

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

H.E. Naci Koru, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey

Distinguished participants and owners of the projects,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

It is a source of great pleasure for me to address this august gathering on the occasion of the “Signing Ceremony” of the successful projects which have been accepted within the framework of the COMCEC Project Cycle Management (PCM); the main implementation tool of COMCEC Strategy.

At the outset, let me congratulate COMCEC for its coherent and well-designed Strategy. The new Strategy of COMCEC is indeed an excellent example to be followed as an innovative approach for enhancing cooperation among the member countries.

With its three core principles of enhancing mobility, strengthening solidarity, and improving governance, COMCEC Strategy addresses the most fundamental and persistent problems and challenges of the member countries in the economic domain.

Through the effective utilization of its implementation instruments, namely COMCEC working groups and project cycle management (PCM), and within the framework of the well-identified financial and monitoring mechanism, the new COMCEC Strategy will contribute significantly to strengthening the level of cooperation among the member countries in the six priority areas of cooperation identified in the Strategy, and, ultimately find solutions to the challenges faced by the member countries in these areas.

COMCEC Strategy will facilitate the production and dissemination of knowledge, share experiences and best-practices, develop a common language of understanding, and approximate policies in the identified cooperation areas with a view to ensuring stronger involvement and ownership of the member countries.

In this context, I would like to congratulate and laud the efforts of the COMCEC Coordination Office (CCO) towards the timely and accurate implementation of the Strategy. Also, I would like to congratulate the projects owners for their valuable projects under different cooperation areas of the Strategy.

Distinguished participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At SESRIC, we are pleased to have two successful project among the 15 final-listed projects entitled to receive grants.

Our first project is under the area of “poverty alleviation” titled “Enhancing National Capacities in Poverty Statistics of COMCEC Member Countries”.

The overall objective of this project is to highlight the nature and causes of poverty and to formulate strategies for strengthening capacities in the compilation, production and dissemination of poverty statistics, and ultimately, to contribute to the National Statistical Systems (NSS) of the OIC countries in terms of poverty alleviation, monitoring poverty and aid effectiveness.

The project aims at identifying the nature and causes of poverty through the preparation of a comprehensive policy-oriented research paper with a special section that considers the statistical capacities and needs in poverty statistics, and provides effective recommendations to overcome poverty-related problems in OIC member countries. This will also contribute to raising awareness of decision makers in the member countries towards evidence-based policy making on poverty alleviation.

Our 2nd project is under the area of “Tourism” titled "Improving Statistical Capacities of Tourism Sector in COMCEC Mediterranean and Gulf Region".

The overall objective of the project is to build statistical capacity in the compilation, production and dissemination of tourism statistics and, ultimately, to contribute to the National Statistical Systems of the OIC member countries through capacity building programs.

This project includes a series of eight short-term training programmes in the Mediterranean and Gulf countries and a regional workshop with the participation of national and international experts at the end of these short-term trainings. The

project aims at enhancing tourism statistics capacity of the staff in the NSOs of these countries as well as those in relevant government agencies. It will also raise the awareness of decision makers in the member countries towards evidence-based policy making on tourism investments.

**Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Before concluding, I would like to congratulate once again COMCEC and the project owners and wish all of us a successful and timely implementation of these projects, of which the outcome will, undoubtedly, contribute significantly to the implementation of the COMCEC Strategy in the concerned areas.

As we all look forward to the successful implementation of the projects, I wish you all the success and pray God Almighty to help us all and guide our steps to achieve prosperity and welfare for the Islamic Ummah.

Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu