

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL, IOFS TO THE 5TH SESSION OF IOFS EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Honourable Executive Board Members,**

**Distinguished Participants,**

I am pleased to address the 5th Session of the Executive Board holding remotely today. I must at the onset express my appreciation to distinguished members for making available this video conference meeting at this very extreme time.

It is my big pleasure to congratulate our newcomer, Mr Md. Hajiqul Islam for his election to serve on the Executive Board, who is representing esteemed Bangladesh. We are of strong opinion that your extensive background and experience will allow us to facilitate our Organization’s mission and we are all warmly welcoming you.

1. I would like to start my report with the latest activities of the Secretariat regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. In the capacity of special international organisation on food security of the OIC family, we have proposed the creation of necessary mechanisms for addressing food emergencies in member states, resulting from food shortages causing by the pandemic. All these activities are written down in the Memorandum which was circulated among our Member States and related international institutions. We have already commenced some consultations with IsDB group in order to coordinate our steps further (background papers are herewith attached).
2. As you know pursuant to Article 17 para 2 of the IOFS Statute the Director General shall prepare an annual report on the budget and the closing account, which shall be submitted to the Executive Board at its following session subsequent to the end of the financial year. Taking into consideration that the Item #1 of Agenda applies Membership, Administrative, Financial and Organic Matters, the Report on cash and bank expenses on performance of the administrative budget of IOFS for 2019 and the Report on mandatory/voluntary contributions are herewith attached (see the attachments). I am undertaking all necessary measures to maintain the operations of Secretariat in money-wise manner as well as making efforts to collect mandatory contributions and manifested voluntary pledges.
3. Since the last Executive Board meeting held on 11-12 December 2019 in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, the Secretariat has been proceeding on implementation of the IOFS programmes. As you are already aware, we are dealing with followings:
4. ***OIC Programme of Action for Development of Strategic Commodities***
5. ***Draft Protocol of OIC Food Security Reserve***
6. ***Islamic Food Processing Association (IFPA)***
7. ***Workshop of Development of National Gene Bank***
8. ***Roundtable on Increasing Water Use Efficiency and Modern Irrigation Systems***
9. ***Agri-Food Trade and Investment Promotion***
10. You could observe from the Agenda of meeting that all these programmes will be discussed on a separate basis during this august Board meeting as our next General Assembly will be mainly devoted to IOFS programmes. Thanks to our honourable Dr.Hameed Opeloyeru, who is leading and supervising all IOFS programmes and other esteemed colleagues, the Secretariat was able to elaborate strong Concept Notes in collaboration with the OIC General Secretariat and other relevant OIC institutions, duly circulate to OIC and IOFS member states and obtain feedback and comments. I would like to also appreciate your personal involvements, dear Board members, since you have provided your invaluable and tremendous inputs to these programmes.
11. In the same vein, I have to put emphasis on peculiarity here that two current programmes of IOFS have OIC origins and come from several OIC Ministerial agendas on Food Security and Agricultural Development, and the Secretariat of IOFS has been instructed to take over them, refine and bring to attention of OIC. Particularly, I am talking about the Programme of Action for Development of Strategic Commodities and the Draft Protocol of OIC Food Security Reserve. That is to mean IOFS Secretariat has been working close with OIC General Secretariat, and Turkey on content of the forthcoming Eight Session of the OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development (MCFSAD), scheduled for Istanbul, Republic of Turkey on 16-18 June 2020, **which was later postponed**. IOFS Secretariat did a great job on forming the agenda, drafting resolutions, and providing progress report and other background papers for said session. It is important to notice that two items out of anticipated eight items of the 8th MCFSAD are overlapped and linked with relevant items of the 3rd IOFS General Assembly that is supposed to be held as back-to-back event (**automatically postponed**). Consequently, it should be borne in mind and eschew confusions that the 3rd IOFS GA’s several resolutions inexorably follow resolutions of the 8th MCFSAD.

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,**

1. It is crucial to note that IOFS participated at the 43rd session of the Islamic Commission on Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs (ICECS) which was held in Jeddah, KSA on 4-6 February 2020. The meeting was preparatory to the 47th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM), scheduled for Niamey, Republic of Niger on 3-4 April 2020 which was also postponed.
2. In the 43th ICECS after exhaustive deliberations, we were able to propose several IOFS activities for further submission to the CFM contained in both preambular and operative paragraphs of relevant resolutions: (*The Draft Resolution No. 1/47-E on Agriculture, Labour and Employment; and Draft Resolution No. 6/47-E on Activities of the Relevant OIC Institutions Working in the Economic Domain, Paragraph C and the Draft Resolution No. 5/47-S&T, Paragraph 6*)
3. During our mission to Jeddah, KSA on 4-6 February 2020, I and Dr. Hameed held series of meetings with heads of delegation OIC member states to brief them on on-going activities of the IOFS. The delegations included those from Sierra-Leone, Morocco, Cameroon and Bangladesh.
4. Having followed recommendations of the Board from previous meeting that IOFS programmes should be implemented, as far as practicable, in partnership between IOFS Secretariat and other OIC institutions and regional and international organisations for proper synergy and efficiency, we have met top persons of International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA), Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT). With these institutions we have agreed to collaborate on matters of reverse linkage, capacity-building, various joint activities and workshops. Market access to IOFS member states, aimed at promoting food availability and accessibility, halal food trade and trade financing, development of IFPA, implementation of strategic commodities development plan of actions, food security reserve, food processing and popularization of food technologies were core talking points, among others. We also agreed to jointly hold a side event during the forthcoming World Trade Organisation (WTO) Summit in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan, for the sensitization of OIC member states to the current programmes of ICDT, IOFS and ITFC.
5. The delegation of the Secretariat of IOFS led by myself participated at the 2nd Brainstorming Session on the Comprehensive Reform of OIC held in Dhaka, the People’s Republic from 19-20 February 2020. The participants of this session attempted to identify the most pressing challenges faced by the OIC while proposing solutions based on the best applicable practices adopted by international organizations.
6. On the sidelines of the main event, I had a pleasure to meet and discuss ongoing matters with H.E. Berik Aryn, honorable Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Saudi Arabia, special representative of Kazakhstan in OIC. Also, I raised and discussed the issues of joining IOFS some new members with delegates from Indonesia, Morocco, and Tunisia and exchanged some relevant opinions with Director General of SESRIC, Mr. Nebil Dabur.
7. I also had a honour to meet H.E. Mr. Sadhan Chandra Majumder, Minister of Food of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh during this mission to Dhaka on 19.02.2020. I am outlining the important role of esteemed Ministry in the operationalization of IOFS. It is well-known that Bangladeshi Prime Minister prioritizes the issues of food security and instructed to build up the whole system of food. So far, the state elaborated and successfully launched National Food Policy, National Food Policy Plan of Action, Bangladesh Country Investment Plan, that could be used by other IOFS members as a good practice for their own national policies.
8. I also met Dr. Md Shahjahan Kabir, Director General of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute during this mission and discussed potentials of a forthcoming establishment of Steering Committee of the Executive Plan of Action on Rice development where Bangladesh is supposed to play key role as well as value chain development of Rice.
9. Having in mind a huge advantage of IFPA for IOFS member states I have initiated courtesy visit to Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FBCCI) and met its President, Mr. Sheikh Fazle Fahim on 20.02.2020. The FBCCI is treated to be a local driver of international trade and multilateral economic relations. Therefore, the close relations with IOFS should be beneficial for Bangladeshi private entities as well as all OIC members states as it develops and broadens horizons of trade. The IFPA is a huge platform for future interaction between entrepreneurs as not only does it relate to trade, but it accommodates other issues of business such as technology and information sharing among members, capability studies and increased market access among others.
10. The Secretariat of IOFS, in the capacity of OIC specialized institution, interacts with other OIC institutes within the framework of ACMOI. The Secretariat of IOFS provides on quarterly basis our Progress reports to input FIDEPS by SESRIC and TISC by ICDT and regular reports to COMCEC. We have already commenced operations stipulated by provisions of signed memorandums under the Partnership Program and coordination with local and regional offices of the FAO, regional associations like the EAEU, which includes a number of OIC countries.

**Mr. Chairman,**

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1. I also deem it appropriate to report on activities of IOFS taking place on the local level, aiming at the facilitation of strong ties with main local key players. Foreign Direct Investments play crucial role in sustainable development and are thought to be decisive detriments of the growth of national economy as well as wellbeing of any society. In this regard, we have established a good relation with Kazakh-Invest, which is quasi-state entity that pursues FDI attraction to the economy of Kazakhstan. IOFS discussed with this national agency trends of investments in the domain of food security, agricultural and rural development.
2. In parallel, IOFS has discussed upon boosting of international agricultural trade with various national stakeholders such as Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Center for Trade Policy Development Qaz-Trade, Kazakh-Export, Kaz-Beef, the Committee on Water Resources etc. The full list of all meetings is herewith attached to this report.
3. With regard to Halal industry development it is necessary to note that meeting on development of halal industry in Kazakhstan was held at IOFS headquarters. The representatives of Ministry of Trade and Integration, Ministry of Agriculture, the Kazakhstani Institute of Standardization and Certification, Atameken and Halal Damu LLP under the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan attended the meeting. We spoke about the need to coordinate efforts of all interested parties in the implementation of an effective halal-standardized system in Kazakhstan. IOFS offered to assist in the development of the industry at both national and regional levels through the exchange of experience, training, and consultations with renowned experts and events. IOFS unites efforts with structures of OIC (IsDB group, SMICC, ICCIA, Fiqh Academy) and related ones such as IHAF. We have not yet met International Halal Accreditation Forum (IHAF) as it was recommended by the Board members, still exploring, however, the opportunity to do so and will report on that in due course.
4. I also need to report that I had a honour to meet several heads of diplomatic mission in Kazakhstan, particularly H.E. Manal Yehia El Shinnawi, the new Ambassador of Egypt to Kazakhstan and H.E. Rahmat Pramono, the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Kazakhstan and discussed various matters of IOFS mandate as well as invoked them to enhance their involvements of IOFS. I had a honour to meet Malaysian Amb. Syed Mohd Bakri and discussed issues of coordination with the new government on joining to IOFS and cooperation with Malaysian food security-related state and public stakeholders.

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,**

1. On administrative, financial and personnel issues, the Secretariat has continued to rely on voluntary contributions made by the Republic of Kazakhstan (2017-2019) to cover the operational budget of the Secretariat. Furthermore, I was officially informed that mandatory contribution of Kazakhstan for 2020 will be transferred by the end of April. The Report on this matter is herewith attached separately.
2. Also, I would like to inform that works on food balance database and e-office are still in progress. Following the Board recommendations, the Secretariat continues to strengthen and increase its quality and service delivery.

Finally, let me once more express my heartfelt appreciation for your continued support for the growth and development of our young Organization.

**Director General**

**IOFS**

**Yerlan Baidaulet**