

Second Session of
OIC Statistical Commission

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WELCOME SPEECH
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Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,

Distinguished Representatives of the National Statistical Offices of OIC Member Countries, OIC Institutions and the International Organisations,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to Izmir on the occasion of the Second Session of the OIC-StatCom. I would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Islamic Development Bank for their effective cooperation in the organisation of this important meeting. I am very happy and proud that the meetings of the National Statistical Offices of OIC Member Countries are becoming more structured and the OIC Statistical Commission is attracting more and more Member Countries to these meetings. This year, we have a record number of attendance: More than forty countries are present in the hall and this is a great success. I also thank you for making this event possible in such a high level.

Of course, we are expecting a lot of outputs from these meetings; so we are particularly, through the OIC-StatCom, aiming to enhance the statistical competencies of our Member Countries and also to generate opportunities to make higher contributions to the global statistical system. Such an important mission undertaken by this Commission of course requires great efforts for the implementation of different activities and projects and this will not be

possible without your contribution and your cooperation. As SESRIC and IDB, we are ready to make this process a successful and possible one, and we are also pleased to see your kind attention to this important matter. The establishment of the OIC-StatCom last year was a turning point in this endeavour and now we are very hopeful that the future will be very bright and our Member Countries will make strong changes in their national statistical systems in a cooperative manner.

We know that the statistical capacities of our Member Countries vary dramatically from one country to another and the statistical capacities have a heterogeneous structure. Some of the member countries have very high level of operations; cutting edge technologies in their processes; but in some other, particularly in the least developed member countries, the situation is not as good. Therefore, this requires strong cooperation among the Member Countries.

In fact, this observation was noticed by SESRIC in 2007 and we started our capacity building programmes to make the change of expertise and experience among the Member Countries possible. Since 2007, you all know that we are sending out surveys to identify the needs and capacities of our Member Countries in different areas under statistics and up to now, many capacity building programmes have been implemented with your cooperation and with the participation of the experts from our NSOs. I am very pleased that hundreds of experts in National Statistical Offices have been trained through these programmes. We have also a very strong cooperation with different international organisations such as EUROSTAT, UNESCWA and

others in this area. Of course, this is not enough, we will continue to increase our cooperation, our capacity building activities and OIC Statistical Commission will be also another means to achieve this in a more structured manner.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, you have given us the honourable position of the Secretariat of OIC-StatCom and as SESRIC, we are very pleased to have this function and we are doing our best to change the statistical system in the positive direction. As you all know, one of the critical components of the national statistical system is the proper dissemination of the statistics. If you produce statistics in the best way but if we don't disseminate them in an acceptable approach, then the information will be lost and no one will care about that. So now, there are different innovative technologies that are being used worldwide, used to attract the attention of the public and researchers to the dissemination of the statistics produced by the national and international statistical organisations.

As you know, Google is currently developing innovative technologies and most people go to Google instead of coming to our websites to make use of statistics produced by us. Why is it so? Because the visual technologies they use are so attractive and people would like to make use of them. You all know that it initially started with Gapminder Foundation's software of Sweden that was very attractive, then it was acquired by Google, and now, under Google, we have Google Motion Charts.

Last year, I mentioned that we are making our best to bring the cutting edge technologies to our Member Countries, so in that regard, at the moment we have in our website, SESRIC Motions Charts which uses a similar technology like Google. I am pleased to inform you all that our engineers have developed open source software, which has the capacity to do the functions done by the Google Motion Charts. In fact, it is, in some cases, doing some better functions as compared with the Google Motions Charts. This new module being developed by our own engineers is in three languages: in English, Arabic and French. So now, the model is almost finished and we will be very pleased to give them to you free. This programme will be given to you all free. You can install this programme in your website and you can use this programme. We will of course give you the technical support to do so. You can use this programme to compare the performance of different cities, different regions and other districts in your countries that will attract more and more attention from public and we are sure that the information we are producing will be much widely used by the society. I know that there will be a small presentation on the outcome of this project that we have done in our Centre and Insha'Allah, we will start distributing the programme to you this year. This will be another contribution from our side to the Statistical Commission.

Dear Distinguished Delegates,

Although the Commission has been in the existence for a short time, a large amount of work has been achieved through your invaluable contributions. As you all know, we have established three working groups. The first working

group was on “Developing a Framework for Statistical Indicators for the OIC Member Countries”, the second working group was on “Strategic Vision for the OIC-StatCom” and the third working group was on “A Framework for the Accreditation of the Statisticians and the Statistical Procedures”. The working groups worked very extensively. I would like all the countries who were members of these working groups and I would like to thank Jordan, Indonesia, and Bahrain for expecting the role of lead country and for making effective contributions to the statistical working groups. In the next session, we will discuss the outputs of these working groups. I am sure that there will be a very positive conclusion to our Commission. I would also like to indicate that this year, we will identify other working groups for next year and we will be looking forward to your inputs on what topics we should choose for the next session.

So again, I would like to thank you all for making time to come to Izmir and to participate to this important meeting and I hope that, with your contributions, we will have a very successful meeting and I thank you very much for your kind attention.

Assalaam ‘alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh