



# TIJARIS



THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL AND INTRA-OIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT



## ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

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CEO Top Class Lavazza

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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.

**Latifa Elbouabdellaoui,**  
Managing Director ICDT.



## ICDT Invest Days Banjul and a Flood of Investments

Held on May 2-3, 2024, as a prelude to the 15th OIC Summit, the ICDT Invest Days Banjul was a resounding success. Paving the way for increased foreign investment and sustainable economic growth in The Gambia, this event highlighted the immense potential of the host country and reinforced its status as an attractive investment destination within the Islamic world. We dare to believe that these ICDT Invest Days Banjul will play a crucial role in raising awareness of investment opportunities in The Gambia. The connection between potential investors and their local partners is now tangible: contracts and MoUs have already been finalized. Such success is an encouraging sign for the future of the Gambian economy. In this issue, we extensively cover the event, reporting the comments of various stakeholders, and we take an in-depth look at this gathering, highlighting its successes and the investment opportunities in The Gambia. Investors, businesses, and government officials from across the Islamic world were able to explore promising investment opportunities in this country. We are pleased that this two-day event showcased the immense potential of this attractive country, with a particular focus on key sectors such as tourism, agriculture, infrastructure, and information and communication technologies.

One success leads to another, as we announce the upcoming ICDT Invest Days events on September 24-25 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and then in the Comoros on November 13-14, 2024.

This Special Issue also includes key events and initiatives of the OIC, such as the Paperless Trade Week, the Electronic Payment Module in Nigeria, the 3rd Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), and a Spotlight on the 15th OIC Islamic Summit in The Gambia. Our magazine also shares the Viewpoint of experts and industry leaders, with Mr. Lucien Leuwenkroon, CEO of Top Class Lavazza, revealing how coffee is much more than just a drink in the Muslim world.

Information on economic and trade trends within the OIC, such as the strong growth of Islamic funds, as well as relevant statistics on the halal industry and the introduction of the ePhyto GeNS system in Togo, are also covered.

Happy reading! ■



PHOTO DE COUVERTURE  
ICDT Invest Days Banjul en Gambie  
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3. Hon. Sir Farimang Saho, President of the Gambian Manufacturers Association (GMA)
4. Muhammed Jah, CEO of Q Group Gambia
5. Momar Tall, CEO of Ecosoil
6. Ms. Saloua Karkri Belkeziz, Vice-President of Asmex, in charge of the Africa Commission
7. Papa Mady Coulibaly, Deputy General Manager of AFI-EU
8. David Costa, Head of the Africa Region, VHM'S
9. Sulayman Cham, CEO of NIRO
10. Aly Guindo, Operations Director of the African Solidarity Fund (FSA)
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## A Delegation from the Private Sector of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Visits the CIDC

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (CIDC) WELCOMED A DELEGATION FROM THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN AT ITS HEADQUARTERS IN CASABLANCA ON MONDAY, MAY 27, 2024. THE DELEGATION WAS COMPOSED OF BUSINESSPEOPLE FROM THE HEALTHCARE, SPORTS, TEXTILE, IT, ISLAMIC FINANCE, PACKAGING, AND AGRO-INDUSTRY SECTORS.



A VIEW OF THE MEETING, AT THE CIDC HEADQUARTERS.

As part of their exploratory visit to the Kingdom of Morocco, the Pakistani delegation's meeting with CIDC officials was an opportunity to present the Centre's initiatives aimed at promoting trade and investment development among the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Notably, the OIC Trade Portal (<https://oic.tradehelpdesk.org>) was highlighted as a single entry point for all market access information, trade procedures, and contacts with specific partners in each of the 57 member states. Exporters, importers, investors, and trade support institutions can

use it to search for business opportunities and market requirements for products. The CIDC detailed the tools of the Trade Help Desk to its guests, such as «Trade Information,» «Export Potential,» and «Market Access.»

Participants also discussed potential avenues for strengthening trilateral cooperation between Morocco, Pakistan, and the CIDC in areas of mutual interest. Such a meeting bodes well for the short and medium term, with possibilities of hosting the OIC Sports and Health Industry Exhibitions and Forums in 2025 or 2026. ■

# PAPERLESS TRADE WEEK

THE ICDT PARTICIPATED IN THE PAPERLESS TRADE WEEK, ORGANIZED BY ESCAP (ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC) FROM JUNE 3-7, 2024, IN BANGKOK, THAILAND. ON THIS OCCASION, IT ORGANIZED, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISDB (ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK), A TWO-DAY WORKSHOP ON DIGITALIZATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRADE FACILITATION IN OIC ASIAN COUNTRIES ON JUNE 3-4, 2024.



SOUVENIR PHOTO OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE PAPERLESS WEEK MEETING IN BANGKOK.

The ICDT's participation in the Paperless Trade Week, held from June 3-7, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, was a great success, reinforcing its position as a leader in promoting digital trade in the Asia-OIC region. This significant event brought together key players in international trade to explore digital solutions to facilitate and streamline cross-border exchanges.

Highlighting its expertise and commitment during the Paperless Trade Week, the ICDT had the opportunity to present its program dedicated to the digitalization of trade and economic intelligence. This showcase emphasized the crucial role of the Centre as a facilitator of international

trade in the region.

## **A Continuous Commitment to Paperless Trade**

At this meeting, the ICDT reaffirmed its commitment to work closely with ESCAP, the IsDB, and the private sector to implement the recommendations and advance the paperless trade agenda in the OIC Asian countries. These concrete recommendations for more efficient paperless trade focused on strengthening international collaboration in sustainable cross-border paperless trade in OIC countries. They centered around implementing a capacity-building program for stakeholders in the Southwest, creating an electro-

nic halal certificate, conducting studies on eTIR, e-CMR, ePhyto systems, and launching pilot projects in Asian member states. The ultimate goal is to promote smoother, more transparent, and more sustainable international trade for the region's economic prosperity and social development.

## **A Fruitful Workshop on Digitalization for Sustainable Trade**

In collaboration with the Department of Cooperation and Capacity Development of the IsDB, the ICDT organized a two-day workshop on June 3-4, focusing on digitalization for sustainable trade facilitation among OIC Asian countries. This workshop brought together over 60 participants from 15 Asian OIC member countries, providing a platform to share experiences and best practices in e-commerce. In addition to its active participation in the workshop and experience-sharing sessions, the ICDT also had the opportunity to meet high-level representatives from governments and international organizations, establish strategic partnerships with key private sector players, and stay informed about the latest trends and innovations in e-commerce.

The next edition is scheduled for June 2025 in Bangkok. ■

# Electronic Payment Module Operational in Nigeria

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT), IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR TRADE FACILITATION (GATF), THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK (ISDB), AND THE ARAB BANK FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (BADEA), IS STREAMLINING ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS IN NIGERIA.

The ICDT’s commitment to streamlining electronic payments in Nigeria is part of its broader efforts to promote smoother and more inclusive trade in OIC member countries. The Centre will continue to collaborate with its partners to implement initiatives that support economic growth and sustainable development in the region.

By facilitating the connection between the GeNS billing module and a platform developed by the Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Service (NAQS), which is also integrated with a local electronic payment solution (Remita), it contributes to boosting trade, reducing transaction costs, and promoting financial inclusion in the country. Exporters can now pay multiple invoices simultaneously without having to visit NAQS or a bank to pay fees related to phytosanitary certificates. The electronic payment module has been operational since February 2024.

## Challenges to Overcome

Despite significant progress in recent years, electronic payments in Nigeria still face several challenges. Due to the fragmentation of the payment landscape, many players offer different payment solutions, creating confusion and increasing costs for businesses and consumers. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure

remains a problem. Access to the internet and formal banking services is limited in some regions of the country, hindering the adoption of electronic payments. High transaction fees are also a concern. The fees associated with electronic payments can be prohibitive for small businesses and individuals, slowing down their use.

## Towards a More Efficient and Inclusive Electronic Payment System

The ICDT initiative aims to address these challenges by promoting the interoperability of payment systems. This will allow users to make payments without being constrained by their choice of payment service provider. Strengthening electronic payment infrastructure can also help address these challenges by expanding access to electronic payment services, particularly in rural areas, and reducing transaction fees, making electronic payments more affordable for small businesses and individuals.

## Expected Positive Impact on the Nigerian Economy

Streamlining electronic payments in Nigeria is expected to positively impact the country’s economy by stimulating trade through transaction facilitation. Electronic payments encourage businesses to expand their operations and reach new custo-



PURCHASES BY CREDIT CARD VIA THE INTERNET



PAYMENT VIA ELECTRONIC PAYMENT TERMINAL (T.P.E.)

mers. Reducing transaction costs allows businesses and consumers to save money on transaction fees, which can stimulate investment and consumption. By facilitating access to financial services, electronic payments can help reduce poverty and promote inclusive growth. The closing workshop was held in Abuja on June 25, 2024. ■



SOUVENIR PHOTO OF THE 3RD MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE OIC TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> MINISTERIAL MEETING of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT) PARTICIPATED IN THE 3RD MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE (TNC) OF THE OIC, WHICH WAS HELD IN ISTANBUL, REPUBLIC OF TURKEY, ON JUNE 10-11, 2024.

The 3rd Ministerial Meeting of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee, held on June 10-11, 2024, in Istanbul, was a significant step in promoting economic and trade cooperation among member countries. The ICDT is proud to have contributed to this event and will continue to play an active role in implementing the decisions made. Its participation in the Ministerial Meeting and the Workshop on the Role of the Private Sector demonstrates its commitment to promoting intra-OIC trade and contributing to the sustainable economic development of member countries.

The objective of this meeting was to discuss ways to strengthen and develop economic and trade cooperation, as well as to promote intra-OIC trade among member countries by addressing the negotiation strategy and action plan to strengthen the Trade Preferential System (TPS-OIC). The meeting

brought together ministers and senior officials from OIC member countries. The Centre presented various aspects of the system, highlighting its positive effects and legal dimensions while emphasizing the importance of economic integration among OIC countries.

### Advocating for a Strengthened Trade Preferential System

The ICDT advocated for strengthening the OIC Trade Preferential System (TPS), a vital tool for facilitating trade exchanges among member countries. The Centre emphasized the importance of expanding the list of products eligible for TPS, simplifying certification procedures, and enhancing the monitoring and evaluation mechanism. A call was made to establish strategic partnerships for collective action. In this vein, the ICDT highlighted the need for increased collaboration among OIC member countries, calling for the creation of strategic partnerships



INTERVENTION BY MS. LATIFA EL BOUABDELLAOUI, CEO OF THE ICDT.

in areas such as the development of regional value chains, promotion of foreign direct investment, and enhancement of trade capacities.

In Istanbul, the ICDT reaffirmed its commitment to continue its efforts to provide technical assistance to member countries, facilitate dialogue among stakeholders, and advocate for favorable trade policies. ■



# 12th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) and 9th Meeting of the Tourism Coordination Committee

THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE (ICDT) PARTICIPATED IN THE 12TH ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF TOURISM MINISTERS (ICTM) AND THE 9TH MEETING OF THE TOURISM COORDINATION COMMITTEE, HELD FROM MAY 31 TO JUNE 2, 2024, IN KHIVA, UZBEKISTAN, UNDER THE THEME «DEVELOPING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT MANNER.»

The 12th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) and the 9th Meeting of the Tourism Coordination Committee, held in Khiva, Uzbekistan, from May 31 to June 2, 2024, were landmark events. These significant gatherings brought together Tourism Ministers, government officials, and private sector stakeholders from OIC member countries to discuss strategies for developing sustainable and inclusive tourism in the region. The conference, chaired by H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary General of the OIC, and the Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection, and Climate Change of Uzbekistan, focused on the theme «Developing the Tourism Industry in a Sustainable and Resilient Manner.»



SOUVENIR PHOTO FROM THE 12TH TOURISM MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE & 9TH TOURISM COORDINATION MEETING.



FROM LEFT, TO RIGHT : DR. SALIM M. ALMALIK, DG OF ICESCO, H.E. MR. HISSEIN BRAHIM TAHA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OIC, MR. AZIZ ABDUKHAKIMOV, MINISTER OF ECOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE OF THE UZBEKISTAN

## Promoting Tourism Among Member States

During the conference, the ICEDT representative presented various initiatives aimed at promoting tourism among member states, including the promotion of tourism through the OIC Tourism Fair, the organization of seminars and webinars for capacity building in the tourism industry, the piloting of a regional project on sustainable tourism development in West Africa, conducting a study on the branding of Muslim-friendly tourism in the global market, and presenting the selec-

tion criteria for tourist cities in OIC countries.

The calendar of OIC tourist cities for the coming years was adopted, with Dakar in Senegal (2025), Cairo in Egypt (2026), and Lahore in Pakistan (2027). Other cities in the OIC region are under selection, highlighting

ongoing efforts to promote tourism within the organization.

It is noteworthy that the 13th Edition of the ICTM is expected to take place in Qatar, reflecting the continued collaboration among OIC member states to advance the tourism agenda. ■



# ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL Beyond Expectations

FOLLOWING TWO SUCCESSFUL EDITIONS IN DAKAR AND NOUAKCHOTT, THE ICDT ORGANIZED THE 3RD EDITION OF THE INVEST DAYS FORUM IN BANJUL ON MAY 2-3, 2024, AHEAD OF THE OIC SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE. A PIVOTAL EVENT FOR INVESTORS AND ENTREPRENEURS WORLDWIDE, THE ICDT INVEST DAYS AIM TO ENERGIZE AND STRUCTURE THE INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE WITHIN THE MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC).

In Banjul, the ICDT Invest Days, held under the theme «Gambia, Land of Opportunities,» were a resounding success. According to Ms. Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, General Director of the ICDT, the Forum was a true success in Gambia, with over 760 participants attending out of approximately 300 expected. Investors responded enthusiastically to Banjul’s call, setting a record for participation. With 1,108 registrants from 40 different countries, the ICDT Invest Days broke a record, reflecting the achievement of the ambitious

goals set. Designed to encourage transnational investment flows and identify promising sectors likely to accelerate regional economic development, the event, featuring panels, deal rooms, and site visits, fulfilled its role by creating a key platform bringing together major stakeholders and OIC investment players, including international investors. This is evidenced by the various accolades received.

### **B2B, B2C, and B2G**

The specific goals, tailored to the local context and Gambia’s eco-

nommic development aspirations, were achieved during the ICDT Invest Days Banjul. Attracting at least 50 international investors to present local investment opportunities and stimulate the Gambian economy through foreign direct investment, conducting site visits—key objectives enabling investors to directly explore Gambian projects and companies and better understand the context in which their investments could thrive—were accomplished. Beyond this B2B and B2C aspect, aimed at creating more concrete

links between investors and local private sector opportunities, Gambia also aimed, in terms of B2G, to sign at least 3 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between foreign investors and Gambian parties. At the Invest Days Banjul, expectations were exceeded, with 8 MoUs signed, marking significant commitments between various organizations and agencies. Notable collaborations include GIEPA-CIDC and FENIP-GMA, demonstrating a strong commitment to economic development and international cooperation. The Gambian Ministry of Health was particularly active, signing agreements with HPIC Morocco, Suptech, and Comedic, focusing on improving health infrastructure and access to medical care. Other partnerships include Fagace-CIDC, FSA-CIDC, TAGFC-FENIP, and GCCI&CCIS-RSK, all reflecting the diversity and scope of the initiatives undertaken at this key event.

With these certainties, contacts will continue even after the event's conclusion. Engaging the online community of participants throughout the year would help maintain engagement and foster new collaborations.

### Priority Sectors in the Regional Economy

The distribution of participants by sector at the Invest Days Banjul reveals varied strategic interests and highlights the priority sectors of the regional economy. The agricultural sector stood out with the highest number of participants (106), underscoring its crucial role in the economy. The oil and energy sectors also attracted significant attention with 60 participants, while manufacturing industries closely followed with 56 participants. The health sector,



RICH AND FRUITFUL EXCHANGES AT ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL, WITH THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS AND MOUS.

with 44 participants, and tourism, with 43 participants, show their growing importance. Transportation, with 41 participants, is essential for logistical and commercial support. In contrast, the digital sector, with only 19 participants, indicates an opportunity for development or a need to increase future engagement. These figures provide insight into areas of interest for investments and development initiatives in the region.

A follow-up within 100 days of this edition of the Invest Days Banjul will assess the actual investments made and provide a more accurate understanding of the volume and distribution of these investments by sector.

### Areas for Improvement

To enhance the effectiveness and impact of future ICDDT Invest Days Forums, several recommendations have been suggested. First, it would be beneficial to clearly communicate existing projects, completed sector studies, and available tax incentives to attract more investors. It is also

advisable to retain the current format, which includes various opportunities such as panels, deal rooms, and site visits, while allowing more time for deal rooms to enable in-depth discussions and more fruitful negotiations. Additionally, encouraging audiovisual media to live-stream and interview key resources in real-time would maximize visibility and engagement during the event.

It is also essential to send detailed bankable projects three months before the forum and organize pre-forum meetings with local decision-makers and interested investors to lay the groundwork and optimize outcomes. Furthermore, inviting sponsors five months in advance would allow them to fully engage and effectively plan their participation. New introductions are also proposed to enrich the event's results. A summary report including key performance indicators (KPIs), a joint post-event evaluation within 100 days, and ongoing support for investors could greatly enhance the experience and success of the commitments made. ■



## MS. LATIFA EL BOUABDELLAOUI

Director General of ICDT

They said...

*«I can say that we have achieved our expected objectives. We recorded the participation of more than 600 investors from several OIC countries and beyond. In terms of participation, we are very satisfied. This demonstrates the importance of Gambia's attractiveness as a destination for investors from the OIC region. We are convinced that Gambia has great potential in various sectors, namely agriculture, transportation, healthcare, and also as a host land for investments targeting other neighboring markets.»*

*Gambia is part of ECOWAS, a market of over 300 million consumers, available to investors who decide to settle there. We ensure that investors choose Gambia, that investments are made in Gambia, and that a partnership relationship between investors in Gambia and other OIC countries becomes a reality.*

*We were very satisfied with the number of MoUs signed between Moroccan operators and Gambian authorities to develop investment projects and strong relationships between these operators and their Gambian counterparts.»*

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«We are convinced that Gambia has great potential in various sectors, namely agriculture, transportation, healthcare, and also as a host land for investments targeting other neighboring markets.»

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## HONORABLE BABOUCAR OUSMAÏLA JOOF

Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration, and Employment,  
Gambia

They said...

*«We invited the ICDT to come and support us in our vision of showcasing Gambia. We have realized that our country has a lot of untapped potential and opportunities. There is a lot of work to be done in this country's economy. After observing very limited investments, we identified 7 priority areas. We now want investors to join us. Governments and international organizations are slowing down their investments. So, currently, it is the private sector that is thriving... This country has chosen to follow economic development and inclusive growth at the private sector level, which is why we are calling on the ICDT. Fortunately, we have obtained their support in this area. That is why we brought them here and we are happy to be number 3 in the ICDT INVEST DAYS roadshow.»*

*I mentioned in a panel that multilateral agreements, in general, revolve around trade... If you look at the ECOWAS agreements, the AU agreements..., they are all concluded to facilitate trade. Trade diplomacy and trade facilitation are what move a country forward. That is why Gambia currently has this unique opportunity... At the next OIC forum in Gambia, I will no longer be a minister, I will no longer be here, I might still be alive, but not a minister. So, having this unique opportunity, where the 57 countries are here to talk about our relations as Muslim countries, we should capitalize and exploit the existing potentials. We are taught in Islam that a brother should be considered as oneself. So, if we come together here as brothers and sisters to discuss our future, nothing is more appropriate than organizing this kind of forum to give you the opportunity to invest in Gambia. But it also gives Gambia the opportunity to receive investments from our brothers. We will then be able to strengthen intra-OIC trade as planned by the OIC Secretariat.»*

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«Currently, it is the private sector that is thriving... This country has chosen to follow economic development and inclusive growth at the private sector level, which is why we are calling on the ICDT.»

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## HONORABLE SIR FARIMANG SAHO

President of the Gambian Manufacturers Association (GMA)

They said...

*«I welcome this forum, considered historic! Our country has never hosted an investment forum of such magnitude. It comes at a crucial time. Our sector desperately needs it to showcase our opportunities and welcome all the various investors into our country. The level of investment is multifaceted. Different sectors need investments, but what we are trying to promote here is the manufacturing sector, the agricultural sector, and all SMEs, meaning all medium-sized enterprises. Indeed, the level of investment is enormous in tourism, finance... The field is vast and untapped. Gambia offers the opportunity of an almost blank canvas where policies are attractive to investors. Gambia should take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to involve a large number of people who are here to show our hospitality, that our country is a dreamland, young and dynamic... 50% of the population is young, and more than 50% are women. All these people are dynamic and actors to be the engine of growth for Gambia and also for the sub-region. I invite all investors to seize the opportunity to invest in Gambia. Our government has the political will to support it.*

*As a manufacturers association, we will remain steadfast in ensuring that investments are protected. And if they invest here, we will ensure that the policies and investments they make here are protected and supported in their implementation.»*

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«I invite all investors to seize the opportunity to invest in Gambia. Our government has the political will to support it. As a manufacturers association, we will remain steadfast in ensuring that investments are protected.»

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## MUHAMMED JAH

CEO of Q Group Gambia

They said...

*«You can see from the airport that the country is very untapped. There are numerous investment opportunities. What is great about Gambia is that we have the rule of law, democracy, etc. It is a peaceful country. This is what businesses need to thrive. And of course, we are in the ECOWAS sub-region, with over 300 million consumers. Added to this are the free trade agreements of ECOWAS and the African Union... I think Gambia is a great opportunity for anyone to invest. I have already noticed that many young people were very enthusiastic about the forum and that there was a lot of networking going on... We have been in business for over 30 years and have participated in many forums like this all over the world. So I think this is especially an opportunity for young and emerging businesses to network and take advantage of the opportunities. I believe there will be many transactions at this event.»*

*We believe that meeting many investors here will allow us to exchange ideas and capitalize on opportunities. We are not just participants; we are also one of the sponsors. My telecommunications company, Q Cell, and my bank, Ajib Bank, the only Islamic bank in Gambia, are sponsors of this event.»*

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«I think Gambia is a great opportunity for anyone to invest. I have already noticed that many young people were very enthusiastic about the forum and that there was a lot of networking going on...»

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## MOMAR TAAL

CEO of Ecosoil

### They said...

*«We are very pleased to have this forum in Gambia, welcoming participants from around the world who have come here to see what opportunities we have to offer, especially in the sub-region. We are a small country; it is not every day that so many investors look into the opportunities that Gambia offers. So we welcome all the guests and investors to learn more about business in Gambia and the various opportunities. We are optimistic that this forum will create new investment opportunities from people across the continent.»*

*It is also an opportunity to open new markets for Gambian businesses seeking exports in the sub-region. We have a lot of potential. We are a country that produces many things, and we believe it is just a matter of sharing them with member states and the various participants. We hope that, in the long run, this visibility will create business opportunities as well as investment opportunities for all.»*

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«We are a small country; it is not every day that so many investors look into the opportunities that Gambia offers. So we welcome all the guests and investors to learn more about business in Gambia and the various opportunities.»

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## MS. SALOUA KARKRI BELKZIZ

Vice-President of Asmex, in charge of the Africa Commission

### They said...

*«We are delighted and honored to have been invited by the ICDT, as Asmex (Moroccan Association of Exporters), which I represent at this forum as Vice-President in charge of the Africa Commission. This is a country we did not know, and we are going to discover it... From the moment we were welcomed at the airport, we were pleasantly surprised. We appreciated the accessibility and approachability of the ministers and government members present to discuss and seize the various business opportunities available. We are a delegation of more than 20 people from Morocco, representing different sectors such as agribusiness, health, digital, and fishing...»*

*Already, several agreements were signed this morning in the presence of the Vice-President of the country. This shows the high-level interest in these exchanges. It is important to remember that both Gambia and Morocco are signatories to the AfCFTA, which came into effect in January 2023 and offers opportunities for our industries and businesses in a market of nearly 3 billion consumers. Another thing that caught my attention is the highly educated human capital in this English-speaking country, despite being landlocked within Senegal. With minimal supervision, we can successfully carry out projects here!»*

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«We are a delegation of more than 20 people from Morocco, representing different sectors such as agribusiness, health, digital, and fishing... Already, several agreements were signed this morning in the presence of the Vice-President of the country. This shows the high-level interest in these exchanges.»

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## PAPA MADY COULIBALY

Deputy General Manager of AFI-EU

### They said...

*«Gambia offers a lot of opportunities. For us, who are in the education sector, specifically in private higher education, even just for English, our students can have immersion experiences in Gambia. But we are also looking for partnerships with universities and business schools to facilitate the much-needed mobility in our schools.»*

*Today, Gambia, which should not lag behind in the sub-regional dynamic, has a new vision. Everything we heard this morning reassured us regarding this ambition. We had two great meetings with the University of Gambia and MDI. These are schools we have known for a long time, as we have been coming to Gambia with our students for immersion and study trips for the past 10 years. It is now time to formalize this experience, which the forum allows us to realize.»*

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«Today, Gambia, which should not lag behind in the sub-regional dynamic, has a new vision. Everything we heard this morning reassured us regarding this ambition. We had two great meetings with the University of Gambia and MDI.»

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## DAVID COSTA

Head of the Africa Region, VHM'S

They said...

*«This forum allows all participants to understand the conditions of this beautiful country, Gambia, and the responsibilities in terms of investments. We want to play a role in sharing the insights we gather from this very important forum with our international clients who may find opportunities here. We will do our best to be the link, the bridge to attract more investments into the country. As our president said, if I may, we can help those who want to attract investments to get started from scratch. Then, materialize the most important products of each country... It's like in football, we win some matches, we lose others, but we play the game... We want to highlight the wonderful opportunities we have identified and participate in the development of every important sector in Gambia.»*

*We have a standard memorandum of understanding (MoU) that we can establish with ministerial levels, with the government level. We have some flexibility around the MoU and can bring it to the table. We are open to this very important connection of the MoU that we can propose to the government.»*

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«We want to highlight the wonderful opportunities we have identified and participate in the development of every important sector in Gambia.»

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## SULAYMAN CHAM

CEO of NIRO

They said...

*«NIRO was founded in 2015. Initially, a bad experience pushed me to create my own restaurant. Gradually, we started with one restaurant in the city and then expanded to other areas where there was real demand, particularly at the airport. In 2020, we decided to create a catering structure at the airport.»*

*Niro Handling Company Ltd is established as a ground handling service provider for aviation. We employ more than 200 people.*

*Regarding the organization of such a forum, we believe it should be held regularly. Bringing investors together is very important, and many things could be accomplished. We are pleased that there is a lot of networking and contact sharing during the meeting, where many interactions could lead to concrete business deals. We hope to reap the benefits as soon as possible.»*

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«Such a forum should be held regularly. Bringing investors together is very important, and many things could be accomplished. We are pleased that there is a lot of networking and contact sharing during the meeting, where many interactions could lead to concrete business deals.»

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## ALY GUINDO

Operations Director of the African Solidarity Fund (FSA)

### They said...

*«Forums like this are a tremendous opportunity for the host states. They help to promote the country and showcase its full potential. The FSA is here because Gambia has just joined the FSA. As a member state, it is entitled to benefit from all the potential products we offer to facilitate the financing of national companies. Our flagship product is the financial guarantee, which we use to share the risk with lenders, such as local and international banks, as well as national companies, to reassure these lenders and secure their financing. So it is natural for the FSA to be present when such an opportunity arises.»*

*I particularly appreciated the Commerce Minister's slogan 'Gambia, Land of Opportunities,' as this country presents many opportunities in transportation, agriculture, import-export, and industrialization. Gambia can be considered a gateway to West Africa for landlocked countries. Considering Mali, the two Guineas, Gambia's positioning is quite favorable for national companies to develop and possibly lead to the creation of new champions.»*

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«Our flagship product is the financial guarantee, which we use to share the risk with lenders, such as local and international banks, as well as national companies, to reassure these lenders and secure their financing.»

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## IBRAHIMA DIONE

CEO of Serex and Secretary General of MEPE

They said...

*«I am here as the CEO of Serex, an electrical engineering company in Senegal, and Secretary General of MEPE (Movement of Professional Energy Enterprises in Senegal and Beyond) to respond to GIEPA's invitation regarding investment within the framework of the ICDT Invest Days Banjul, on the sidelines of the OIC Summit...»*

*Senegal and Gambia are one people in two countries. Here, we are ready to share our experience, our network, and our partnership capital for the emergence of Gambia. This dynamism in the relations between the two countries is effective. It is manifested through their respective policies, as well as by the Executives and business organizations.*

*Regarding Morocco's policy towards sub-Saharan African countries, a certain trend has been emerging for some time. The observation is that it is positive and beneficial in both directions. This momentum must materialize in win-win projects where Moroccans, Gambians, and Senegalese, for example, or more generally ECOWAS countries, all benefit. We welcome the presence of several Moroccan companies active in various sectors to support project leaders and partner companies.*

*Following this summit, it would be useful to continue this dynamic. It has allowed us to initiate tripartite partnerships between Senegalese, Gambian, and other companies, particularly Moroccan or Gulf country organizations.»*

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«Senegal and Gambia are one people in two countries. Here, we are ready to share our experience, our network, and our partnership capital for the emergence of Gambia. This dynamism in the relations between the two countries is effective.»

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## MOMODOU HYDARA

Director of Jah Oil Company

They said...

*«We welcome the organization of this forum on Gambian soil, as it helps us present our opportunities as a company and showcase what we have, the hidden potentials, and how we can expand our capabilities. It is a great opportunity. We will be able to network and see what other areas to explore to improve our respective businesses. In this sense, it is a very good initiative that allows Gambian companies to open up and realize more potential, which they might not have done easily or simply by staying put. The interaction is very good. We have started networking with other companies from different countries.»*

*Today, I have met 3 or 4 companies, some in the oil sector, others in food. As Jah Oil, we market both petroleum products and other raw materials such as food, building materials, or agriculture. In these areas, we are invested in discovering potential markets, potential investors with whom we can share ideas and expertise, and have a common understanding of how we will develop our business together here.»*

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«The interaction is very good. We have started networking with other companies from different countries. Today, I have met 3 or 4, some in the oil sector, others in food.»

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# POINT OF VIEW

INTERVIEW

## MR. LUCIEN LEUWENKROON

CEO of TOPCLASS.ma Lavazza Morocco

WITH HIGH COFFEE CONSUMPTION IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, WHICH ARE AMONG THE LARGEST CONSUMERS IN THE WORLD, THE EDITORIAL TEAM SHARES THE VIEWPOINT OF MR. LUCIEN LEUWENKROON, CEO OF TOPCLASS.MA LAVAZZA MOROCCO. BEYOND ITS INDIVIDUAL CONSUMPTION, COFFEE PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND APPEARS AS A SIGN OF HOSPITALITY AND RESPECT IN MUSLIM CULTURE. WITH \$995.5 MILLION, SAUDI ARABIA RANKS AS THE LARGEST COFFEE IMPORTER IN THE MENA REGION, WHICH INCLUDES COFFEE-PRODUCING COUNTRIES SUCH AS YEMEN AND ETHIOPIA. THIS COFFEE PROFESSIONAL, BASED IN MOROCCO FOR DECADES, SHARES WITH OUR READERS THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF THE COFFEE INDUSTRY IN THE ECONOMIES OF COUNTRIES, GENERATING REVENUE AND EMPLOYMENT.

Propos recueillis par D. MBaye

**Tijaris: Coffee consumption in Muslim countries is deeply rooted in their culture and lifestyles. It is not just a beverage, but also a symbol of hospitality, conviviality, and exchange. Are these the reasons that explain your establishment in Morocco, along with a significant «Business» market?**

**Mr. Lucien Leuwenkroon:** Indeed, this year, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of Topclass in

Morocco, which came to change consumption habits initially with a novelty at the time—the Lavazza coffee capsule—in a cultural exception of the Kingdom, one of the few Muslim countries with a tradition of hospitality with its wonderful mint tea.

**You are based in a country that is not a producer. Doesn't this fact constitute a handicap?**

The richness and secret of good coffee lie in its blend. Therefore, its

origins are often multiple.

**The MENA region includes significant coffee-producing countries, such as Yemen and Ethiopia. Do your coffee imports come from this region where coffee production plays a crucial role? If not, do you plan to in the future?**

This month, we are launching an exceptional single-origin product from Ethiopia called Kafa, an ex-





*«Coffee is a major job creator for the future. That is why in 2012 we created the first Lavazza Training Center in Africa in Casablanca, which trains more than 500 baristas for free to improve their working conditions and especially better support investors in the Horeca sector.»*

ceptional and very selective product due to its rarity. I invite you to our Topclass Tendances stores to discover it with a tasting in capsule or bean form.

**How do you assess coffee consumption and its derivatives in Morocco and similar economies, knowing that a country like Lebanon, for example, stands out by ranking 5th globally with a consumption of 5.8 kg per capita per year?**

A big challenge! Thirty years ago, coffee and derivatives consumption was less than 300 grams per capita in Morocco. Today, it is almost 1 kg. I am very enthusiastic that in 2024 we will surpass 1 kg with the proliferation of small food trucks across the Kingdom. I can assure you that these small spaces constitute a new haven for meetings, in small groups, at affordable and reasonable prices!

**Based on your decades of experience, do you share the idea that coffee plays an important role in the economy in terms of production, trade, and job creation?**

Coffee is a major job creator for the future. That is why in 2012 we created the first Lavazza Training Center in Africa in Casablanca, which trains more than 500 baristas for free to improve their working conditions and especially better support investors in the Horeca sector (Note: Hotel, Restaurant, Café, etc.), also known as CHR or food service industry.

**What is your view on the significant proliferation of «cafés» or «coffee houses», places of meetings and exchanges, in large Moroccan cities, to the point of exhausting the sector, with observed closures?**

In my opinion, the word «too» is often used by younger people in place of «very» and thus used in a positive manner. For example, «he is too cute» instead of «he is very cute...» For me, the more «cafés» or «coffee houses» there are, the more it forces us to be more inventive, creative, to focus on hospitality, image, quality, etc. So, there will never be too many «cafés» or «coffee houses»! ■

Mr. Lucien Leuwenkroon, currently CEO of Topclass.ma, was President of the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (CCBLM) in 1998, then Vice-President of the Services & Commerce Federation of CGEM (General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises) in 2004, and among other titles, he was elected President of Eurocham in 2008. Before the creation of Topclass Espresso in 1994, he led Cosmax in 1987, Soraya & Co in 1990, Sofira in 1992, Vendor in 2002, or subsidiaries such as Topclass Tendances in 2005, SSRL in 2012, Topclass DA in 2014.



MR. LUCIEN LEUWENKROON, CEO TOPCLASS LAVAZZA, ON THE LEFT.



MR. LUCIEN LEUWENKROON, CEO TOPCLASS LAVAZZA, AND MAROC FAMILY.



TEAM TOPCLASS LAVAZZA MOROCCO.



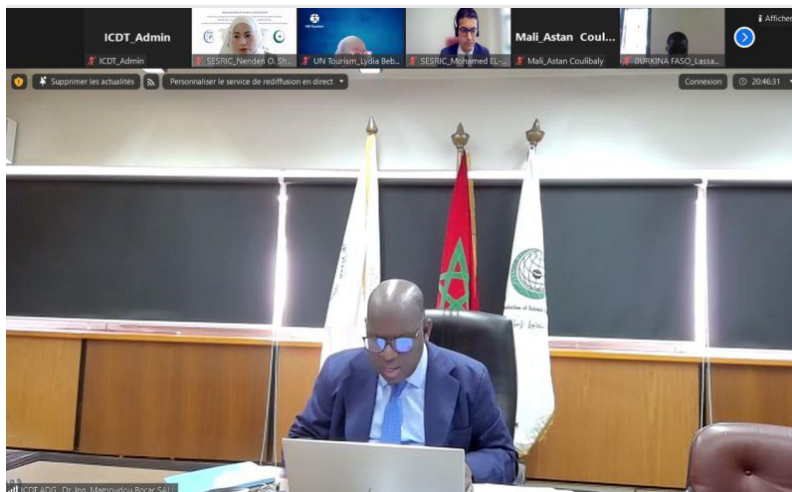
# SNAPSHOT

ICDT INVEST DAYS BANJUL, held on May 2-3, 2024, were marked by plenary sessions, workshops, on-site visits, Talk Meet Ups, extensive networking, and the signing of contracts and MoUs. This event fostered the growth of cooperation and economic exchanges between investors, partners, and Gambian authorities through B2B and B2G interactions.



# Virtual Training Workshop on Sustainable Ecotourism Development

THE ICDT AND SESRIC ORGANIZED A VIRTUAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES IN WEST AFRICA ON MAY 28, 2024, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (UNWTO) AND THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP).



ICDT REPRESENTATIVE, SPEAKER AT THE VIRTUAL TRAINING WORKSHOP.

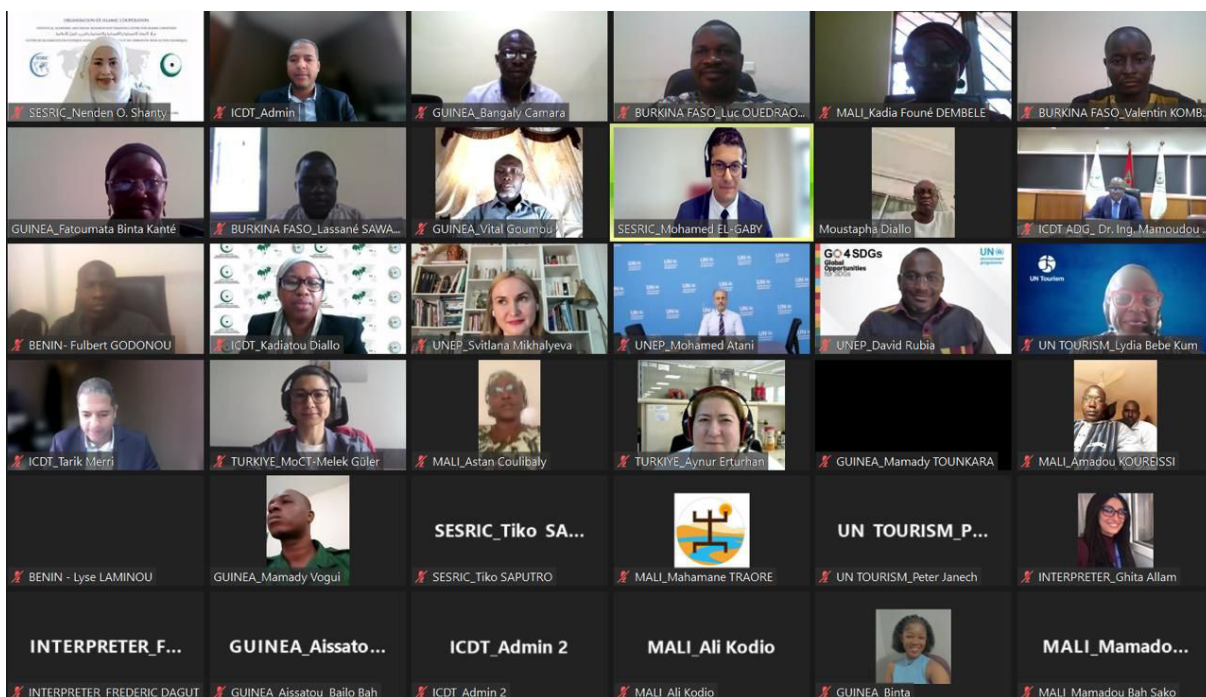
The development of sustainable ecotourism in OIC member countries in West Africa represents a major opportunity to enhance the region's natural and cultural wealth, create jobs, and generate income for local communities, while contributing to environmental conservation and promoting responsible tourism.

The virtual workshop on sustainable ecotourism development in OIC member countries in West Africa, organized by the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Statistical, Economic, and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) on May 28, 2024, provided an overview

of the sector and identified key challenges and opportunities for its promotion. The virtual training aimed to promote ecotourism in the West African region and brought together representatives from Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, and Sierra Leone, members of the «Regional Project for Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa.» Delegates from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey and DISTED Malaysia also participated in this event to share their best practices in ecotourism.

## A Roadmap

The recommendations from this workshop provide a valuable roadmap for governments, international organizations, and local stakeholders committed to developing sustainable ecotourism in



A ZOOM VIEW OF THE TRAINING WORKSHOP.

the region. Indeed, the development of sustainable ecotourism in these countries rests on several key areas, centered around preserving natural and cultural wealth, enhancing local communities, and promoting responsible tourism.

Participants discussed enhancing natural and cultural resources, involving local communities and inclusive development, promoting responsible and sustainable tourism, and strengthening cooperation and partnerships. They advocated for the conservation and enhancement of national parks, nature reserves, and other biodiversity-rich protected areas, ensuring sustainable management and local community involvement. Recognizing that respectful sustainable tourism considers cultural and historical heritage, the virtual training workshop promoted this by highlighting

historical sites and monuments, local cultural traditions, and craftsmanship, encouraging local artisanship and products.

### Promoting Responsible and Sustainable Tourism

Eco-responsibility goes hand in hand with sustainable tourism. During this session on developing sustainable ecotourism in OIC member countries in West Africa, encouraging the adoption of eco-friendly practices in accommodations, restaurants, and tourist activities, minimizing tourism's environmental impact, was a recurring theme in the discussions.

Informing and educating tourists about the environmental and cultural issues of ecotourism, encouraging them to adopt responsible behaviors, and promoting solidarity and fair tourism were also highlighted. To meet

such challenges, participants advocated for the development of solidarity and fair tourism that benefits local communities and contributes to environmental preservation.

### Strengthening Cooperation and Partnerships

Regarding means, the virtual training workshop supported strengthening cooperation and partnerships, supported by collaboration among West African OIC member countries, government institutions, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, and local communities for implementing sustainable ecotourism projects and developing this activity in OIC member countries in West Africa. During this workshop, rich in every way, the mobilization of adequate financial resources to support sustainable ecotourism development in the region was not overlooked. ■



PHOTO-SOUVENIR DE L'AZERBAÏDJAN BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH INTERNATIONAL FORUM.

# Azerbaijan ByYouthforYouth International Forum in Susha and Baku

AT THE BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH INTERNATIONAL FORUM, ORGANIZED BY ISESCO (ISLAMIC WORLD EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION) IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ICEDT, IN SUSHA AND BAKU, AZERBAIJAN, FROM JUNE 25 TO 27, 2024, THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD WAS HIGHLIGHTED.

Youth empowerment, skills enhancement, and access to investment programs are among the priorities of the OIC. This was the case at the ByYouthforYouth International Forum, organized in Susha and Baku, Azerbaijan, from June 25 to 27, 2024, by ISESCO, in collaboration with the ICEDT. On this occasion, ISESCO's Director General, Dr. Salim M. Al Malik, and the Minister of Youth and Sports of Azerbaijan, Mr. Farid Gaibov, delivered speeches focusing on the role of youth socio-economic development in the Islamic world. The Director General of ISESCO particularly thanked the Azerbaijani head of state, Ilham Aliyev, the First Vice-President, Mehriban Aliyeva, and the Minister of Youth and Sports for their support in organizing such a forum.

In the same vein, the ICEDT Representative gave a presentation dedicated to youth empowerment in promoting trade and investments, capacity building, and investment programs in food and health. In Susha, during this international forum, which had more than 200 participants from 50 countries, the ICEDT sponsored the Youth Innovation Lab and the Entrepreneurship Prize ByYouthforYouth International Forum. At the announcement of the results on June 26, 2024, in Baku, the first prize was awarded to Mali, the second to Azerbaijan, the third to Morocco, the fourth to Togo, and the fifth to Oman.

It should be noted that the distribution of distinctions took place in the presence of Mrs. Fatma Samoura from Senegal, former Secretary General of FIFA. ■



UNE VUE DES SESSIONS D'INTERVENANTS AU BY YOUTH FOR YOUTH INTERNATIONAL FORUM.



REMISE DE PRIX À LA REPRÉSENTANTE D'UN PAYS DÉSIGNÉ VAINQUEUR.



REMISE DE PRIX À LA REPRÉSENTANTE DU TOGO.



PHOTO-SOUVENIR DES REPRÉSENTANTES DES PAYS VAINQUEURS.



PHOTO-SOUVENIR DES REPRÉSENTANTES DES 5 PAYS VAINQUEURS.

# Strong Growth of Islamic Funds

THE SECTOR IS EXPERIENCING A STRONG GROWTH OF 34%, REACHING 1,903 FUNDS. ESTIMATES PREDICT THAT THE VOLUME OF ASSETS UNDER MANAGEMENT COULD REACH \$3.7 TRILLION BY THE END OF 2024.

The Islamic funds sector offers significant growth potential for investors. With its ethical principles, resilience, and wide range of products, Islamic finance is well-positioned to meet the financial needs of a growing Muslim population and an increasing number of non-Muslim investors. The Islamic funds sector is expected to continue growing in the coming years, driven by several growth factors. Estimates predict that the volume of assets under management could reach \$3.7 trillion by the end of 2024.



In recent years, the Islamic funds sector has been experiencing rapid growth, with the volume of assets under management reaching record levels in 2023. Estimates from the Islamic Finance Development Platform (IFDP) indicate that assets under management in Islamic funds surged by 31.9% in 2020 to reach \$3.4 trillion. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the global drop in oil prices in 2020, this growth marked a slower progression compared to the 12.4% recorded in 2019.

In the long term, the trend remains positive, and Islamic funds have seen an average annual growth of around 15% over the past decade. Several factors contribute to the rapid expansion of the Islamic funds sector. Among them is a growing Muslim population. It should be no-

ted that Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world, with an estimated population of 1.9 billion people in 2021. This demographic growth drives demand for Sharia-compliant financial products. Another factor contributing to this significant progress is the growing interest of non-Muslim investors in Islamic finance, which attracts an increasing number of non-Muslim investors drawn by its ethical principles and resilience in the face of financial crises.

Moreover, new markets for Islamic finance are emerging, particularly in Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia. This opens up new growth opportunities for the sector. Additionally, many governments are implementing initiatives to support the growth of Islamic finance, recognizing its potential to contribute to economic development.

## Popular Products

Islamic funds offer a wide range of products, with the most popular including Sukuks, Islamic equity funds, and Islamic real estate funds. Sukuks are Sharia-compliant bonds that generate income through underlying halal assets. There are several types, including Murabaha Sukuks, Salam Sukuks, Istisnaa Sukuks, Musharaka Sukuks, among others.

As for Islamic equity funds, they invest in publicly traded companies that adhere to Sharia principles, while Islamic real estate funds invest in Sharia-compliant real estate properties.

This is a significant part of what is termed participatory finance, which also covers other sectors such as banking and Takaful insurance. ■



# Gambia HOSTS THE 15<sup>th</sup> ISLAMIC SUMMIT

THE 15TH SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC), OR THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT, WAS HELD ON MAY 4-5, 2024, IN BANJUL, GAMBIA. THIS HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF THE 57 OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES IS AN IMPORTANT PLATFORM FOR MUSLIM COUNTRIES TO DISCUSS COMMON ISSUES, PROMOTE COOPERATION, AND MAKE COLLECTIVE DECISIONS.

The 15th Session of the OIC Summit Conference took place from May 4-5, 2024, in Banjul, Gambia. The theme focused on «Strengthening Unity and Solidarity through Dialogue for Sustainable Development among the 57 Member States.»

In addition to the Palestinian issue and ongoing crises in Muslim countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Mali, and Libya, the heads of state and government addressed the fight against Islamophobia and discrimination, the promotion of economic and social development in Muslim countries, and the strengthening of scientific and technological cooperation. During this rich program, which included plenary sessions and one-on-one meetings between heads of state and government, H.E. Mr. Bra-

him Hussein Taha, Secretary General of the OIC, and H.E. Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of Gambia, emphasized in their speeches the importance for OIC member states to cooperate for political, social, and economic development, and to address crises within the OIC region.

## **A Spirit of Solidarity and Brotherhood**

Banjul 2024 brought together a significant number of heads of state, including the President of Senegal, H.E. Mr. Bassirou Diomaye Diakharr Faye, an immediate neighbor of the host country. He assured his peers of his country's continued commitment to the OIC in a spirit of Islamic solidarity and brotherhood, expressing his firm determination to work with everyone to achieve

common goals. Kings, presidents, or heads of government who were absent or unable to attend sent their representatives. In a speech by King Mohammed VI, President of the Al-Quds Committee, read by H.E. Mr. Ahmed Taoufiq, Minister of Habous and Islamic Affairs, the Sovereign reiterated that the OIC, which was founded 55 years ago in his country following the arson attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which holds a special place in the hearts of Muslims worldwide, must mobilize to defend the just causes of the Islamic nation, first and foremost the Palestinian cause. He emphasized that the OIC should play a leading role in promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue. He also highlighted: «We must promote human development and the well-being of Muslim peoples.»





SOUVENIR PHOTO FROM THE 15<sup>th</sup> OIC ISLAMIC SUMMIT IN BANJUL, GAMBIA.

Adopted at the conclusion of the Summit, the Banjul Declaration, with 34 points (see next article), reaffirms, among other recommendations, the OIC's commitments to peace, security, sustainable development, human rights, and South-South cooperation. The Declaration emphasized a resolution related to Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif, supporting the OIC's commitment to the Palestinian cause and advocating for the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state. Strong calls were made for the unity of the Palestinian people under the PLO banner, for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, and for the cessation of aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza, as well as the protection of the rights of Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC member states. The OIC also urged member states and other countries to take all measures to combat religious intolerance, specifically Islamophobia, negative stereotypes, hatred, and incitement to violence against

people based on their religion or beliefs. In Banjul, OIC member states condemned in the strongest terms the incidents of burning parts or copies of the Holy Quran in several European countries and called on the concerned countries and the international community to take decisive measures to prevent the recurrence of such acts and to counter the alarming rise of Islamophobia. While the UN is urged to adopt a resolution designating March 15 as «International Day to Combat Islamophobia,» a draft resolution aims to establish July 11 as «International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the Srebrenica Genocide,» in reference to the 1995 massacre.

#### **For a Prosperous Muslim World**

Economic development was also addressed. Discussions included combating water stress, the importance of implementing the «OIC-2025 Program of Action» to achieve goals in political, economic, social, and cultural domains,

and preparing the Program of Action for the 2026-2035 period.

Before paying tribute to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, for their generous support and continuous guidance to the OIC and the Ummah in general to achieve peace, justice, harmony, security, and sustainable development worldwide, and to H.E. Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of Gambia, for chairing the OIC and hosting the 15th Summit, countries such as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Turkey, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and other member states were recognized for leading efforts urging the UN Secretary-General to appoint a UN Special Envoy to combat Islamophobia and establish an international day dedicated to this cause. ■

# BANJUL DECLARATION

ADOPTED BY THE 15TH SESSION OF THE ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE

(SESSION OF “ENHANCING UNITY AND SOLIDARITY THROUGH DIALOGUE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”)

## In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

We, the Kings, Presidents and Emirs of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, gathered at the Fifteen Session of the Islamic Summit Conference held in Banjul, The Republic of The Gambia, from 25-26 Dhul-Qi’dah 1445 A.H, corresponding to 04 – 05 May 2024;

Reaffirming our commitment to the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the OIC, in particular respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, non-interference in their domestic affairs and peaceful resolution of disputes;

Adhering to the noble Islamic values of unity and fraternity, peace, solidarity compassion, tolerance, equality, justice, moderation, balance and human dignity;

Attached to the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and to International Law;

Stressing the importance of promoting education, human rights, tolerance, moderation, and middle stance;

Recognizing the importance of interfaith and intercultural dialogue as an effective mechanism against all forms of racism, discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia, extremism and incitement to hatred based on religion and race;

Underscoring our attachment to inclusive and balanced multilateralism to contribute to international peace, security, justice, and sustainable development, and to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, friendly relations and good neighbourliness, mutual respect and cooperation;

1- Affirm our solidarity in confronting the humanitarian catastrophe befalling Gaza Strip and its people due to the unflinching Israeli aggression for more than six months without respect for the most basic moral and humanitarian values, and call on the countries of the world to take action to stop the crime of genocide committed by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip and to implement the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice; and affirm that all efforts should be made to accelerate the delivery of all humanitarian aid and reject any attempts to displace the Palestinian people from their land.

2- Reiterate our solid support for the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle to attain their inalienable rights including their right to self-determination and to establish their sovereign state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital and call upon the international community to compel the Occupying power to abide by international law, and United Nations resolutions and end its illegal occupation, colonization of and apartheid in the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Failure to do so is bound to prolong the conflict, cause further suffering and instability in the region and diminish the chances of a “Two-State Solution”.

3- Reaffirm the need to enable the Palestinian people to realize their legitimate national rights, as recognised by the international community, including through its recognition of the fully sovereign State of Palestine within on the 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

4- Take all measures to safeguard the Islamic identity of Al-Quds Al-Sharif from the illegal measures and policies as well as Judaization attempts of the occupier and the violations against the sanctity and the status of Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

5. Urge our Palestinian brothers and sisters to unite in their struggle to achieve their objectives, under the banner of the Palestine Liberation Organization the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

6. Confirm the full solidarity of Member States with the Palestinian People in their struggle to free themselves from foreign occupation and colonization and condemn all illegal actions aimed at denying them their legitimate rights, commend the role of UNRWA in serving the Palestinian refugees and

invite all States and the international community to continue supporting it to execute its historic mandate and responsibility.

7. We call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and cessation of the all-out aggression against the Palestinian people in Gaza, as well as for providing humanitarian, medical, and relief aid, providing water and electricity, and opening humanitarian corridors to deliver urgent aid to the Gaza Strip in an unhindered and adequate manner ; warn of the danger of continuing the crime of genocide and ethnic cleansing, including starvation, deprivation of water, and preventing entry of fuel, which led to a genuine disaster for all health and humanitarian sectors; and affirm our categorical rejection and confrontation, by all means, to any attempt at forcibly displacing, expelling or transferring the Palestinian people from their land;

8. We pay tribute to the solidarity of African peoples and governments with the struggle of the Palestinian people, specifically the Member States of the OIC, and their firm stance to end the historical injustice that has befallen the Palestinian people, based on their bitter experience with ending colonization and apartheid, and affirm our continued support for the Palestinian people and their just struggle until they gain all their legitimate and inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination, freedom and independence.

9. Reiterate the importance of resorting to dialogue and mediation for peaceful settlement of disputes thereby creating a tension-free atmosphere among the Islamic Ummah.

10. Stress the importance of strengthening preventive diplomacy in order to contribute significantly to achieving peace, saving lives and resources as well as attaining the aspirations of our peoples for sustainable development.

11. Underline the importance we attach to decent living and protection of the rights of Muslim communities and minorities in non-OIC Member States.

12. Express our solidarity with Muslim communities and minorities in a number of non-OIC Member States who face persecution, injustice and aggression, extend necessary support to their legitimate causes, and call for further international efforts to safeguard their rights, dignity and religious and cultural identity.

13. Reaffirm the continued political, moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people and call upon the United Nations Security Council to take effective measures to implement its resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir to enable the Kashmiri people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination through a UN-supervised plebiscite;

14. Reaffirm the urgent need to resolve the longstanding disputes including Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir as per United Nations' relevant resolutions and wishes of their people to avoid continuous threat to peace and security of the Middle East and South Asia;

15. Express deep concern over the increasing systematic persecution of Muslims and other minorities in India that has led to their political, economic and social marginalization and urge the Government of India to take necessary measures to protect their lives and properties and prevent any such acts in the future;

16. Pay tribute to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Türkiye, Islamic Republic of Iran, Arab Republic of Egypt and other Member States for leading efforts at the UN General Assembly for the adoption of the Resolutions designating 15 March as "International Day to Combat Islamophobia" in 2022 and "Measures to Combat Islamophobia" on March 15, 2024 and urge the UN Secretary General to appoint United Nations Special Envoy to combat Islamophobia and implement other relevant measures contained in these resolutions;

17. Call upon Member States and other countries to take all measures, including legislative and policy measures to combat religious intolerance, negative stereotyping, hatred, incitement to violence and violence against persons on the ground of their religion or belief;

18. Emphasize to continue deliberations on full activation of the OIC Peace and Security architecture and appreciate Islamic Republic of Pakistan for initiating discussion to deliberate and develop mechanisms for conflict prevention, mediation, reconciliation, and peace building to address contemporary challenges and conflicts confronting the Muslim Ummah;

19. Reaffirm our support for a peaceful, stable, prosperous and inclusive Afghanistan and in this regard reiterate the need to address the challenges faced by Afghan people, such as humanitarian, human rights, ethnic groups, security and terrorism, narcotics and social challenges. 20. Stress the importance

of full respect for the human rights of all Afghans and the need to protect the fundamental rights of Afghan girls and women, especially the right to education and work, and call for more communication with the de facto authorities on these issues. We also emphasize the need to make more efforts to address the challenges associated with ethnic groups, terrorism, drugs and social aspects for inclusive governance to achieve sustainable stability.

21. Reaffirm our unwavering support to the countries and peoples of the Sahel region facing daunting security and humanitarian challenges involving armed conflicts, violent extremism, food insecurity, and vulnerabilities amplified by climate change.

22. Pay tribute to The Republic of the Gambia for its leading efforts at the level of the International Court of Justice, on behalf of the OIC, to hold to account those responsible for genocide and other atrocities against Rohingya Muslims.

23. Support United Nations General Assembly Draft Resolution to designate 11 July as the International day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, stressing the importance for the international community to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes.

24. Condemn in the strongest terms the repeated incidents of burning copies of the Holy Quran in a number of European countries and call again on the concerned countries and the international community to take comprehensive and necessary actions to prevent the recurrence of such acts and to counter the alarming surge of Islamophobia.

25. Strongly condemn all forms of intolerance, terrorism, violence, extremism leading to violence, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and discrimination of any kind based on ethnicity, tribe, color, and religion.

26. Underline the importance of fostering tolerance, dialogue and cooperation among civilizations, religions, cultures, and peoples as the most effective way to address the scourges of racism, discrimination, religious hatred and Islamophobia.

27. Urge the international community to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly poverty alleviation, climate change, food security, health and education consistent with Islamic Principles and values.

28. Underline the need for more international efforts to protect the rights of women, children, youth, the elderly and people with special needs as well as Islamic family values.

29. Stress the need to confront the challenge of water scarcity, which has escalated over recent decades to become a global challenge with the continuation of human development, increasing population growth, and the worsening repercussions of the water-related climate change phenomenon, especially in arid countries.

30. Welcome the outcomes of the International Conference on Women in Islam, hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on November 6-8, 2023, in Jeddah, including the education of girls and the rights to work for women.

31. Affirm the right to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty

32. Underscore the importance of implementing the “OIC-2025: Program of Action” to achieve the set goals in the political, economic, social and cultural fields Call for enhanced coordination and consultation among Member States and OIC organs to prepare the 2026 – 2035 Program of Action.

33. Pay tribute to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, The Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, (May Allah preserve and protect them) for their continued generous support and guidance to the OIC and the Ummah in general for the attainment of global peace, justice, harmony, security and sustainable development.

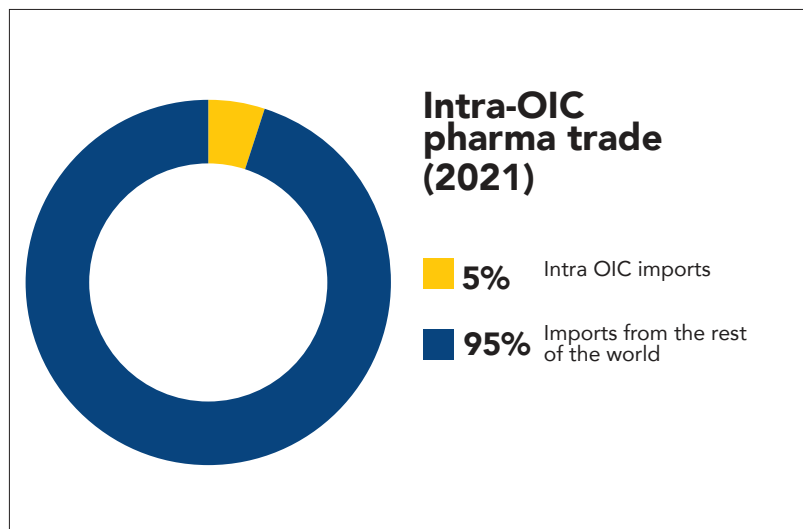
34. Congratulate and Commend the Government and People of The Gambia for hosting the 15th OIC Islamic Summit, particularly His Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of The Gambia, for assuming the Chairmanship of this Organization and assure him of our unflinching support and prayers to Allah to grant him the wisdom and strength to further concretize the bonds of fraternity, cooperation and solidarity among Islamic Countries in the service of the Ummah.

**May Allah The Almighty and Omniscient bless our undertakings and grant us success in the achievement of our noble objectives for the Ummah and humanity at large.**

# Data to Boost Intra-OIC Trade and Strengthen the Halal Value Chain

THE GLOBAL HALAL MARKET IS ESTIMATED AT \$2 TRILLION AND IS EXPECTED TO REACH \$3 TRILLION BY 2025, ON A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE. TO ENHANCE THE HALAL INDUSTRY AND PROVIDE INTELLIGENCE TO ECONOMIC OPERATORS, THE ICDDT DEVELOPS QUALIFIED DATA FOR EACH SPECIFIC SECTOR OF THE HALAL INDUSTRY ON TRADE, CONSUMER SPENDING, AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITY.

Halal data and initiatives can help boost intra-OIC trade and strengthen the halal value chain. By increasing intra-OIC trade, OIC member states can stimulate their economic growth and create jobs. Strengthening this value chain allows OIC member states to meet the growing demand for halal products from consumers. The ICDDT halal dashboard provides a crucial decision-making tool by refining strategies and smoothing trends. Major companies operating in this sector within the OIC region are also made available to stimulate intra-OIC trade and strengthen the halal value chain.



In his message at the opening of the OIC Halal Expo 2023 and the 9th World Halal Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 25, 2023, Mr. Houssein Brahim Taha, Secretary-General of the OIC, highlighted the significant growth of the global halal market in recent years and the growing demand for halal-certified products, which reached a market value of \$4.7 trillion in 2020. This message was read by Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs. It should be noted that these simultaneous events took place in Istanbul from November 23 to 26, 2023. The 10th edition will be held in Tunisia from October 8 to 12, 2024.

## Statistics for Performance

Data on intra-OIC trade can be used to identify opportunities to increase trade among OIC member states, while data on halal consumption helps identify halal consumption trends. Data on the halal value chain can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the value chain. A number of initiatives have been launched to boost intra-OIC trade and strengthen the halal value chain. Among these initiatives is the Intra-OIC Trade Center, an online platform that allows businesses from OIC member states to connect and trade. It offers a number of resources, including a business directory, an e-commerce platform, and an information center.

Additionally, the OIC Halal Forum, an annual event that brings together businesses, governments, and international organizations, discusses opportunities in the halal value chain.

To facilitate the trade of halal products among OIC member states and beyond, the OIC Halal Standardization Program aims to develop international standards for halal products. ■

# Togo: The ePhyto GeNS System Comes into Play

THE EPHYTO GENNS SYSTEM IS FULLY OPERATIONAL IN TOGO. SINCE SEPTEMBER 2023, TOGO HAS BEEN EXCHANGING EPHYTOS DIRECTLY WITH ITS MAIN TRADING PARTNERS VIA THE CENTRAL PLATFORM. THE REQUIRED ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FOR SENDING EPHYTOS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION WAS INSTALLED IN DECEMBER 2023. IT CAN HELP FACILITATE INTRA-OIC TRADE BY PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR THE ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE OF PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES.



A VIEW OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY.



THE SIGNATORIES OF THE SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION.



A VIEW OF THE SIGNING CEREMONY AUDIENCE.

The Generic National ePhyto System (GeNS) is a centralized online system that allows countries that do not have their own national system to produce, send, and receive electronic phytosanitary certificates (ePhytos). It should be noted that GeNS is developed by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) with financial support

from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF). The provision of essential computer equipment allows phytosanitary inspectors to verify, process, and record information in the field accurately and quickly. The official ceremony for the handover of equipment took place on March 14, 2024.

### Catalysts for Intra-OIC Trade

GeNS is a system that provides numerous advantages, such as helping to improve the efficiency of trade by reducing the time and costs associated with issuing and processing paper phytosanitary certificates, reducing phytosanitary risks by improving the tra-

ceability of plant product shipments, and most importantly, facilitating intra-OIC trade by providing a platform for the electronic exchange of phytosanitary certificates.

To do this, GeNS offers a number of features, including the creation, submission, receipt, verification, and management of ePhytos. Users can create ePhytos by entering the required information, such as shipment details, shipped products, and the destination country, submit ePhytos to the National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPO) of destination countries, which can receive ePhytos from sending countries and verify their authenticity. Users can manage their ePhytos, such as checking the status of ePhytos and downloading approved ones. The project closing meeting is scheduled for July 25, 2024, in Lomé. ■



## ICDT INVEST DAYS YAOUNDÉ

THE ICDT INVEST DAYS YAOUNDÉ FORUM, ORGANIZED BY THE ICDT AND THE ARAB BANK FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (BADEA) IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CAMEROON INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY (CIPA) AND UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON, IS SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 24-25, 2024, IN YAOUNDÉ, CAMEROON.

Following the success of the Banjul event, the «ICDT Invest Days» are set for September 24-25, 2024, in Yaoundé, the capital of the Republic of Cameroon. Beyond highlighting investment prospects, the forum aims to foster economic and trade partnerships among OIC countries and strengthen regional integration.

As Ms. Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, Director General of ICDT, aptly

states, «By organizing this event under the theme ‘Investing in the New Cameroon, Land of Opportunities,’ our goal is to showcase Cameroon’s potential as a prime investment destination by presenting lucrative opportunities to investors from OIC member countries.»

For participants, the «ICDT Invest Days» on September 24-25, 2024, in Yaoundé, Cameroon, will undoubtedly be a timely op-

portunity to explore and contribute to Cameroon’s flourishing investment landscape.

«We will facilitate the exchange of national and regional knowledge, offer project financing support through regional financial institutions, and promote strategic investment projects to strengthen value chains within the OIC,» assure the initiators of these meetings in a country with immense potential. ■



LAHORE CITY IN PAKISTAN LOCATED ON THE RAVI RIVER, A TRIBUTARY OF THE INDUS.

# Pakistan 18<sup>th</sup> TRADE FAIR OF OIC MEMBER STATES IN LAHORE, DECEMBER

THE ICDT, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PAKISTANI MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN COLLABORATION WITH THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF PAKISTAN (TDAP), IS ORGANIZING THE 18TH TRADE FAIR OF OIC MEMBER STATES FROM NOVEMBER 29 TO DECEMBER 1, 2024, IN LAHORE, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN.





Working tirelessly to strengthen trade ties among OIC member states, the ICDT is organizing the 18th Trade Fair of OIC Member States.

This multisectoral fair, scheduled for November 29 to December 1, 2024, in Lahore, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, will offer a platform for the business community, trade promotion organizations, investment promotion agencies, chambers of commerce, industry, agriculture, crafts, professional associations, and economic operators from

OIC member states to showcase their products and services, finalize trade agreements, and form partnerships. It is anticipated that industry leaders and innovators from OIC member states will not miss this event, which is an essential meeting for SMEs to connect and grow.

#### An Event Not to Be Missed

The organizers and their partners are already announcing a rich program with various sequences and working sessions. The event will

include, in addition to a Pakistan-Africa business forum and a Political Dialogue Forum for IPAs from Asian and African OIC countries, a training workshop on Halal Certification and the presentation of the OIC Report on the Halal Economy in collaboration with SMIIC.

As usual, B2B meetings are planned to facilitate or initiate business exchanges on-site.

The event is expected to feature an awards ceremony for the Best Pavilions and women entrepreneurs. ■



# CALENDAR

- ▶ **16<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL UN-OIC COOPERATION MEETING INVEST DAYS À YAOUNDÉ**  
July 22-24, 2024 • Astana, Kazakhstan

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- ▶ **WEBINAR ON «ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF HALAL TOURISM IN THE OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES»**  
July 29, 2024 • Virtual

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- ▶ **ISLAMIC COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (CIAECS)**  
July 28-30, 2024 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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- ▶ **PERMANENT FINANCIAL COMMITTEE (FPC)**  
July 28-30, 2024 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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- ▶ **WORKSHOP ON ISLAMIC DIGITAL ECONOMY IN OIC MEMBER STATES**  
July 31 - August 3, 2024 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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- ▶ **50<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF OIC FOREIGN MINISTERS**  
August 29-30, 2024 • Yaoundé, Cameroon

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- ▶ **22<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC TRADE WORKING GROUP**  
September 19-20, 2024 • Ankara, Türkiye

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- ▶ **INVEST DAYS IN YAOUNDÉ**  
September 24 -25, 2024 • Yaoundé, Cameroon

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- ▶ **10<sup>th</sup> OIC MEMBER STATES HALAL PRODUCTS EXHIBITION**  
October 08-12, 2024 • Tunis, Tunisia

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- ▶ **TRAINING OF WOMEN FROM FRENCH-SPEAKING OIC COUNTRIES**  
October 21-25, 2024 • Ndjamen, Chad

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- ▶ **41<sup>st</sup> COMCEC SESSION**  
02-05 November 2024 • Istanbul, Türkiye

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- ▶ **4<sup>th</sup> CONSULTATIVE FORUM OF REGIONAL COOPERATION ORGANIZATIONS (RCOS) OPERATING IN THE OIC AREA**  
November 18-19, 2024 • Marrakech, Morocco

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- ▶ **COP 29 (TRAINING WORKSHOP OF ASIAN COUNTRIES)**  
November 11-22, 2024 • Baku, Azerbaijan

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- ▶ **18<sup>th</sup> OIC TRADE FAIR**  
November 29-December 01, 2024 • Lahore, Pakistan

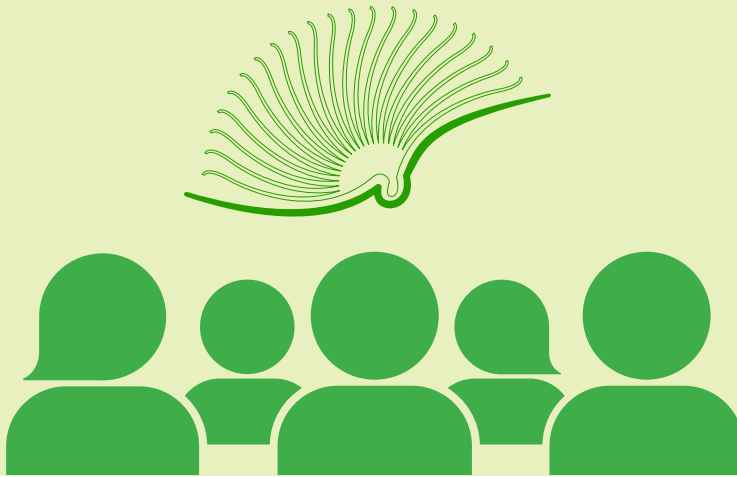
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- ▶ **8<sup>th</sup> ACMOI**  
December 04-05, 2024 • Jeddah, Saudi Arabia



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

**OCTOBER 21-25, 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.





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)