

Workshop on Monitoring Food Security in the Context of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

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Welcoming Remarks by

HE Ambassador Musa KULAKLIKAYA, Director General of SESRIC

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Workshop on Monitoring Food Security in the Context of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. I want to thank you for accepting our invitation and participating to the Workshop. I also want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and its Subregional Office for Central Asia (FAO-SEC) in Ankara for providing their support and valuable knowledge through their distinguished experts.

I am full of hope that your deliberations would strengthen the long term and mutually beneficial cooperation in food security, particularly in view of the multiple challenges faced by OIC member countries in food insecurity and poverty alleviation.

Distinguished Participants,

Food insecurity is one of the most significant challenges facing humanity today. Over the past few decades, many initiatives have been taken at both the national and international levels to end hunger and achieve the goal of food security at global levels.

In 2000, the **elimination of hunger and under-nourishment** was identified in the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** as one of the most important objectives to be achieved on both national and global levels.

On 25 September 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It includes 17 **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and 169 targets that will guide the actions of governments, international agencies, civil society and other institutions over the next 15 years.

SDG 2 aims to end **hunger and all forms of malnutrition** by 2030. It also commits to universal access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food at all times of the year. As expressed under the eight targets of SDG 2, achievement of SDG 2 will require sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices, equal access to land, technology and markets and international cooperation on investments in infrastructure and technology to boost agricultural productivity.

It is true that the fight against hunger has progressed during the MDGs period. **The prevalence of hunger declined from 15% in the period 2000-2002 to 11% in the period 2014-2016.** However, according to Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, **more than 790 million people worldwide still lack regular access to adequate amounts of dietary energy.**

The majority of these undernourished people reside in the developing regions of Asia & Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean. As majority of OIC countries are located in these regions, it is evident that a significant portion of the undernourished people in these regions resides in OIC countries, particularly in the least-developed member countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The **OIC began to focus quite extensively on agriculture and food security**, particularly during the 1980s. Seven ministerial conferences have been held between 1981 and 2016 to strengthen the cooperation and foster development in agriculture and food security in OIC countries. Additionally, the 2005 OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century, and subsequently new OIC Programme of Action (2016-2025); have also paid significant attention to agricultural and rural development and food security.

During the recent years, several project proposals have gained support from the OIC member states and moved towards materialization. One of these proposals was on the establishment of an **Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS) as a specialized institution of OIC**. And IOFS recently started its activities last year 2016 with Headquarters in Kazakhstan.

Distinguished Participants,

Taking this opportunity, I would like to mention briefly some of the ongoing and conducted activities of SESRIC in the area of **food security and poverty alleviation** within the scope of its mandate on statistics, research, and training.

In the area of statistics, SESRIC collates, processes and disseminates socio-economic statistics and information on and for the utilisation of the member countries. Hosting 313 socio-economic variables under 19 categories for OIC Member Countries, the **OIC Statistics Database (OICStat)** currently has 20 indicators pertaining to agriculture and malnourishment. The content of OICStat is regularly updated and enriched based on information collected from the national and international statistical sources to enable access to the comparable data.

Additionally, organized with a South-South cooperation approach, the **OIC Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme** contributes to the capacities of the National Statistical Offices of OIC member countries in order to enhance the National Statistical Systems in member countries. In the field of agriculture statistics, SESRIC has facilitated the organisation of a total of **15 short-term statistical courses and 2 study visits in 12 OIC Countries** since 2007 with the support of 8 OIC Countries by providing their experts and facilities.

In its close connection with food security, SESRIC conducts **statistical activities on poverty alleviation**. For instance, the project titled “Enhancing National Capacities of OIC Member Countries in Poverty Statistics” has produced the report on “**Measurement of Poverty in OIC Member Countries 2015**”. As a continuation of the project, **8 short-term statistical courses** have been organised for the benefit of NSOs of OIC member countries. Additionally, a Regional Workshop has been conducted with the partnership of OPHI.

In the area of research, SESRIC regularly publishes the report on “**Agriculture and Food Security in OIC Member Countries**” every two years for the **OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development**. The report explores major issues such as agricultural population and land use in agriculture, water resources and their use in agriculture, production and trade of agricultural commodities, food aid, prevalence of undernourishment, and impacts of food price volatility. The report also includes a diverse set of policy recommendations and project proposals for enhancing OIC cooperation in this important area.

In the area of training, SESRIC has developed **the OIC Agriculture Capacity Building Programme (OIC-AgriCaB) and OIC Poverty Alleviation Programme (OIC-PAP)**. These programmes aim to have an active and vital role in facilitating the exchange of knowledge and the best practices among OIC Member Countries through various projects, trainings, and other capacity building activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The persistence of hunger is no longer simply a matter of food availability. If significant progress cannot be demonstrated, the **zero hunger target** will be largely missed by 2030. More and better data on access to food can enable the tracking of progress and guide interventions to fight food insecurity and malnutrition.

Monitoring progress also requires a mutual effort among countries, international and regional organisations. **National data collected by governments should form the foundation for monitoring SDG 2.** The goal is to provide information for action leading to policies that reach the most vulnerable groups in all countries.

In this regard, I am sure that this Workshop will foster exchanges of knowledge, and help to create an environment for collaboration and innovation concerning the **Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU) methodologies.**

I wish you very productive deliberations, and pray to Allah Almighty to help us all and guide our steps to improve prosperity and welfare in our societies. Thank you for your attention.

Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu