



# TIJARIS



THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTRA-OIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT

## TRADE FACILITATION AS A LEVER FOR SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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President of ASMEX and the ASMEX Halal Club



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**The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (I.C.D.T)**, headquartered in Casablanca, Morocco, serves as a privileged instrument for promoting trade among the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

**Its objectives include :**

- Encouraging the development of regular trade exchanges among Member States.
- Promoting investments aimed at trade development.
- Contributing to the promotion of productions from Member States and facilitating access to foreign markets.
- Promoting commercial information.
- Assisting Member States in the field of trade promotion and international trade negotiations.
- Assisting businesses and economic operators.

**I.C.D.T's actions revolve around six main areas :**

**TRADE PROMOTION**

- Encouraging contacts between businessmen from Member States.
- Promoting the products of Member States, including through regular Islamic Fairs and specialized exhibitions.
- Assisting Member States in establishing and organizing Export Promotion Centers.
- Providing advisory and expertise services to Member States in trade promotion matters.

**TRADE INFORMATION**

- Collecting and disseminating trade data.
- Developing remotely accessible trade databases.
- Assisting Member States in establishing Documentation Centers and Commercial Information networks.

**INVESTMENT PROMOTION**

- Encouraging intra-OIC investments.
- Promoting foreign investments in OIC Member States.
- Encouraging partnerships among economic operators from Member States.
- Providing advisory and expertise services to Member States, particularly in export-oriented investment promotion.

**STUDIES AND RESEARCH**

- Publishing an Annual Report on intra-Islamic trade.
- Conducting sectoral studies on products and markets.
- Studying ways and means to alleviate trade barriers among Member States.

**TRAINING**

- Organizing seminars and training programs.
- Assisting Member States in creating a pool of experts in various fields of trade development.

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS**

- Assisting Member States in trade negotiations.
- Preparing and organizing intra-OIC trade negotiations.

Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui,  
Managing Director ICDT.



## Trade Facilitation: A Powerful Engine for Socioeconomic Development

Trade is an essential pillar of socioeconomic development, in that it stimulates economic growth, creates jobs, and promotes innovation and competitiveness. Trade facilitation, which aims to simplify and streamline procedures and trade exchanges, plays a crucial role in maximizing the benefits of trade for all. The OIC is firmly committed to promoting trade facilitation among its member countries. Our various bodies consider trade as a powerful tool for achieving Sustainable Development Goals, such as poverty reduction, creating decent jobs, and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The IDB implements a range of concrete initiatives to facilitate trade between member countries. Among these are the organization of workshops and forums to raise awareness among member countries about best practices in the field and share their experiences and expertise, the development of platforms and tools to simplify administrative procedures and reduce the costs of trade transactions, not to mention capacity building.

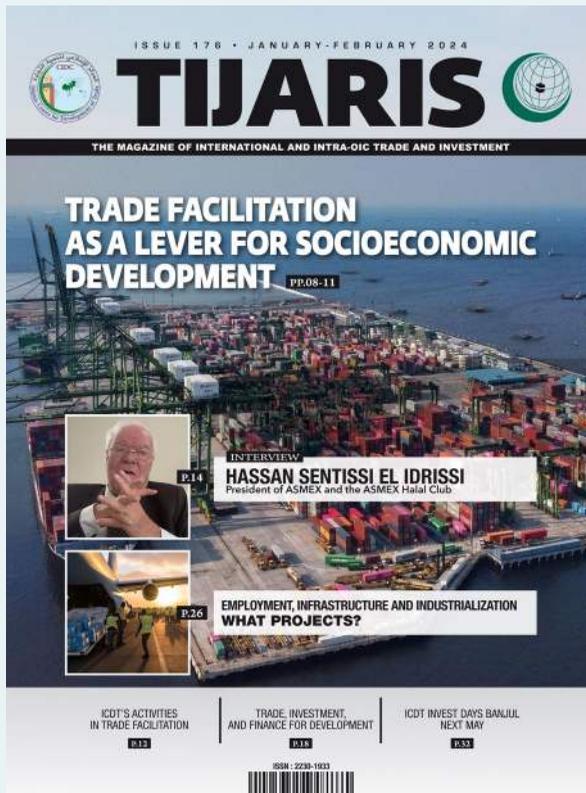
Through various events, such as the 7th Session of the Annual Meeting of OIC Institutions in Jeddah, the Regional Preparatory Workshop for the 13th WTO Ministerial Meeting in Tunis, the Workshop on the Development of Digital Trade..., tangible results are evident.

In this issue, we focus on trade facilitation as a lever for socioeconomic development in the OIC zone, as well as the challenges and issues in the Arab region. We have emphasized the topic in the sense that trade facilitation translates into the simplification of administrative procedures and the reduction of costs related to trade exchanges. This allows for increasing the competitiveness of companies, attracting foreign investments, and stimulating job creation.

Mr. Hassan Sentissi El Idrissi, President of the Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX), highlights in POINT OF VIEW the importance of the ASMEX Halal Club, a concrete example, in promoting the trade of Moroccan halal products internationally.

In the forward-looking part of this issue, the ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL, which will be held next May in Gambia, a land of opportunities, precede our scheduled activities in the AGENDA and will undoubtedly be a promising Forum for the promotion of trade and investment in the region. Convinced that by investing in trade facilitation, we are also and above all investing in the future of our populations.

We wish you a good read and once again an Excellent Year 2024! ■



COVER PHOTO  
Aerial view of container ships  
in a deep sea port  
© Syahrir Maulana / Alamy Banque d'Images

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# TIJARIS

EDITED BY THE ISLAMIC CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

ISSN : 2230-1933

Director of publication Mme Latifa EL Bouabdellaoui • Editorial Board Mme Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, M. Mamoudou Bocar Sall, M. Ismail Taqui • Editot-in-chief Daouda MBaye • Design and Layout Samir tebiche • Realization Afrique Challenge • Publisher Centre Islamique pour le Développement du Commerce Tour des Habous 11/12ème étage 20000 Casablanca-Maroc. Mail: [icdt@icdt-oic.org](mailto:icdt@icdt-oic.org) - [www.icdt-cidc.org](http://www.icdt-cidc.org)

7<sup>th</sup> SESSION

# Annual Meeting of OIC Institutions-ICDT in Jeddah

THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF OIC INSTITUTIONS (ICDT), HELD ON JANUARY 17 AND 18, 2024, AT THE OIC HEAD-QUARTERS IN JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA, FEATURED A DELEGATION FROM THE IDB LED BY MS. LATIFA ELBOUABDEL-LAOUI, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, AND MR. MAMOUDOU BOCAR SALL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL.



THE 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF OIC INSTITUTIONS ORGANIZED BY THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT IN JEDDAH FROM 17 TO 18 JANUARY 2024.

In Jeddah, the 7th Annual Meeting of OIC Institutions (ICDT) covered a wide range of topics. Around six thematic committees of the ICDT participated. Besides Palestine and the issue of Al Qods, discussions included political and economic affairs, science and technology, information technology, culture, sports, youth, human rights, social, family, and humanitarian affairs.

Chaired by H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the OIC, this 7th ICDT gathered Heads of Delegations and repre-

sentatives from 30 OIC Institutions, Permanent Committees of the OIC, around discussions rich in various perspectives.

The IDB participated in the Economic Affairs Group, alongside institutions such as the OIC Department of Economic Affairs, the COMCEC, the SESRIC, the ICCIA, the SMIIC, the ICYF, the IOFS, the Department of Cooperation and Capacity Development of the IDB, the ICIEC, and the IFHAB. Following H.E. Dr. Ahmed Sengendo, Assistant Secretary-General of the OIC for

Economic Affairs, who provided an overview of economic activities since the 6th Meeting of Action, in areas such as «Intra-OIC Trade and Investment», «Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food Security», «Tourism Development», «Private Sector and Entrepreneurship», «Poverty Alleviation», «Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration», «Labor, Employment, and Social Protection», «Transport», and «Miscellaneous». Succeeding him, a Representative of the OIC presented the progress of the OIC Ten-Year Action Plan 2016-2025 and the 3rd Plan for 2026-2035, particularly the format of the reporting.

### **Energizing South-South Cooperation and Initiating Support for the Private Sector**

Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of the IDB, presented the 2023-2024 activity program of the Trade and Investment Subcommittee (TISC), in the field of «Trade Promotion, Development of the Halal Industry including Tourism», «Trade Facilitation including the OIC-SFP and Regional Integration» and «Investment Promotion». She revealed that in 2023, TISC Members implemented 41% of its activities, 16% are in progress, and a portion of

43% is scheduled for this year. On the sidelines of this meeting, the Director-General met with the OIC Secretary-General, the Secretary-General of Foreign and Administrative Affairs, and presented the activities of the IDB.

It should be noted that H.E. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk, Director-General of the SESRIC, who chairs the Sub-Committee on Financing and Private Sector Development (FIDEPS), outlined the Committee's activities in the areas of financing, agriculture and rural development, poverty alleviation, and private sector development.

As a reminder, during the meeting, it was recommended for the TISC and FIDEPS Sub-Committees to continue to perform semi-annual reports, in collaboration with their members, and to submit them to the OIC General Secretariat. In this context, it was recommended for all Sub-Committee members to update the list of their members to facilitate communication and reporting of programs. Participants highlighted the importance of energizing South-South cooperation and initiating support for SMEs and LDCs in the field of food security, entrepreneurship, and private sector involvement.

The 8th Meeting of the ICDT is already scheduled in Jeddah, from December 4 to 5, 2024. ■

## REGIONAL PREPARATORY WORKSHOP

# 13<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference for the Benefit of OIC Member States



FAMILY PHOTO DURING THE REGIONAL PREPARATORY WORKSHOP FOR THE 13<sup>th</sup> WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (CM13)

THE IDB, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT OF THE TUNISIAN REPUBLIC, THE DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDB, AND THE WTO, COMMENCED ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024, THE REGIONAL PREPARATORY WORKSHOP OF THE 13TH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC13) FOR THE BENEFIT OF OIC MEMBER STATES.

The Regional Preparatory Workshop of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13) for the benefit of OIC Member States was held from January 10 to 11, 2024, in Tunis. The stakeholders, namely the IDB, the Ministry of Commerce and Export Development of the Tunisian Republic, the Department of Cooperation and Capacity Development of the IDB, and the WTO, stated that the main objective was to enable OIC Member States to better prepare their participation in MC13, which will take place in Abu Dhabi, from February 26 to 29, 2024.

In Tunis, representatives from 20 OIC member countries and 5 International Organizations participating in this Workshop were briefed on the latest developments in discussions around trade and health, fisheries subsidies, food security, e-commerce, and WTO reform. Through rich debates, they exchanged experiences of OIC countries to align their positions. Some express readiness for the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference, scheduled in a few days in Abu Dhabi. ■



FAMILY PHOTO OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL COMMERCE IN AFRICA FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE AFRICAN OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES

## Workshop on the Development of Digital Trade in Africa

THE IDB ORGANIZED, FROM JANUARY 8 TO 10 IN CASABLANCA, MOROCCO, A WORKSHOP ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL TRADE IN AFRICA, FOR AFRICAN MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE OIC. THE OCCASION WAS FOUND IN THE KINGDOM'S INITIATIVES RELATED TO THE THEME OF THE AFRICAN UNION'S YEAR, «ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)».

Digital trade is becoming a major trend in Africa. The opportunities and challenges of digital commerce on the continent, especially with the significant development of digital trade at the international level, fully deserve attention. Rich in this conviction, the IDB, in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco, organized a Workshop on the Development of Digital

Trade in Africa, for African member countries of the OIC, at the beginning of this year.

Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of the IDB, proceeded on Monday, January 8, 2024, in Casablanca, to open the session. It should be noted that this three-day Workshop is co-organized with the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco and is part

of the Kingdom's initiatives related to the theme of the African Union's year «Accelerating the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)».

Undoubtedly, the work of this meeting will contribute to the development of Digital Trade in Africa, especially in favor of African member countries of the OIC. ■



A VIEW OF THE MOU SIGNING: MS. LATIFA ELBOUABDELLAOUI, DG (CDT (LEFT) SIGNED ON FEBRUARY 26, 2024, AND MR. WALID FARGHAL, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INVESTMENT CONGRESS ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE OIC COUNTRIES

## IDB MoU - Annual Investment Congress Meeting on Cooperation in the Field of Investment Promotion and Development in OIC Countries

A VALUABLE TOOL FOR THE PROMOTION OF INVESTMENTS, THE DEVELOPMENT OF STARTUPS AND SMES, AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN THE OIC REGION, THE ANNUAL INVESTMENT CONGRESS MEETING ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN OIC COUNTRIES IS MOVING CLOSER TO THE IDB. A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WAS SIGNED ON FEBRUARY 26TH.

The Annual Investment Congress Meeting is a significant event that contributes to the economic growth and social development of OIC member countries. On this occasion, Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of the IDB, and Mr. Walid Farghal, Director-General, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the development of cooperation in the field of investment promotion in OIC member states. This legal framework will facilitate the joint organization

of Business Forums and cooperation in strengthening the capacities of investment promotion agencies (IPAs), Startups, and SMEs.

**A Series of Benefits** The Annual Investment Congress Meeting offers numerous advantages to OIC member countries, particularly in terms of investment promotion, the development of startups and SMEs, and the strengthening of the capacities of IPAs. To mention just a few

concrete examples. Saudi Arabia signed an agreement with Morocco to invest 5 billion dollars in infrastructure projects during the 2023 meeting.

Senegal announced the creation of a new investment fund of 100 billion CFA francs to support startups and SMEs, while the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) launched a training program to help IPAs improve their skills in marketing and investment promotion.

More generally, in terms of investment promotion, the Annual Investment Congress Meeting for OIC member countries, in collaboration with the IDB, can offer a unique platform for OIC member countries. Such forums allow them to present their investment opportunities to an international audience of potential investors.

Together, these entities contribute to the promotion of investment policies. Member countries can indeed share their best practices and exchange ideas on creating an investor-friendly environment.

Besides increasing the visibility of member countries that can showcase their assets and improve their image among foreign investors, such an approach is conducive to capacity building, through workshops and training organized to help startups and SMEs develop their skills and improve their competitiveness. It also facilitates networking for these companies to seize opportunities and create links among themselves and with potential investors to raise capital.

As for IPAs, they will be able to share their best practices more, learn from the experiences of other member countries, collaborate among themselves to promote investments in the OIC region, and strengthen their skills and efficiency through training and workshops. ■

The logo consists of a square icon on the left containing a stylized white mountain range and a sun or moon, set against a black background. To the right of the icon, the words "FREEZE" and "FRAME" are stacked vertically in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

Ms. Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, Director-General of the ICDT, delivered a speech on the occasion of the «launch of the Muslim World Women's Summit 2024» on February 27, 2024, in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, in the presence of YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Ahmed Zahid Bin Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia and Minister of Rural and Regional Development.

Two personalities from the political and scientific world were honored with the Muslim World Rania Award 2024, respectively H.E. Mrs. Aissata Tall Sall, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Senegal, and Professor Rajaa Aghzadi, a Moroccan visceral surgeon with significant international recognition





# Trade Facilitation as a Lever for Socioeconomic Development

TRADE FACILITATION IS A CRUCIAL ISSUE FOR THE SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES. PRECISELY, THE OIC HAS IMPLEMENTED A TRADE FACILITATION PROGRAM ALONG WITH AN OIC TRADE PREFERENTIAL SYSTEM (TPS-OIC). BY ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND CONTINUING ONGOING INITIATIVES, OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES CAN HARNESS THE FULL POTENTIAL OF TRADE TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF THEIR POPULATIONS.

The benefits of trade facilitation in OIC member countries are numerous. Trade facilitation, which involves simplifying the procedures and regulations governing trade exchanges, indeed offers many advantages for OIC member countries.

Firstly, in terms of stimulating economic growth, trade facilitation in OIC member countries helps to increase trade flows, attract foreign investments, and create jobs.

Next, by increasing income and creating economic opportunities, trade facilitation contributes to poverty reduction.

Because it enables the improvement of the population's well-being, trade facilitation improves access to essential products and services, such as food, medicine, and technology.

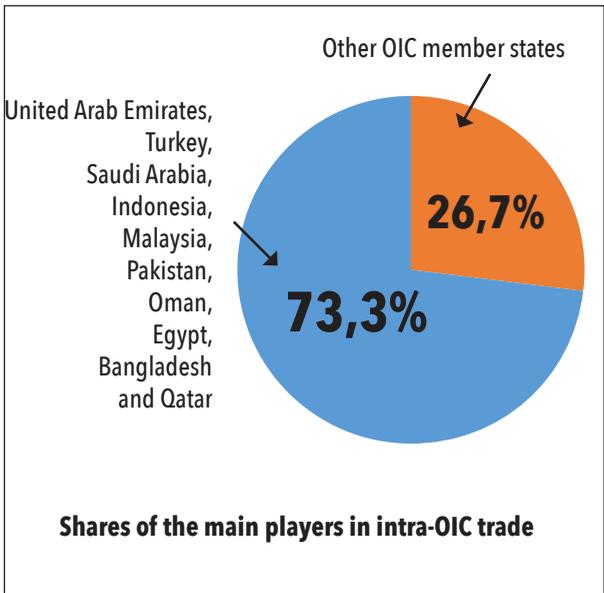
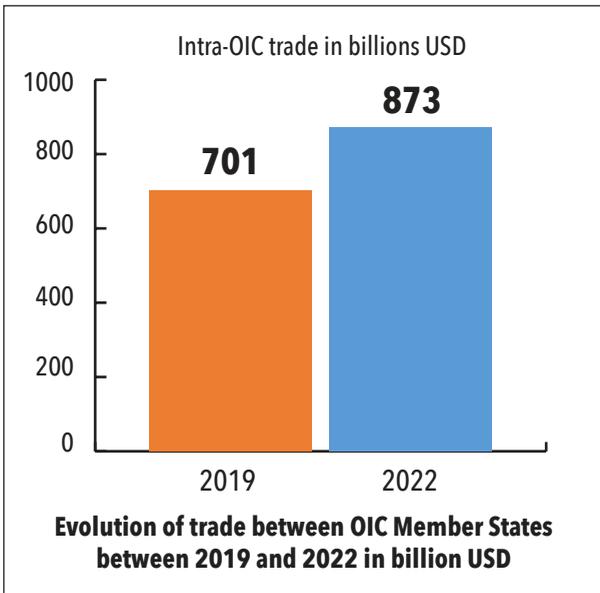
## **New Ten-Year Action Plan**

Among the benefits that trade facilitation brings to OIC member countries, cooperation and economic integration among OIC member countries hold a special place. As a reminder, at the 13th Islamic Summit in April 2016, held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, a New Ten-Year Action Plan was adopted, aiming to achieve an intra-OIC trade share of 25% by 2025 (OIC-2025) covering the period 2016-2025. At the beginning of this period, about 26 countries had reached the 25% intra-OIC trade threshold advocated by the New Ten-Year Action Plan (TAP) OIC-2025.

Despite the instability of international markets, following the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and armed conflicts

in several regions of the world, intra-OIC trade increased from 701 billion USD in 2019 to 873 billion USD in 2022, marking a growth of 24.58%. This progress follows the development of exchanges in energy products, food products, and manufactured goods. The evolution of primary product prices and the rise in the dollar exchange rate contributed to the increase in Intra-OIC trade, which currently represents an average of 19.26% of the external trade of member countries.

The main actors of Intra-OIC trade in 2022 are the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Oman, Egypt, Bangladesh, and Qatar. These countries accounted for about 73.3% of Intra-OIC trade, amounting to 640.25 billion dollars. ■





ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS BY SEMI-TRAILERS

# Challenges to Trade Facilitation in OIC Member Countries

DESPITE THE NUMEROUS BENEFITS OF TRADE FACILITATION, OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES FACE SEVERAL CHALLENGES, RANGING FROM INFRASTRUCTURAL INADEQUACIES TO WEAK HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES, THROUGH TO CUMBERSOME AND COMPLEX ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, THE PERSISTENCE OF UNCLEAR REGULATIONS, TARIFF AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS, ETC.

Intra-OIC trade requires certain logistics to enable growth points for member countries. Among the challenges these countries face in this endeavor are ensuring adequate infrastructure. Port, road, and rail infrastructures remain inadequate. Such deficiencies hinder the smooth flow of trade.

In addition to this structural difficulty, a persisting administrative bureaucracy can impede commercial activities. Indeed, complex and cumbersome administrative procedures constitute a major barrier to trade.

On another note, OIC member countries need to strengthen their human and institutional capacities to implement effective trade facilitation policies. Observers have praised efforts to combat the weakness of human and institutional capacities in OIC member countries.

## Supporting Activities of OIC Institutions

Furthermore, diversifying the exportable offer is a necessity for developing foreign trade and intra-OIC investment. It was previously argued that it is important for OIC member states to actively participate in the activities of OIC Institutions in charge of intra-OIC trade development, namely those of ICDT, the IDB Group, ICCIA, SMIIC, and COMCEC projects within the framework of Project Financing.

Moreover, the persistence of tariff and non-tariff barriers is regrettable. Despite considerable efforts made by member states, the OIC General Secretariat, and its Institutions to promote intra-OIC trade and reduce barriers, numerous obstacles still exist. According to a study conducted by ICDT a decade ago, the difficul-

ties faced by exporting companies were related to customs services (76%), then logistics and legal aspects at 33% each. Contrary to widespread belief, financial difficulties were cited in only 10% of cases. The primary difficulty is related to logistics, particularly interstate transportation. The costs of transport (freight), which were very high between African ports and still are. In terms of financial difficulties, we can mention pre-financing, export guarantee insurance, or payment, especially in the repatriation of currencies from African countries. Having different currencies poses a challenge.

Another significant difficulty is the lack of transparency and predictability. It is true that trade regulations can be opaque and unpredictable, which discourages investors and businesses.■

# Initiatives for Trade Facilitation in OIC Member Countries

TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION AMONG OIC COUNTRIES, INSTITUTIONS AND OIC MEMBER STATES CONTRIBUTE TO THE DIRECTIVES INITIATED BY THE OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT, THROUGH ITS OIC TEN-YEAR ACTION PLAN 2025, THE ACTIVITIES OF ITS SUB-COMMITTEES, ESPECIALLY THOSE RELATED TO CAPACITY BUILDING, PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FAIRS, TRADE SHOWS, AND BUSINESS FORUMS, NOTABLY THOSE ORGANIZED BY THE IDB AND THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB), BUT ALSO TO SIMPLIFY THEIR EXTERNAL TRADE AND INTRA-OIC INVESTMENT PROCEDURES TO ENERGIZE TRADE EXCHANGES BETWEEN MEMBER STATES.

To address the challenges of trade facilitation in OIC member countries, several initiatives have been put in place.

The OIC Trade Facilitation Program aims to simplify and harmonize trade procedures and regulations, strengthen human and institutional capacities, and promote cooperation among member countries. Goals include increasing the volume of trade exchanges between OIC member countries, diversifying OIC member countries' exports, attracting foreign direct investments into OIC member countries, and contributing to the economic growth and sustainable development of OIC member countries.

To achieve this, the initiative particularly intends to increase intra-OIC cooperation, through: strengthening coordination between Border Control Agencies, developing infrastructure, improving maritime, air, and land connections between member countries, and investing in information and communication technologies to facilitate e-commerce. In support of the private sector,

the OIC Trade Facilitation Program calls for supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by facilitating their access to foreign markets and strengthening their capacities in production, marketing, and management.

## **A Battery of Measures to Facilitate Trade**

At the international trade level, it involves strengthening the OIC's position through negotiating preferential trade agreements with other countries and regional organizations, enhancing the positioning of OIC member countries in multilateral trade negotiations, and promoting the participation of OIC member countries in global value chains.

The OIC Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC) is another initiative to facilitate trade. It is a system aimed at increasing trade exchanges between OIC member countries by granting them tariff preferences.

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is a program to assist developing countries, including

several OIC member countries, to leverage trade for development.

In terms of technical assistance, the OIC Center for Trade and Development (COMCEC) provides OIC member countries with assistance in implementing trade facilitation policies.

Other measures have also been taken, including the electronic submission and processing of trade transactions, improving the logistic performance index by more than 10%, national infrastructures, and the maritime connectivity rate for coastal countries.

To facilitate direct contact between businessmen from OIC countries, Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) and investments have been established in several OIC countries. They have thus developed tools to incentivize exports and investment, aiming to facilitate cross-border trade and foreign direct investments.

Regarding the many initiatives of the IDB on this subject, we will return to them in more detail in the continuation of this Focus. ■



ROOM OF THE INTERNATIONAL SILK ROAD CONFERENCE, ORGANIZED BY ICESCO AND THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES ON THE SILK ROAD OF SHANGHAI UNIVERSITY AND THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO, ON DECEMBER 4, 2023 IN RABAT

# ICDT’s Activities in Trade Facilitation

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT) HAS MADE NUMEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTRA-OIC TRADE FACILITATION. IMPLEMENTING THE PREFERENTIAL TARIFF SCHEME FOR TPS-OIC, AN OIC MEMBER STATES’ SINGLE WINDOW FOR TRADE, AN OBSERVATORY FOR NON-TARIFF BARRIERS BY ICDT, AND THE OIC TRADE HELPDESK PLATFORM ([HTTPS://OIC.TRADEHELPDESK.ORG](https://oic.tradehelpdesk.org)), A SINGLE ENTRY POINT TO EXPLORE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES AND MARKET ACCESS CONDITIONS IN THE REGION, NOT TO MENTION COUNTLESS ACTIVITIES, AIMS TO MITIGATE OBSTACLES TO INTRA-OIC TRADE.

Since its establishment, the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) has organized several general trade fairs, specialized exhibitions, Business Forums, seminars and training workshops in international trade professions, numerous webinars, buyer-seller meetings, and established a business center... to boost intra-OIC trade. Besides promoting such activities, ICDT endeavors to orga-

nize several awareness seminars on the importance of the TPS-OIC Agreement and its protocols.

ICDT organized alongside OIC countries’ fairs, several Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) and Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) Forums, Workshops on Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade in OIC countries, ICDT INVEST DAYS... to identify obstacles to

trade and investment between OIC countries and seek solutions to gradually dismantle these barriers. In the recent past, ICDT launched the TPO website that will relay trade information directly from OIC Countries (<http://tpo.oicinvest.org/>) and the Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade website (<http://ntb.icdt-oic.org/survey>). More recently, the OIC Trade HelpDesk platform (<https://oic.tradehelpdesk.org>)



RIYADH: MS. LATIFA ELBOUABDELLAOUI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ICDT, HAD A MEETING WITH MR. SAAD ALKHALB, CEO OF SAUDI EXPORTS.



MS. LATIFA ELBOUABDELLAOUI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ICDT, MET H.E. DR. MANSUR MUKHTAR VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS OF THE IDB (ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK), ON JANUARY 21, 2024 AT THE IDB HEADQUARTERS IN JEDDAH.

aims to be a single entry point to explore trade opportunities and market access conditions in the region.

### Trade Facilitation at the Forefront

Bilaterally, ICDT has organized and continues to organize several business missions of nationals from OIC member countries to Casablanca and elsewhere, aiming to promote trade and investment between OIC countries.

As recently as December 4, 2023, in Rabat, Morocco, ICDT participated in the International Silk Road Conference, organized by ICESCO, the Shanghai University's Silk Road Strategic Studies Center, and the Embassy of China in the Kingdom of Morocco. The importance of the new Silk Road, launched by China in 2013 for the development of international trade and the key role played by the Kingdom of Morocco in its realization, especially on the African continent, were central to the discussions.

A few weeks later, Mrs. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of ICDT, met with H.E. Dr. Mansur Mukhtar, Vice-President of Operations of the Islamic

Development Bank (IDB), on January 21, 2024, at the IDB headquarters in Jeddah. The meeting allowed them to discuss cooperation possibilities related to food security, health security, women's empowerment, and E-phyto programs for African member countries.

The next day, the Director-General of ICDT made a courtesy visit to the CEO of Saudi Eximbank in Riyadh, on January 22, 2024. Their exchange focused on cooperation to promote the Saudi private sector in Africa, emphasizing food and health security areas. Topics discussed included participation in events such as the OIC Health Expo, Food Expo, ICDT Invest Days Banjul in Gambia, and other countries. Additionally, discussions covered the development of Saudi SMEs in OIC countries.

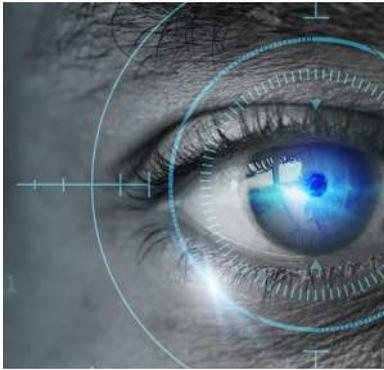
On the same day in Riyadh, Mrs. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of ICDT, had a meeting with Mr. Saad Alkhalb, CEO of Saudi Exports. In the same vein as the previous meetings, it allowed evaluating cooperation opportunities in coordinating events such as fairs and exhibitions in Saudi Arabia and African OIC member

countries. The purpose of this visit was to enhance trade exchanges between OIC countries and Saudi Arabia.

### Continuously Promoting Trade

Very recently, ICDT participated in the Workshop «Emerging Approaches to International Investment Agreements of African Member States.» This event, organized by IDB and UNCTAD in collaboration with ICDT, took place in Casablanca on January 30 and 31, 2024. The goal was to share best practices in International Investment Agreements, with a particular focus on Africa, to support the operational implementation of the AfCFTA. Note that more than 15 African countries participated in this meeting.

On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at the Center's headquarters in Casablanca, Mrs. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director-General of ICDT, received a delegation composed of representatives from ministerial departments and private operators of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This meeting, part of a prospecting visit by the delegation to the Kingdom of Morocco, provided an opportunity for the DG. ■



# POINT OF VIEW

INTERVIEW

## HASSAN SENTISSI EL IDRISSE

President of ASMEX and the ASMEX Halal Club

THE HALAL CONCEPT HOLDS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT, WITH 1.8 BILLION CONSUMERS AND GROWTH EXCEEDING 6% ANNUALLY. IT'S A MARKET VALUED AT 2 TRILLION DOLLARS, WITH MORE THAN 90% DOMINATED BY NON-OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE RISE OF THIS BUSINESS WORLDWIDE AND THE ABSENCE OF MOROCCAN PRODUCTS IN MAJOR MARKETS FOR HALAL-CERTIFIED PRODUCTS HAVE LED ASMEX TO ESTABLISH A HALAL CLUB IN 2015. SERVING AS A PLATFORM FOR REFLECTION AND ACTION IN FAVOR OF BUSINESSES AND RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS, NOTABLY THE MOROCCAN INSTITUTE OF STANDARDIZATION (IMANOR), WHICH HAS ESTABLISHED A MOROCCAN HALAL LABEL UNDER THE MOROCCAN ASSOCIATION OF EXPORTERS (ASMEX), THIS CLUB SUPPORTS EXPORTING COMPANIES, ORGANIZES MEETINGS IN VARIOUS REGIONS, RAISES AWARENESS, IDENTIFIES NEW PRODUCTS, AND PARTICIPATES IN PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES DEDICATED TO HALAL. MR. HASSAN SENTISSI EL IDRISSE, PRESIDENT OF ASMEX, SHARES MORE INSIGHTS.

**TIJARIS: What is the origin of the ASMEX Halal Club, and when was it created?**

Mr. Hassan Sentissi El Idrissi: One of ASMEX's missions is to seek opportunities and new markets for its members' exports. The global rise of the halal business and the absence of Moroccan products in major markets for halal-certified products naturally prompted us to reflect on how to capture market shares in this niche, which is over 75% dominated by non-OIC member countries.

Hence, the idea to create a Club in 2015, intended as a platform for reflection and action in favor of busi-

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*The ASMEX Halal Club is chaired by a personality committed to the field of halal who is Mr. Adnane El Gueddari, General Manager of the UMNIA BANK participatory BANK.*

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nesses and responsible institutions, notably the Moroccan Institute of Standardization (IMANOR), which has established a Moroccan halal label. I would like to pay tribute to its Director General, Mr. Abderrahim Taïbi, for his continuous efforts to strengthen the positioning of the Moroccan halal label globally.

**The ASMEX Halal Club is chaired by a committed personality in the halal domain, Mr. Adnane El Gueddari, General Manager of the participative bank UMNIA BANK.**

**What are its goals and targets?**

The ASMEX Halal Club targets exporting companies whose

Président de l'Association Marocaine des Exportateurs (ASMEX) depuis 2014, M. Hassan Sentissi El Idrissi a d'abord travaillé pendant 23 ans à la Banque Marocaine du Commerce Extérieur (BMCE), aujourd'hui Bank of Africa, où il fut Directeur de toutes les agences BMCE. Dans ce secteur, il a été Directeur Général de l'Union Marocaine des Banques. Premier investisseur à Laâyoune, toutes industries confondues, il est le Fondateur de la Société COPELIT au capital de 30 000 000 DH, plus importante unité de production de farine et huile de poisson de tout le continent africain. Entre autres activités, il détient l'unité de congélation la plus importante du Royaume et la première unité de farine et huile de poisson au Sénégal, COPELIT SÉNÉGAL. Consul Honoraire de la République de Bulgarie, il est le Fondateur de la table ronde au Maroc, Président fondateur de l'ANAFAP (Association Nationale des Fabricants de Farine et d'Huile de poisson), de la FENIP (Fédération Nationale des Industries de Transformation et de valorisation des Produits de la Pêche auprès de la CGEM, de l'AFIEX (Association Africaine des Importateurs et Exportateurs de Produits Halieutiques) et du Conseil d'Affaires maroco-russe.



*The ASMEX Halal Club is working to support IMANOR in its efforts to raise awareness and popularize the halal labeling, which also inquires about sanitary standards, food chain safety and the non-toxicity of the product.*

products are halal-certified, and those with an exportable offer that could interest halal product importing markets.

The ASMEX-created Halal Club aims particularly to raise awareness among exporting companies about the opportunities in the halal business, encourage them to get certified to seize these opportunities... It also supports IMANOR in its awareness-raising and popularization efforts of halal labeling, which also requires health standards, food chain safety, and non-toxicity of the product. The Halal Club also proposes improvement and support avenues for company certification, instills halal culture

within companies and among consumers, etc.

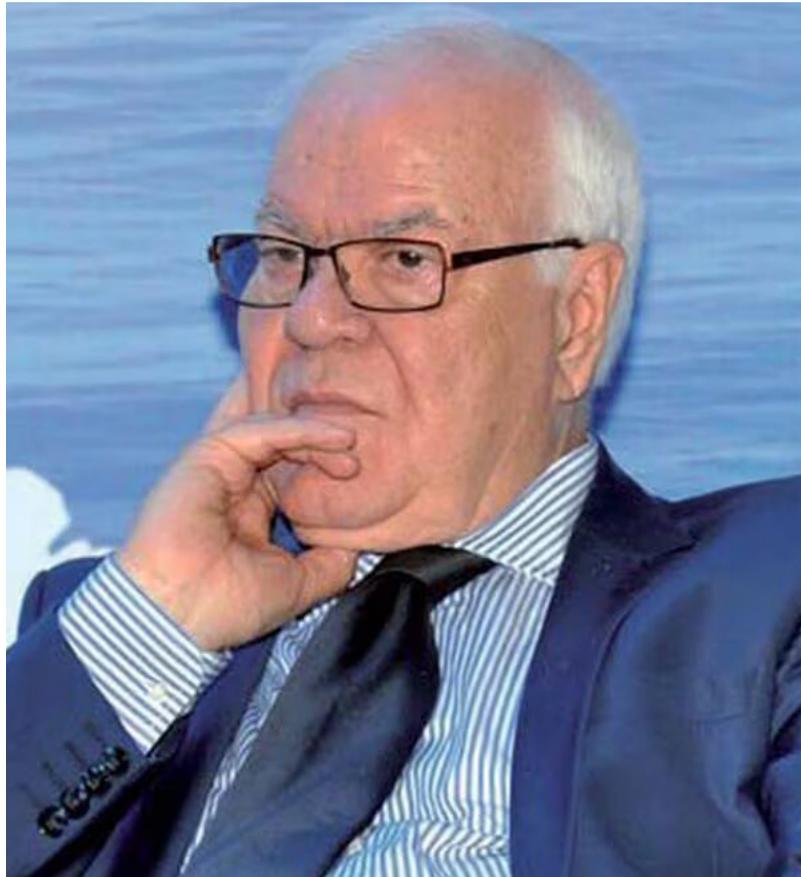
#### **What does ASMEX offer its member companies in terms of authenticating their products and services?**

ASMEX supports its members on several fronts. In terms of raising economic operators' awareness about the stakes and opportunities of the global halal market and the importance of halal certification standards for accessing this market, supporting participation in halal-focused fairs to learn from international experiences, meet potential clients, or propose measures to ease the certification process..., our

association stands by the companies. It lobbies for the recognition of the halal label by other international organizations during international meetings...

#### **How is the Moroccan halal label promoted?**

The Moroccan halal label is promoted in various ways. Measures range from organizing and/or participating in halal-focused forums, raising awareness around different training programs launched by IMANOR, to organizing participation in international promotional actions dedicated to halal, distributing specific flyers, etc.



### And how does one access this label and the Club?

The Club is open to any company whose products are halal-certified or have the potential to be certified. Access to the label follows a procedure with IMANOR.

### What actions does the Halal Club undertake?

Among the Halal Club's actions are organizing meetings in various regions to raise company awareness and identify new products with potential for the halal business, as well as participating in promotional actions dedicated to halal. A mission is currently underway with IMANOR in Russia, to raise awareness among the Russian Muslim community about Moroccan halal-certified products and establish mutual recognition of labels

*The main obstacle lies in the cost of certification that small companies or cooperatives cannot bear. We have proposed to the government to introduce the label free of charge for this category of companies for at least a period of 3 to 5 years...*

between the two countries. In this regard, a series of meetings are scheduled with Russian authorities responsible for halal, as well as audits of some Russian companies conducted by IMANOR.

This mission, organized at the invitation of the authorities responsible for halal in Russia, opens new prospects for developing Moroccan halal product exports in this significant region of 90 million Muslim consumers (Editor's note: Russia and neighboring countries).

### What obstacles have you encountered? What have you done or are doing to overcome them?

The main obstacle lies in the cost of certification, which small companies or cooperatives cannot afford. We have proposed to the government to make the label free for this category ■

Propos recueillis par D. MBaye

# FREEZE FRAME



On January 29, 2024, in Rabat, the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) held the 22nd Meeting of Economic Counselors at the Embassies of OIC Member States accredited to the Kingdom of Morocco, aiming to deepen discussions with member countries regarding the activities planned by ICDT for 2024.

# Trade, Investment, and Finance for Development

ENHANCED COOPERATION IN TRADE, INVESTMENT, AND FINANCIAL SECTORS IS CRUCIAL FOR PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE IN OIC MEMBER STATES. A QUICK ANALYSIS OF THESE SECTORS IN THESE STATES REVEALS A NUMBER OF STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND LINGERING WEAKNESSES.

OIC-2025 is an action program, developed based on the vision and principles outlined in the Charter of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The directives contained in agreements, conventions, and various declarations and resolutions adopted by OIC forums provide the necessary framework for the development paradigm pursued in this action program. Trade, compared to OIC's total trade, is the most commonly used measure to assess the level of intra-OIC economic integration and cooperation. Yet, progress in intra-OIC trade cooperation remains insufficient. If the level of trade cooperation is to reach desired levels, it is necessary to quickly operationalize trade facilitation systems, such as the OIC's Preferential Trade System (OIC-TPS), export credit and investment insurance, as well as the recognition of standards, technical regulatory procedures, and conformity assessment.

## Significant Room for Improvement

Financial flows indicate their growing attractiveness to foreign investors and the improvement of the business environment. Furthermore, the external debt burden of member states, when measured against their GDP and exports, has been declining for several years, relieving member states of the excessive burden of debt maintenance, strengthening their international positioning, and presenting investment opportunities in the domestic economy.

It's true that the global Islamic finance market, with \$2,249.2 billion in 2022, expected to reach \$4,900 billion in 2025, still represents a small part of the



global financial system. Nevertheless, Islamic finance has inherent strengths. Indeed, it offers significant advantages in terms of stability, development, inclusiveness, and sustainability in economies where it is practiced. Its growth remains uninterrupted and averages about 20% per year when the global financial system is going through turbulence. OIC member states hold a predominant share, exceeding 95%, in the global assets of Islamic finance, trade, and intra-OIC investment.

With the action program, OIC member states aim to promote trade among themselves, establish free trade and export processing zones, and facilitate intra-OIC investments, including domestic FDI flows by the public and private sectors.



It also involves improving the partnership between public and private enterprises within and between OIC countries, developing partnerships among productive sectors of member states, to enhance the competitiveness of production and export entities.

To achieve these goals, the plan always relies on increasing the production and competitiveness of products in member states, increasing intra-OIC trade, implementing the OIC's Preferential Trade System (TPS-OIC), and encouraging OIC member states in other areas of regional trade agreements (RTA).

Continuing the implementation of the COMCEC strategy to build an interdependent Islamic World in the entirety of its sectors would contribute to increasing trade and investment within OIC by enhancing economic and trade cooperation among member states.

### Development of Islamic Finance

The success of participative finance relies on the development of a healthy and well-regulated Islamic financial system and related institutions aimed at ensuring the orderly development of this branch. Facilitating a regular flow of financial resources, direct foreign and portfolio investments between OIC member states, and developing Islamic financial products would result in notable progress in the socio-economic development in OIC member states. Of course, it will be necessary to continue promoting cooperation in Islamic banking and finance, such as regulations, the adoption of standards, Sharia governance mechanisms, and product development. ■





VIEW OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE TRAINING WORKSHOP ON EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE LABOR MARKET

# Training Workshop on Effective Information Systems for the Labor Market

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT), IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MALAYSIAN SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANISATION (SOCSCO), ORGANIZED A TRAINING WORKSHOP ON EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR THE LABOR MARKET, FROM JANUARY 17 TO 18, 2024, VIA AN ONLINE VIDEO CONFERENCE PLATFORM

Within the framework of the OIC Public Employment Services Network (OIC-PESNET) and the SESRIC Public Employment Services Capacity Building Program (PES-CAB), the online Training Workshop on Effective Information Systems for the Labor Market, organized by ICDT in partnership with SOCSCO of Malaysia, from January 17 to 18, 2024, was led by competent experts from the latter organization.

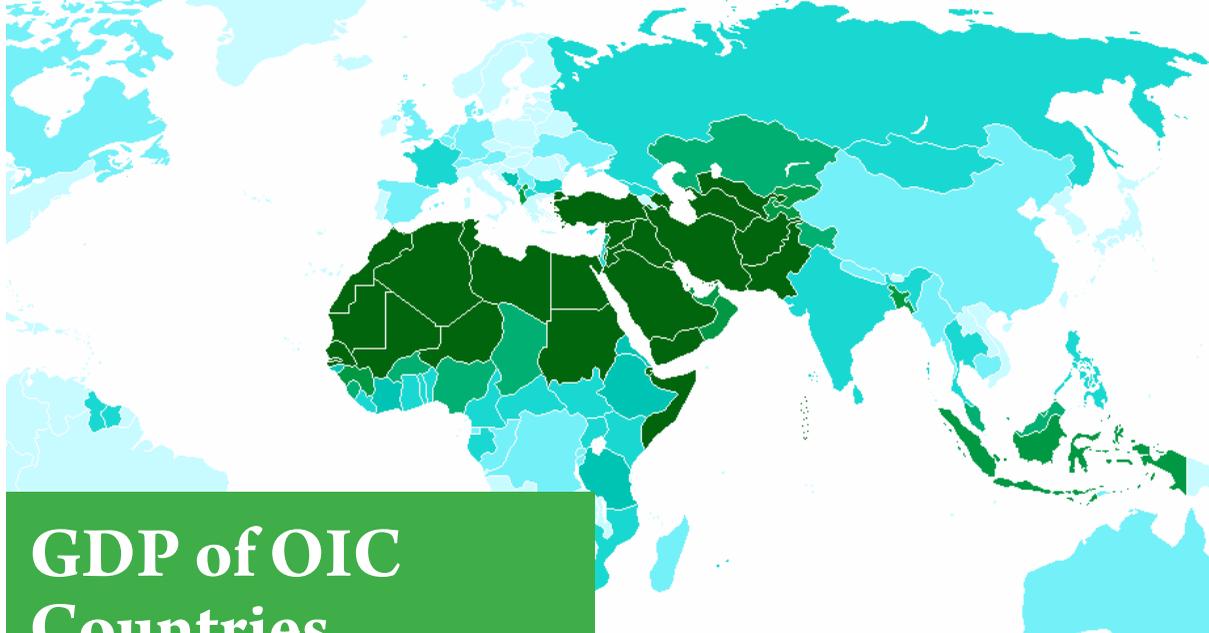
Organized for the benefit of experts and leaders of agencies and/or national public services authorities (PES) in OIC member

countries, the Training Workshop aimed to improve the participants' capacity in designing and developing effective labor market information systems, to provide an overview of the latest tools and techniques for data collection, analysis, and dissemination. The main objectives included facilitating knowledge sharing and networking among participants to enhance regional cooperation and collaboration in the field of public employment services.

It should be noted that OIC-PESNET is an OIC platform established to create closer coo-

peration between the national public employment services agencies/authorities of OIC member countries by sharing knowledge, experience, and best practices.

It is also worth mentioning that SESRIC serves as the Secretariat of OIC-PESNET and implements a specific capacity-building program, namely the Public Employment Services Capacity Building Program (PES-CAB), to support the efforts of OIC member countries in developing the capacities of institutional and human resources in the field of public employment services. ■



## GDP of OIC Countries Compared to Global GDP

SPANNING 57 MEMBERS ACROSS FOUR MAIN GEOGRAPHICAL ZONES, THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC) COVERS THE ARAB-MUSLIM SPACE, THE HISTORICAL AND CENTRAL CORE OF ISLAM THAT EXTENDS FROM MOROCCO TO AFGHANISTAN, INCLUDING IRAN AND TURKEY, THE SAHEL-SAHARAN SUB-REGION STRETCHING FROM WEST AFRICA TO THE HORN OF AFRICA, THE LARGEST ENSEMBLE BEING THE MALAY-INDONESIAN SPACE, REPRESENTING SOUTH ASIAN ISLAM, AND A FINAL GROUP OF 4 REPUBLICS FROM THE FORMER USSR (KAZAKHSTAN, UZBEKISTAN, TAJIKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN). IN TERMS OF POPULATION, IT MAKES UP A QUARTER OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION BUT GENERATED LESS THAN 9% OF GLOBAL GDP IN 2022.

With 2 billion individuals and a growing economy, OIC member countries are significant on the global stage. However, economically, none of them are in the world's top 10, and in 2022, they generated less than 9% of global GDP. A clear example is the comparison between Indonesia and Spain, which have comparable economic weights, noting that the population of the former is 6 times that of the latter. Further analysis reveals two blocks, namely hydrocarbon producers and importers.

Within the subgroup of oil countries, nearly a quarter of OIC affiliated countries are members of OPEC+ with an average growth exceeding 3.5% since the early 2000s, well above global growth. Today, sovereign funds are invested internationally and diversification

in the economies of the OIC space has become a reality. The development of local industries, the promotion of high-end tourism, or ambitious projects in Saudi Arabia (Vision 2030 Plan), Kuwait (Vision 2035)... illustrate this dynamic. A similar trend of diversification is real in South Asia, notably in Malaysia. However, the diversification effort is less effective in the Sahel-Saharan space and Central Asia. In this latter sub-region, OIC member countries have owed their growth only to their strategic geographical location between China, Russia, and Europe.

### Significant Advantages

Driven by the growth of South Asian countries – exacerbated by China's breakthrough since its WTO accession –, the economies of the oil-importing country bloc have progressed vigorously. This growth also stems from the demographic dividend, low labor costs, the strength of the domestic market, historical specialization, and the power of a competitive manufacturing industry (food industry, automotive, chemical-parachemical, furniture, steel industry, textile...) in Morocco and Turkey.

The demographic transition of OIC countries is indeed unfinished, but will continue. Their economies are diversifying, transforming, and becoming less dependent on hydrocarbons. It is gratifying to note that diversification is spreading and driving growth. In the same vein, the main GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) analysts of S&P Global Ratings are organizing an interactive live webinar on Wednesday, February 21, 2024. Discussions revolved around the opportunities and challenges GCC economies face due to climate transition. The main focuses were on the positioning of GCC sovereign funds in the energy transition, initiatives by GCC companies, banks, and insurance companies, renewable investments in the region, and trends in the GCC sustainable debt markets. ■



# Trade Facilitation in the Arab Region

TRADE FACILITATION IS AN ONGOING PROCESS THAT REQUIRES COMMITMENT FROM ALL INVOLVED STAKEHOLDERS. BY ADDRESSING PERSISTENT CHALLENGES AND CONTINUING TO STRIVE FOR PROGRESS, THE ARAB REGION CAN MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF TRADE AND REALIZE ITS FULL ECONOMIC POTENTIAL.

Facilitating trade in the Arab region helps to boost economic growth, investment, and job creation. A quick overview of the opportunities and prospects in the Arab zone highlights a significant regional market of over 400 million consumers, with substantial growth potential, the development of a Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), offering opportunities for the growth of intra-Arab trade, and, in the short to medium term, digital technologies that can play a crucial role in simplifying procedures and enhancing competitiveness.

Within Arab countries, the private sector plays an important role in trade facilitation. Moreover, to simplify administrative procedures and improve communication among trade actors, technology can play a crucial role. Additionally, it's important for governmental executives to strengthen human capacities for better trade management.

### **Integration as a Supplement**

From the OIC's perspective, the trade facilitation program takes into account member states' concerns regarding the instability of international markets and the rising costs associated with transport and logistics. This program aims to help reduce trade barriers through the implementation of technical assistance projects that have a direct impact on trade between member states. Planned activities include support for the implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Trade Facilitation Agreement and negotiations of other WTO Agreements. Moreover, this program pays special attention to introducing digital techniques to address transport and transit issues between member states.

Within the WTO and regional groupings, OIC member states are called to actively participate in multilateral trade negotiations. For its part, ICDT contributes to the technical support of member states in these negotiations. It is reported that activities organized by ICDT aim to offer negotiators information on the status of issues discussed at the WTO, as well as topics related to regional integration, such as the African Continental Free

Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Arab League, and other agreements at the Asian level. Workshops took place in 2023 in partnership with the IDB, UNCTAD, and the WTO, focusing on the outcomes of MC12, preparations for MC13, and the implementation of AfCFTA.

### **Challenges and Initiatives**

Crucial for economic development, trade facilitation in the Arab region helps reduce costs

## **Digitalization of procedures: spearhead of the CIDC for the facilitation of intra-OIC trade**

In the modern era, the digitalization of procedures has become an essential tool for the development of commerce. The introduction of the digital element makes it possible to automate many tasks, which reduces slowness and speeds up processes. This allows companies to process orders, transactions and requests faster and more efficiently.

At the OIC level, digitalization will offer companies certain opportunities in terms of access to larger international markets. Geographical and procedural barriers are reduced, saving time and cost. This is likely to increase the competitiveness of companies in the OIC zone. Aware of the importance of digitalization as a means of reducing barriers to intra-OIC trade, the CIDC is working to carry out concrete activities, in favor of private and public operators from several member countries. To this end, and since June 2020, the CIDC has taken the initiative to sign an innovative Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Trade Facilitation Alliance (GATF).

The objective is to assist the Member States regarding the simplification of foreign trade procedures, via the digitization of control certificates, in order to streamline the customs process. Assistance programs for the establishment of an electronic phytosanitary certificate (e-phyto) were launched in Nigeria in December 2022 and in Togo in September 2022. They aim to simplify the trade of agricultural products, through technical assistance for optimal use of the digital element. Other projects are being finalized, in particular the digitization of the Health Certificate for animal products (e-Vet), such as fishing products, the digitization of Customs services (e-customs) via ports and customs services, in order to facilitate the transit and clearance of goods for Morocco and other countries.

and delays associated with trade transactions, stimulating economic growth, investment, and job creation. However, it still faces a number of challenges. Transport and communication infrastructures in the Arab region are often insufficient and of poor quality. Administrative procedures related to trade are often complex and cumbersome. Other difficulties that hinder trade in the Arab region add to these challenges.

Fortunately, several initiatives have been taken to facilitate trade in the region. Early on, the establishment of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA). Signed on February 27, 1981, by the contracting parties (Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Sudan, Sultanate of Oman, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen), GAFTA came into effect on January 1, 1998, to liberalize trade among Arab countries. Its scope covers all products originating from Arab countries. An excellent initiative, whose Achilles' heel lies in the agreed treatment, especially in terms of duty-free importation and tariff dismantling.

Adopted in 2010, the Arab Action Program for Trade Facilitation was launched to identify trade obstacles and establish measures to eliminate them. Among other initiatives, the Arab Trade Information System (ATIC). It is an online information system that provides businesses with information on trade regulations and customs procedures in the Arab region.

**One Step Forward, Two Steps Back**

Progress has been made in trade facilitation in the Arab region, notably in terms of reducing



SALLE DÉDIÉE AUX RÉUNIONS DE LA GZALE AU SEIN DU SIÈGE DE LA LIGUE ARABE AU CAIRE



LE MAROC A PLACÉ, À LA LUMIÈRE DES DÉVELOPPEMENTS MAJEURS ET DES DÉFIS ÉCONOMIQUES, SOCIAUX ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT AUXQUELS LA RÉGION ARABE EST CONFRONTÉE, L'ACTIVATION DE L'ACTION ARABE COMMUNE ET LA CONSOLIDATION DE L'UNITÉ ARABE AU CŒUR DE SON AGENDA DIPLOMATIQUE.

customs duties in most Arab countries. Measures have also been taken to simplify trade-related administrative procedures. Concurrently, investments have been made to improve transport and communication infrastructures in the Arab region.

Nevertheless, several challenges persist. To facilitate trade in the Arab region, it is important to effectively implement the initiatives that have been taken in this regard. By strengthening regional cooperation, Arab countries will be able to better address common trade facilitation obstacles. Efforts also remain to be made in promoting intra-Arab trade. It is observed that intra-Arab trade remains low. Yet, it is important to promote it.

**Simplifying Administrative Procedures**

By digitizing documents and processes and adopting single electronic platforms for commercial transactions, digitizing procedures is a notable advancement in simplifying administrative procedures.

Adopting common standards and procedures among Arab countries and reducing unnecessary documentary requirements, aiding in harmonizing regulations, benefits to strengthen trade flows in the zone.

Online publication of trade regulations and procedures, or setting up single information desks for businesses, enhance transparency. It should be noted that the OIC's Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC), a legal instrument on the exchange ■

# FREEZE FRAME



The ICDT took part in the workshop «Emerging approaches to international investment agreements of African Member States». This event, organized by the IDB and UNCTAD in collaboration with the ICDT, took place in Casablanca on January 30 and 31, 2024.



# STATS

## EMPLOYMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

# What Projects?

AS A GROUP, THE MEMBER STATES OF THE OIC ARE WELL-ENDOWED WITH POTENTIAL ECONOMIC RESOURCES IN VARIOUS SECTORS, SUCH AS AGRICULTURE AND ARABLE LAND, ENERGY AND MINES, HUMAN RESOURCES. THEY CONSTITUTE A LARGE STRATEGIC COMMERCIAL REGION. YET, THIS INHERENT POTENTIAL IS NOT REFLECTED IN REASONABLE LEVELS OF ECONOMIC AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.



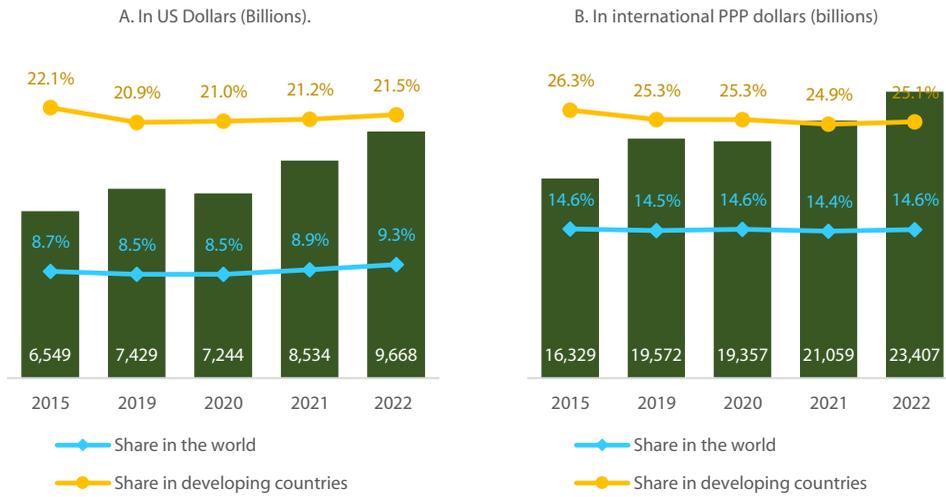
Employment, infrastructure, and industrialization are among 18 areas considered as priorities of the OIC-2025, an action program developed based on the vision and principles enshrined in the Charter of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. To recall, this Charter gives priority attention to science, technology, and innovation, as well as promoting women's rights and creating conditions conducive to good education for children and youth in an environment free from all forms of intimidation, religious, or cultural discrimination.

The OIC's agenda with the scope of its work has also expanded, moving from a primarily political domain to many new areas of immediate concern related to human development and well-being. These include socio-economic empowerment, health, good governance, human rights, water and sanitation, to name just a few.

What uses of the factors of production? In 2013, the 57 member states of the OIC, which represented 22.6% of the total global population, produced only 11.2% of the total global GDP. At that time, the average GDP per capita in the member states was recorded at \$6,076, which is \$1,234 and \$6,290 less than other developing countries and the global average, respectively. The average real GDP per capita growth rate of the OIC member states was recorded at 1.8% in 2013, against 2.2% globally and 4.1% in other developing countries. The inefficient use of available production factors in the member states is also evident in productivity indicators, such as labor productivity growth rates and total factor productivity growth. Between 2001 and 2012, the annualized labor productivity growth rate of the member states was on average 0.84%, while the average for other developing

countries was 1.27% over the same period. Similarly, the growth rate of total factor productivity in the member states, on average, was lower (2.53%) compared to other developing countries (4.39%) over the period 2001-2012. In 2014, the average unemployment rates in the member states were recorded at 7.6% compared to 5.1% in other developing countries and 5.9% globally. During this period, the figures on youth unemployment in the member states are even less promising, with a rate of 15.6% compared to 10.9% in other developing countries and 12.9% globally. Between Goals and Achievements Developed countries have reached their current level of prosperity by transforming an economy based on agriculture first into an economy based on industry, and then on knowledge and service-based economies, and by providing resilient and reliable infrastructure.

**Total GDP and world shares of OIC countries (at current prices)**



Source: Authors' calculation based on the IMF, World economic outlook Database April 2022.  
 Note: P= Projection. The data exclude Syria for the entire reporting period and Afghanistan and Lebanon 2021 and 2022

The member states of the OIC host nearly two-thirds of the world's crude oil and natural gas reserves. Yet, in terms of refining capacity for energy products, efficiency of industrial energy use, access to energy, there is still a long way to go, it was said in the past. Access to reliable, modern, and affordable energy sources is a prerequisite for eradicating poverty and promoting economic growth. The OIC member states must step up their infrastructure development efforts. As a group, the OIC member states have a high potential for the development of a sustainable international tourism sector. Thus, this sector can make a tangible contribution to promoting socio-economic development and strengthening the bonds of solidarity among people. Therefore, the OIC member states must make efforts to significantly increase intra-OIC investments in the tourism sector, especially in the least developed countries.

An OIC GDP around 9% of the Global GDP Just a few months before the deadline of OIC-2025, it was observed, according to SES-ERIC, that at current prices, the total



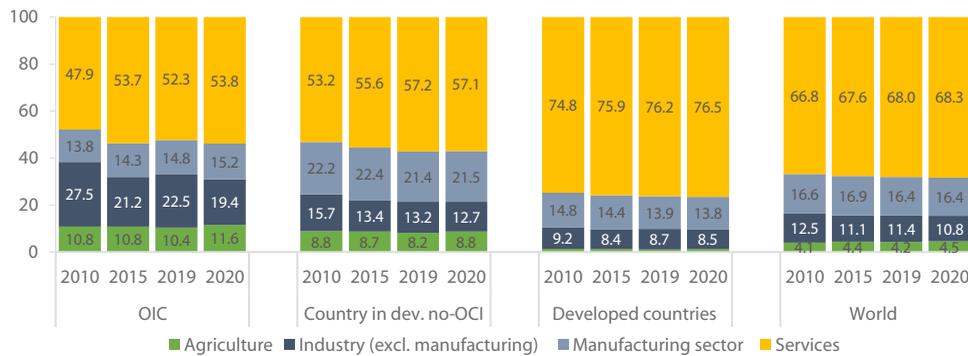
OIL DRILLING IN SAUDI ARABIA

GDP of the OIC countries, which contracted by 2.5% in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, increased by 18.6% to reach \$8.5 trillion in 2021 and surpassed the pre-pandemic level of 2019. Given the gradual recovery underway, it is estimated to increase further to reach \$9.7 trillion in 2022. With this economic size, the OIC countries, as a group, represented 8.9% of the global GDP in 2021, 0.4 percentage points more than the previous year.

The share of OIC countries in the total GDP of developing countries also increased, from 21% in 2020 to 21.2% in 2021, indicating that the recovery of current production was faster in OIC countries compared to the rest of the world (see Graph A/ Total GDP and Global Shares of OIC Members)

In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) expressed in international dollars, the total GDP of the

### Value added by major economic activity (% of total)



Source: Authors' calculation based on the data-in current prices in US dollars from the UNSD, National Accounts Analysis of the main aggregates (AMA) .  
 Note: "Agriculture" includes agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing (ISIC A-B), "industry" includes mining, manufacturing, utilities and construction (ISIC-CF), and "services" include service activities (ISIC G-P). Data coverage: 57 OIC countries, 115 non-OIC developing countries and 39 developed countries.

OIC countries at current prices reached \$21.1 trillion in 2021, marking a 9.7% increase from the previous year. In 2022, it is expected to reach \$23.4 trillion. With these amounts, the OIC countries as a group accounted for 14.4% of the global GDP in 2021, a decrease of 0.2 percentage points from 2020, although projections indicate that this share will return to its 2020 level in 2022. Their share in the total GDP of developing countries also decreased in 2021, reaching a record level of 24.9%, but this share is expected to rise to 25.1% in 2022 (Graph B/ Total GDP and Global Shares of OIC countries). Considering the estimated share of OIC countries in the world population (24.2%) and in the population of developing countries (28.2%) in 2021, their share in GDP, whether in US dollars or in international dollars at purchasing power parity, remains below the desired levels.

Recent developments from the SESRIC for OIC countries show that the growth performances of OIC countries differ according to income groups, although

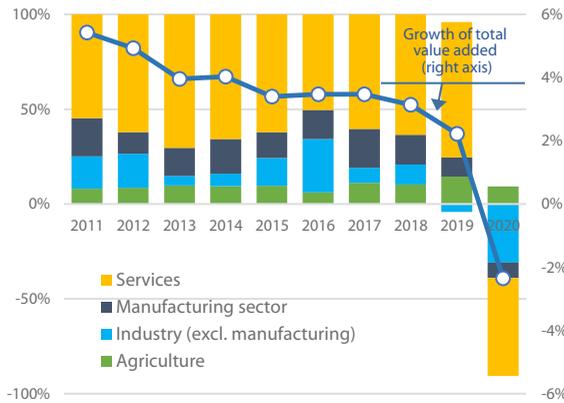


ROBOTIC ASSEMBLY PLANT

all experienced a contraction in 2020 and growth in 2021 (Graph 2.6). The economies of high-income countries rich in natural resources, which contracted the most (-4.7%) in 2020, recorded a growth rate of 2.6% in 2021, lower than the 3.5% average of the 2010-2019 period. A stronger growth rate of 6.4% is expected in 2022, supported by high oil prices, followed by a moderate rate of 3.5% in 2023. Having recorded a higher

average economic growth (5.5%) over the ten years preceding the pandemic compared to other groups, the upper-middle-income countries contracted by 2.3% in 2020. They strongly rebounded in 2021 with a growth of 11.4%, mainly due to the high growth rates recorded in Turkey (11.0%) and Libya (177.3%). After a relatively limited contraction (-0.6%) in 2020, the growth of lower-middle-income economies resumed with

**Sectoral contribution to the growth of added value in the OIC countries**



Source: Authors' calculation based on data - at constant 2015 prices in US dollars - from the UNSD, National Accounts - Analysis of the main aggregates (AMA).  
 Note: "Agriculture" includes agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing (ISIC A-B), "industry" includes mining, manufacturing, utilities and construction (ISIC C-F), and "services" include service activities (ISIC G-P). Data coverage: 57 OIC countries.



PART MACHINED BY A MODERN LATHE

a rate of 4.3% in 2021 and is expected to remain above the 2010-2019 average of 4.2% over the next two years. Low-income countries, which had recorded a lower average growth rate (2.5%) compared to other income groups over the 2010-2019 period, rebounded with a growth of 2.3% in 2021 after a contraction of 1.7% the previous year. Growth in these countries is expected to exceed the pre-pandemic average in the next two years, reaching 2.9% in 2022 and 4.9% the following year.

Diverse Economic Configurations The composition of GDP provides important indications about the structure of economies. The latest data available for 2020 show that agricultural activities, which constitute only 1.2% of the total value added in developed countries, have a high share of 11.6% of the total value added in OIC countries, which is even higher than in non-OIC developing countries (8.8%), see Graph Value added by major economic activity (% of total).

The agricultural sector is particularly important for OIC countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where its share in value added reaches 63% in Sierra Leone, 60% in Somalia, 41% in Niger, and 38% in Mali and the Comoros.

The share of non-manufacturing industry, which is much higher in OIC countries compared to the rest of the world, has slowly decreased over the last decade worldwide. For OIC countries, it has decreased from 27.5% in 2010 to a record low of 19.4% in 2020. The sector represents more than a third of the total value added in eight member countries that are heavily engaged in oil and gas extraction, namely Brunei Darussalam (43%), Qatar (42%), Oman (41%), Azerbaijan (39%), Iraq (38%), Guyana (37%), Libya (36%), and Kuwait (34%). The manufacturing sector, which has greater potential to promote productivity and competitiveness, has a share of 15.2% in the total value added of OIC countries, which is comparable to that of developed countries (13.8%), but significantly lower than that of non-OIC developing countries



EXTENT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE

(21.5%). The sector represents 36% of the total value added in Turkmenistan and 20-23% in 6 other member countries, namely Suriname, Malaysia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, and Bangladesh.

The service sector continues to play a key role in the majority of OIC economies, averaging 53.8% of the total value added in the OIC group. Yet, this share remains low when considering that the sector represents three-quarters (76.5%) of the total value added in developed countries and 57.1% in non-OIC developing countries, with the glo-

bal average being 68.3%. In OIC countries, this share reaches 90% in Lebanon, 87% in Djibouti, 78% in the Maldives, 70% in Palestine, and 68% in Jordan, while it is at least 50% in 33 other member countries. The service sector, which experienced an average annual growth of 4.5% during the 2010-2019 period, has also been the main contributor to the economic growth of OIC countries, generally representing more than 60% of the growth of the total value added at constant prices (See Graph Sectoral Contribution to the Growth of Value Added in OIC countries). Similarly, by contracting by 2.7% in 2020, this

sector was largely responsible for the decline in total value added that year, with nearly two-thirds of the total value added contraction (-1.4 percentage points of the -2.3% growth) coming from the service sector.

The contraction of the non-manufacturing industry (-4.3%) and the manufacturing industry (-1.5%) further worsened the contraction of the total value added by respectively -0.9 and -0.2 percentage points. The agricultural sector, which continued to grow (2.4%) in 2020, only offset a small part (0.3 percentage point) of the contraction. ■



# ICDT MAY 02-03, 2024 INVEST DAYS BANJUL



## ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL NEXT MAY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GAMBIAN INVESTMENT & EXPORT PROMOTION AGENCY (GIEPA), THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT) IS ORGANIZING ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL ON MAY 2 AND 3, 2024, IN BANJUL, REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA. THUS, THE GAMBIAN CAPITAL BECOMES THE THIRD VENUE IN THIS SERIES OF PIVOTAL BUSINESS EVENTS.

Organized by the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), a subsidiary body of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) tasked with developing trade and investments among member states, the ICDT Invest Days serve as a platform for promoting and developing investments between OIC member states.

Following the editions in Dakar and Nouakchott, Banjul will be the third destination of this business event series, scheduled for May 2 and 3, 2024, on the sidelines of the

OIC Heads of State Summit. This high-level meeting will highlight new investment opportunities in Gambia and strengthen economic relations between this country and the other 56 OIC member countries. It's important to note that the forum will bring together strategic investment players from various markets, public and private investors, investment promotion agencies, employers' federations, professional associations, bankers, insurers, and more. Alongside the ICDT and GIEPA, other stakeholders will include

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI), the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDB), the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), the African Guarantee and Economic Cooperation Fund (FAGACE), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and Afreximbank.



ARCH 22 IS A TRIUMPHAL ARCH LOCATED AT THE ENTRANCE TO BANJUL, THE CAPITAL OF THE GAMBIA.

As of now, Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director General of the ICDT, has met with H.E. Ms. Safie Lowe Ceesay, Ambassador of the Republic of Gambia to the Kingdom of Morocco, on Friday, February 9, 2024, at the Embassy of the Republic of Gambia in Rabat. The two parties discussed ways and means to further develop cooperation between the Centre and Gambian trade and investment institutions. During their meeting, the Director General of the ICDT expressed the Centre's readiness to work towards promoting economic partnership between Gambia and other OIC countries through these business meetings, ICDT Invest Days Banjul, on May 2 and 3, 2024.

### Strategic Investment Zone

The ICDT Invest Days Banjul are considered a showcase for Gambia as a strategic investment zone. This is especially true given the country benefits from a variety of trade agreements and preferential mar-

ket access through its membership in the OIC, AfCFTA, ECOWAS, etc. Among the sectors actively promoted by Gambia, special emphasis is placed on agro-industry, ICT, renewable energy, light industry, transport, and tourism. These represent numerous investment opportunities to strengthen economic relations between Gambia and the other OIC member countries.

The main goals of ICDT Invest Days Banjul are to promote Gambia as an investment destination and present its key investment opportunities to investors from OIC member countries. It will encourage the development of economic and commercial partnerships between OIC member countries and promote co-investment among the champions of Islamic economies for greater added value and regional integration. Among other objectives, the business forum will highlight cooperation and synergy among OIC member countries

to attract complementary investments in continental value chains. Following the event, stakeholders expect the realization of investment intentions on structuring projects, as well as the promotion of investments in intra-OIC value chains.

The ICDT Invest Days Banjul agenda includes an opening ceremony and panels featuring speeches, presentations, and corporate videos on investing in Gambia, Deal Rooms for B2B and B2G meetings between key investment actors and project sponsors in Gambia, and visits to local companies and projects.

It should be noted that Ms. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director General of the ICDT, and Mr. Ousainou Senghore, Director General of GIEPA, will deliver closing remarks, and a Gala Dinner will be hosted by GIEPA on the evening of Friday, May 3, 2024. ■

## Pre-Programme

### **THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2023**

8:30-9:00 AM

Registration and welcome of participants

9:00-10:00 AM

#### **Opening session**

Opening speeches according to the protocol defined by GIEPA and Gambian authorities

10:00-10:15 AM

Invest in Gambia Pitch:

10:15-11:15 AM

Investment:

- Business environment and risk management
- Public-private synergies for the promotion and development of investments

11:30 AM-1:00 PM

(Simultaneous sessions)

Business Room 1

Livestock & Agriculture, Fisheries

Business Room 2

Infrastructure & Construction

Business Room 3

Mining & Industry

2:30-4:00 PM

Business Room B2G 4

Energy & Oil

Business Room B2G 5

Tourism and Transport

Business Room B2G 6

ICT

2:00-4:15 PM

**Closing session**

### **FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2024**

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Visits to strategic sites

7:00-9:00 PM

Gala Dinner offered by the GIEPA

# Gambia, Land of Opportunities

SURNOMMÉE LA «CÔTE SOURIANTE DE L'AFRIQUE», LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE GAMBIE EST UNE PETITE NATION DE 11000 KM2 DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST, ENCLAVÉE DANS LE SÉNÉGAL ET QUI S'OUVRE SUR L'Océan Atlantique. SA POSITION GÉOGRAPHIQUE STRATÉGIQUE LE LONG DE LA CÔTE ATLANTIQUE ET LE RÔLE CENTRAL JOUÉ PAR LE FLEUVE GAMBIE QUI LA TRAVERSE CONSTITUENT AUTANT D'ATOUTS QUI CONFÈRENT À CE PAYS L'UNE DES ÉCONOMIES LES PLUS RÉSILIENTES DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST.

The Republic of Gambia's tremendous investment opportunities have led the ICDT to rank it third in the cycle of ICDT Invest Days. Consequently, alongside the OIC Heads of State Summit, the ICDT Invest Days Banjul are scheduled for May 4 and 5, 2024. This major event is an opportunity to strengthen economic relations between Gambia and other OIC member countries. A few figures

illustrate this point. The country has experienced remarkable economic expansion, with an annual growth rate estimated at 5.2% in 2022. This growth is driven by the tourism sector, a significant influx of funds, and proactive government initiatives to support the development pace. An essential aspect of this growth strategy involved implementing reforms to modernize the agricultural sec-

tor. According to UNCTAD, FDI flows in Gambia increased from 190 million dollars to 252 million dollars between 2020 and 2021, amid the global recovery after the world health crisis, indicating the country's growing investment potential.

Improving the Business Climate  
Commendable efforts have been made to continuously improve

the business environment, particularly with the Government's 2018 National Development Plan, which identifies 8 priority areas, with the commitment of institutions such as the Gambian Competition Commission (GCC), the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), GIEPA, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Agency (ADRA), the Credit Reference Bureau under the Central Bank of Gambia (CBG), and the Gambian Standards Bureau (GSB). The 2013 SWBR Act introduced a new registration agency under the Ministry of Justice. With the new system, the Online Single Window Business Registry (SWBR) serves as the sole point of contact for starting a business... while the Special Investment Certificate (SIC), the main incentive program, is available to both domestic and foreign investors committing to invest a minimum of 100,000 dollars and 250,000 dollars respectively in a priority sector and/or area. It's worth noting that fiscal incentives include income tax exemption for 5 years for priority sectors and 8 years for priority areas.

With a favorable climate and a 3-hour flight from Europe, Gambia has become a sought-after tourist destination in West Africa. The seaside, hinterland, and eco-tourism have benefited from significant private sector investments and offer adequate facilities. The tourism sector accounts for about 20% of GDP and is one of the government's priority sectors. Furthermore, the service sector as a whole (including tourism, trade, transport, and communications) collectively contributes 65% to Gambia's GDP. In contrast, the agricultural sector accounts for about 30% of GDP.

Gambia has become a sub-regional re-export hub, with industries benefiting from liberal trade poli-



THE ENTRANCE TO BANJUL, THE CAPITAL OF THE GAMBIA.



AERIAL VIEW OF THE GAMBIA MANGROVES



AERIAL VIEW OF THE FISHING VILLAGE OF TANJI.



HARVESTING CABBAGE IN AN AGRICULTURAL FIELD



POWER PLANT ON MOORED BOATS NEAR BANJUL BEACH IN THE GAMBIA



GENERAL MOTORS BUILDING



THE COASTLINE OF BANJUL, GAMBIA

cies and logistical infrastructure, with ongoing or planned development of the road network, telecommunications system, seaport, airport, and electrical grid. The country has several export processing zones (EPZs) and industrial parks that offer advantages to both foreign and local investors looking to establish or expand their businesses in the country.

The modernized Banjul International Airport has already received an investment of 14 million dollars and hosts the July 22nd Business Park, while the Banjul port, playing a crucial role in trade and the distribution of goods to neighboring countries, including Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, and others, is subject to continuous improvements. ■



# CALENDAR

- ▶ **22<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP**  
April 25, 2024 • Ankara, Turkey

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- ▶ **ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL**  
May 2-3, 2024 • Banjul, Gambia

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- ▶ **15<sup>TH</sup> OIC ISLAMIC SUMMIT**  
May 4-5, 2024 • Banjul, Gambia

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- ▶ **AIM CONGRESS (ANNUAL INVESTMENT MEETING)**  
May 7-9, 2024 • Abu Dhabi, UAE

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- ▶ **40<sup>TH</sup> COMCEC FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE**  
May 22-23, 2024 • Ankara, Turkey

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- ▶ **40<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS**  
July 16-17, 2024 • Yaounde, Cameroon

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- ▶ **ICDT INVEST DAYS YAOUNDE**  
July 15-17, 2024 • Yaounde, Cameroon

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- ▶ **5<sup>TH</sup> HEALTH EXPO IN OIC COUNTRIES**  
July 2024 • Dakar, Senegal

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- ▶ **4<sup>TH</sup> ADVISORY FORUM OF REGIONAL COOPERATION ORGANIZATIONS (RCO) OPERATING IN THE OIC REGION**  
September, 2024 • Marrakech, Morocco

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- ▶ **10<sup>TH</sup> OIC HALAL EXPO**  
October 8-12, 2024 • Tunis, Tunisia

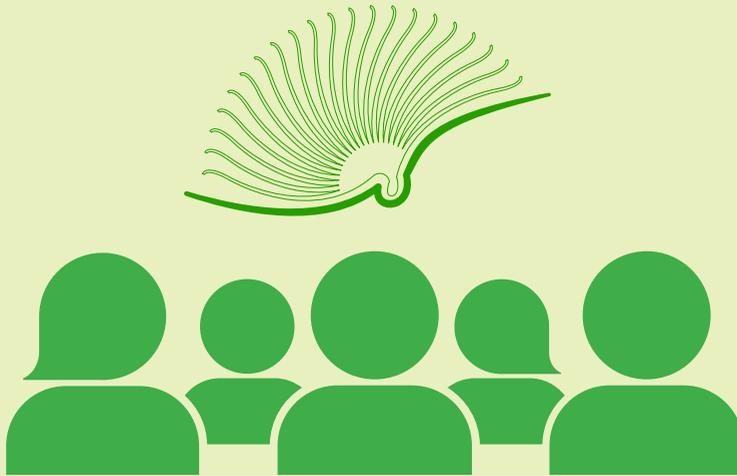
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- ▶ **18<sup>TH</sup> OIC TRADE FAIR**  
29<sup>th</sup> November- 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2024 • Lahore, Pakistan



**TRAINING WORKSHOP  
ON MARKET ACCESS AND VALUE CHAIN MANAGEMENT  
FOR WOMEN-LED BUSINESSES AND COOPERATIVES  
IN FRENCH-SPEAKING OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES**

**FIRST SEMESTER 2024 • N'DJAMENA, CHAD**



THE WORKSHOP ESSENTIALLY AIMS TO HELP SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMES) AND WOMEN-LED COOPERATIVES INCREASE THEIR ACCESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET AND BETTER MANAGE THEIR VALUE CHAINS, WHICH, IN TURN, WILL INCREASE OVERALL FLOWS OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS OF FRENCH-SPEAKING MEMBER COUNTRIES.

THE WORKSHOP AIMS TO SUPPORT BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVE LEADERS FROM OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES, WITH THE AIM OF ACCESSING THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET, DISCOVERING NEW MARKET TRENDS AND PROVIDING THEM WITH THE NECESSARY SUPPORT IN TERMS OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES.



PARTNER





منظمة التعاون الإسلامي

OIC-OCI

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations, comprising 57 member states spread across 4 continents. The Organization serves as the voice of the Muslim world, safeguarding and protecting its interests in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among the world's diverse peoples.

The Islamic Summit, the Council of Foreign Ministers, and the General Secretariat are the main organs of the OIC. The Organization also includes three permanent thematic committees: the Committee on Science and Technology, the Committee on Economy and Trade, the Committee on Communication and Culture, as well as the Al-Quds Committee. Furthermore, the Organization has specialized institutions operating under its umbrella, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO). These thematic committees, subsidiary bodies, and affiliated institutions of the Organization play a vital and complementary role by working in various domains.



[www.oic-oci.org](http://www.oic-oci.org)