

**Message of H.E. the Secretary General
to the Fifth Session of the Statistical Commission
of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC-StatCom)
Ankara, Turkey, 12-14 May 2015**

Bismillahi Arrahmani Arrahim

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Members of the OIC Statistical Commission,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalamu Alaikum wa-Rahmatu Allahi wa-Barakatuhu

It is a great pleasure for me to address the Fifth session of the Statistical Commission of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC-StatCom). Let me express my gratitude to the SESRIC and Islamic Development Bank for the elaborate preparations for this meeting. I wish to also commend all participants, who have come to Ankara from their capitals to give their contributions to the OIC statistical cooperation at a crucial moment in the history of our Organisation.

As you know, the challenges facing National Statistical Organizations in our countries are exacerbated with ever increasing demands for a much wider scope of quality and timely statistics covering national, regional and global issues. In tackling these challenges the critical issues remain, inter alia, budgetary constraints, access to emerging technologies, capacity to provide timely statistics, data analysis, dissemination and utilization, cooperation among countries, and strong political support, among others. These issues require urgent national, regional and global attention. Accordingly, sustained efforts by the countries themselves, support by international organizations, and cooperation between countries remain much needed to contribute to the development of National Statistical Organizations.

It is in this context that I am pleased to note that, since its inception in 2011, the OIC-StatCom has contributed significantly to strengthening cooperation among National Statistical Organizations in OIC Member States through developing capacity building and standardization of statistical methods in OIC region. I have no doubt that the capacity

building and other initiatives initiated by the OIC-StatCom have contributed to the quality of the data collected in our countries. This work must continue and be expanded.

In a similar way, I commend the OIC-StatCom's on-going work to develop a core set of statistics for Islamic financial products, including waqf and zakat. This is more so considering the fact that the Islamic financial products have developed to become a viable alternative for project financing and the much needed investment in our countries. I urge the OIC-StatCom to proceed expeditiously to the implementation phase of this laudable initiative.

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Members of the Statistical Commission,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

There is no doubt that the efforts aimed at addressing the identified challenges of our National Statistical Organisations should now be given due prominence in the scheme of affairs of the OIC-StatCom. In this regard, the OIC-StatCom's immediate preoccupation should seek to mainstream capacity building projects, where experiences of national institutions could be shared and harmonized in order to address chronic paucity of data in our developmental paradigm.

At the level of OIC institutions, the existing databases should be streamlined to enhance efficiency and avoid overlapping. This cooperation mechanism can assist OIC institutions greatly to create an online platform among institutions and development partners for monitoring and reporting of progress on our joint projects. I have in mind the proposed project for online platform for OIC-UN joint collaboration, as well as envisaged online platform for monitoring trade facilitation activities, including the elimination of non-tariff barriers. It is, therefore, my sincere hope that this action can fit in the on-going negotiation of new OIC-2025: Programme of Action.

Similarly, there is a need for coordination among OIC institutions in order to enhance efficient data collection, instead of the present situation whereby they collect the same data from the same sources. Furthermore, there is a need for members of the OIC-

StatCom to coordinate their capacity building programmes among themselves, thereby avoiding the training of same people for same programmes. It is equally important to promote exchange of data and basic figures that feature in the various publications of members of the OIC-StatCom.

I thank you for kind your attention and wish all of you a successful deliberation at this meeting.

Wassalamu Alaykum wa-Rahmatullah wa-Barakatuh.