

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم



**MESSAGE OF
H.E. PROF. EKMELEDDIN IHSANOGLU,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OIC,
TO THE FIRST MEETING OF
THE OIC STATISTICAL COMMISSION**

**ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
11-12 APRIL 2011**

Bismillahi Arrahmani Arrahim

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalamu Alaikum wa-Rahmatu Allahi wa-Barakatuhu

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to address the first meeting of the OIC Statistical Commission. This meeting is taking place at a crucial period in the history of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference as it continues to place considerable emphasis on developing capacities of development agencies in OIC Member States. Let me at the outset express deep appreciation to all participants at this meeting for their diligence and sense of purpose, which are aimed at pooling resources for the creation of a reliable databank in OIC Member States.

I must also avail myself of this opportunity to acknowledge the excellent arrangements put in place by the organisers of this meeting, namely: the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). In the same vein, I wish to commend the Government of Turkey for the warm reception and brotherly hospitality extended to all delegates at this meeting.

The decision taken at the Fifth Meeting of the National Statistical Organizations of OIC Member States in 2010 to organize their future meetings under the title of OIC Statistical Commission (OIC-SC) is aimed at

underscoring the crucial role, which cooperation in the domain of planning, knowledge-sharing and exchange of best practices, can play in leap-frogging the various stages of socio-economic development in the OIC Member States. This new resolve by our planning agencies to collaborate in the area of statistical data sharing is a welcome development that will complement the various activities underway within the Organisation for the development of the economies of OIC Member States.

It is commonplace that the developmental problems facing our countries are traceable to lack of adequate capacity for planning and statistics. This situation is compounded by absence of proper coordination among our Member States and regional institutions, inadequate of manpower and financial resources, lack of strategic direction for efficient and effective design of statistical activities. Also identified as the bane of our developmental activities is the question of duplication of efforts among our various research institutions, which in turn leads to waste of resources.

The OIC Statistical Commission would need to avoid these traditional pitfalls by ensuring that decisions taken at this multilateral forum are reflected in our various national priorities as an indication of our strong political will. Otherwise, our current desire and pre-occupation to expand cooperation and share knowledge will remain largely unattained.

In the same vein, it is also important for participants at this meeting to address the issue of building capacities of OIC Member States for developing requisite data and statistics to aid developmental efforts. This will enable us avoid the current situation whereby data on most of our social

and economic indicators are non-existent. It is very true that such a state of affairs hampers proper and accurate planning.

At his juncture, let me also commend the work done by competent OIC institutions in the area of coordination of statistical data within the framework of the OIC Statistical Working Group. The coordination process among our four institutions is a good example of the dividend which can accrue from harmonization of policies and delineation of tasks. Although it is still work in progress, this collaboration will improve quality and content of our data presentation, since every institution would now specialize on specific areas of competence to ensure perfection, effectiveness and efficiency.

On the international plane, this meeting would also need to work out modalities for active cooperation with relevant members of the international statistical community. Our efforts must be geared towards re-positioning the Commission as an authentic one-stop source of data and statistics on OIC Member States, a situation that will promote the international image of the Commission.

As I renew my sincere congratulations for the convening of this important meeting, let me also wish you all happy deliberations.

Wasalam alaekun, warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu.