



WEBINAR ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TRADE PROMOTION STRATEGIES IN FACILITATING INTRA-OIC TRADE

Summary Note

Context

Following the recommendations of the OIC General Secretariat to its institutions on assisting and supporting OIC Member States in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) in collaboration with Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) such as Senegal Export, Tunisia Export, the Malaysian Trade Promotion Agency (MATRADE), and the private sector namely the Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX) and the BAIG Group of Pakistan, organized a webinar on the impact of COVID-19 on trade promotion strategies in facilitating intra-OIC, on 29th June 2020, via Zoom platform.

Objective

The objective of this webinar was to exchange experiences in promoting trade and investment in the OIC Member Countries, to identify the challenges ahead and to propose responses to strengthen intra-OIC trade flows and investment and between OIC Member Countries and the rest of the world.

Participants

More than 70 participants took part in this webinar from the Ministries of Commerce, Industry, Tourism, as well as representatives of Embassies, Trade and Investment Promotion Organs, academics and consultants, in addition to the OIC Institutions and regional and international organizations and the private sector.

Webinar proceedings

After the welcoming remarks by Mrs. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director General of the ICDT, the panelists, namely Dr Malick Diop, Managing Director of Senegal Export, Mr. Mohamed Ikbali Khaldi, Director at Tunisia Export and Mr. Mansor Shah Wahid, Director at MATRADE Malaysia, presented the impact of COVID-19 on national

exports and GDP and the measures taken by their respective States and Institutions in mitigating effects of the health crisis on national economies.

Among these measures, we can cite the digitalization of export promotion services, virtual meetings (business forums, workshops and fairs), the development of electronic commerce, the sharing of commercial information with regional offices and trade promotion organs in order to intensify trade between their country and international partners.

Capacity building programs in terms of digitization of these TPOs services have been implemented for the benefit of trade commissioners and companies from their respective countries, either through their country's embassies, foreign embassies or through their local offices to better position their market and remain competitive.

In addition, representatives of the private sector, namely Mr. Hassan Sentissi, President of the Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX) and Mr. Ishtiaq Baig, Vice-Chairman of the BAIG Group of Pakistan highlighted the impact of COVID -19 on their exports and identified the most affected sectors as well as the support initiatives of their governments for the benefit of the private and public sectors.

Participants also discussed barriers that hinder the development of trade and investment flows during the pandemic.

Finally, the participants were delighted with the organization and smooth running of this webinar and congratulated the ICDT and its panelist partners.

The Webinar was chaired by Mrs. Zahra Maafiri, Trade Promotion Expert.