as well as our brotherly institutions SESRIC and IDB in their endeavors.

Before concluding, I would like to thank SESRIC and IDB Group once again for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and wish you all the success in your deliberations.

Thank you.

Wassalamu 'Alaikum