REPORT ON

THE TRADE INFORMATION NETWORK FOR ISLAMIC COUNTRIES (TINIC)

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TINIC has been redesigned and restructured since October 2001 in such a manner as to meet the needs and expectations of the private sector and professional associations. It is operational and accessible at the following address: (http://www.icdt-oic.org). A CD-ROM presenting the existing TINIC's databases are also available for visitors. Well structured research engines have been developed focusing on the major databases so as to help Internet visitors of our web site to find and screen required information in a simple manner. Additionally, subscription forms are also available and operational on our web site. They are meant to help visitors to directly subscribe to our databases through Internet, in order to help them save time and retrieve data in a more efficient manner.

Besides, the Arabic version of the Centre's web site has become operational since January 2008 in implementation of the request of the Board of Directors of ICDT made at its 24th Session.

New databases were launched on TINIC in January 2010. These are in particular, the OIC Foreign Trade Statistics, Statistics on trade structure with 2 digits and per country and databases in customs tariffs (2-4-6 digits) for the comparison of international data and (7-12 digits) for the analysis of national data. These 7-12 digits are available on line in the INDT's Internet Web site for the years spreading from 2005 to 2009 in French or in English according to countries.

These new data comprise comprehensive data on foreign trade statistics (between 2 to 6 digits), on customs tariffs until 8 digits, information on tariff measures, either per country or regional grouping with a partner country or region of the OIC with a view to developing trade information dissemination among the OIC Member States. These new databases allow to:

- ➢ To make research per kind of product of the Harmonised System with 2 digits for comparisons of the OIC Countries statistics;
- ➢ Possible research per customs tariff;
- ➢ Forecast the import/export performance and the competitiveness of the OIC Countries.

The TINIC remains an information network that connects the various operators of foreign trade of the OIC Member States, its aim is to facilitate access to information and operations to develop trade and business cooperation between Member States.

- **OIC TRADE EMBEDDED MAP: Trade Statistics for OIC Business Development.**

Within the framework of its collaboration with the International Trade Center (ITC-Geneva) the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, a subsidiary organ of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, seeks to among its objectives, the collection and the dissemination of trade information and the development of the Trade Information Network for Islamic Countries (TINIC), the OIC Trade Centre has launched since December 2016 the *OIC Trade Embedded Map*, which is a tailored Trade Map for the 57 OIC Member Countries.

This new database provides trade flow information in a user friendly and easily accessible format. TINIC users have access to one of the world's largest trade databases containing indicators on national export performance, international demand, alternative markets and the role of competitors from both the product and country

perspectives.

TINIC users can quickly and easily:

- Analyse current export performance: examine the performance and dynamics of an OIC country's export markets for any OIC product/service; identify the number and size of export markets and the concentration of exports; highlight countries where market share has increased.
- Identify promising export markets: view the world's major importing countries for a specific product, with indicators illustrating the concentration and growth rate of imports in each market.
- Assess the level of competition in the global market: competing countries, exporting the same product, are ranked in terms of value of exports, and availability of additional indicators on quantities, growth and market share.
- Assess the level of competition in a specific export market: view a country's competitors in any target market, with information on the export performance of each competitor, the number of supplying countries and their performance in the market.
- Find information on the average tariffs applied by countries to the import of a specific product from specific partner countries: a first overview on market access conditions is directly available in Trade Map; further and more detailed information is available by following a direct link to Market Access Map. Market Access Map provides tariff-line market access information such as ad valorem equivalents and specific tariffs as well as tariff-rate quotas, MFN and preferential tariffs applied under bilateral and regional trade agreements.
- View trade data at the national tariff line level: trade flows are detailed at the NTL level for around 10,000 products and more than 150 countries, covering more than 90% of world trade; trade in services data is also available under the Balance of Payments nomenclature
- Identify new supplying markets: countries exporting a product both to the world and to a specific market are ranked against one another thus allowing direct comparisons of current and potential national suppliers.
- Review opportunities for diversification in a specific market by comparing the demand for a set of similar or related products/services in the market under review.
- Assess national trade performance: make an overall evaluation of national trade performance and identify sectors and products/services in terms of their potential for investment and trade promotion.
- Identify existing and potential bilateral trade with any partner country or region: bilateral trade opportunities can be identified by comparing the actual bilateral trade, the partner countries' demand of a specific product/service in terms of imports and the global export capacity of the home country.
- Access trade data as recent as the previous quarter in the same year: users can analyse long time series on a monthly or quarterly basis to see seasonality and better understand the impact of a historical event on trade dynamics.

- Identify companies exporting, importing or distributing a specific product in a number of markets.

Tariff information at the 6-digit level allows the exporter to get a quick overview of the average level of protection applied to a group of products in order to quickly screen and rank markets.

In OIC Trade Embedded Map, the exporter of a product who wants to target any OIC Member Country market is also able to find information on companies importing or distributing the said product in case of availability of data. OIC Trade Embedded Map provides the location, contact details, turnover, number of employees and the Website address of a selection of companies exporting, importing, distributing, producing or supplying specific products or services in a country of interest. The company information in OIC Trade Embedded Map is based on a selection of companies that cannot be considered neither exhaustive nor including the major exporting/importing/distributing companies worldwide. As of September 2014, the source of company information in Trade Map is Kompass International, a company specializing in the provision of business information.

- Technical Assistance:

REMINDER:

Within an IDB's delegation, ICDT participated in a mission in Guinea whose main task was to study the different possibilities of creating a Documentation and Trade and Information Centre, upon a request of the Guinean government.

At the end of this mission, a report on the feasibility and evaluation of the project was presented to IDB.

The Government of the Republic of Guinea has contacted ICDT requesting it to propose experts for the implementation of this project. For this purpose, ICDT submitted an offer in October 2001, which was accepted, with a view to implementing the stages 3 and 4 of the trade information and documentation project pertaining to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the SMEs of the Republic of Guinea. UNCTAD will achieve stage 1 and 2 of this project.

It is within this framework that ICDT sent Mr. Amadou CIRE SALL, expert at ICDT, from 19 to 30 April 2004 to launch the implementation of phases 3 and 4 of this project, whose completion has been assigned to ICDT's expert.

The ICDT's expert went to Conakry from 7th December 2005 to 6th January 2006 to finalise this project.

This second mission that was carried out concerned the network wiring and the electric installation of the DNCC; the design and the construction of the web site and of an interactive CD-ROM for the DNCC and SOPHOS Pure/Pure Message Anti Spam: Antivirus solutions. All the invoices were submitted to IDB, which is the financing partner with a view to having the agreement of the relevant senior executives of the Bank so as to allow the companies that have been selected to effectively start their work.

Pending the network wiring, the HP ML server PROLIANT G2 has been installed to be subsequently operated once the wiring is finished.

Within this framework, ICDT has received a request for technical assistance made by the

Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Republic of Cameroon, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Benin with a view to setting up a Trade Information Network or to restructure it. These requests are currently being examined by ICDT in close collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank.

It is within this framework than an expert of ICDT was sent to start prospection missions.

A first prospection and initial contact mission was carried out on 22nd June 2010.

A second mission was carried out on 15-16 September 2010, which has enabled to:
- ❑ Take stock of the existing infrastructure in the field of trade information;
- ❑ Identify the project, which is the subject of the Senegalese request;
- ❑ To assess the needs on equipment and human resources for the good functioning of the project.

At the end of the mission, a restructuration project of the documentation and archives system was finalised and sent to the Chamber of Commerce, industry and Agriculture of Dakar upon which the government of Senegal will make a financing request at the level of the Islamic Development Bank as well as at the level of other funding sources.

With respect to the Republic of Benin, the Centre has sent its experts for a first mission for the diagnosis of the Trade Information System. Mr. Amadou Ciré Sall carried out a mission on the spot from 7 to 10 February 2011. In brief, this first prospection mission has allowed to:
- - Assess the existing infrastructure in the field of trade information;
- - Indentify the project subject of the Beninese request.

Mr. Ciré Sall held several working sessions with the different responsible for each department and service of the ABePEC to make a diagnosis of the situation with a view to explore the ways and means to be used for the restructuration of the Trade Information and Markets Analysis Department.

Mr. Sall has also held talks with the Directors of the Cabinets of the Ministries of Commerce and Industry, which expressed their thanks to the Centre for having responded promptly to the requested for technical assistance of the ABePEC. All of them are confident and expecting fruitful results from ICDT-ABePEC cooperation for the good of the business community of Benin.

In order to carry out successfully the technical assistance of ICDT, the project was broken down as follows:
- ▪ Diagnosis phase within the ABePEC, which formed the subject of our 1st mission from 5th to 11th February 2011;
- ▪ Identification of needs in equipment;
- ▪ Selection and analysis of databases to be set up;
- ▪ Assessment of available human resources with a view to defining the equired personnel and its qualification for the drawing up of a training plan;

A second phase of the setting up will have a main mission, once funding is secured:
- ▪ Acquisition and reception of furniture and equipment;
- ▪ Setting up of the internal network of the ABePEC;
- ▪ Installation and testing of equipment;
- ▪ Setting up of operation applications of databases;
- ▪ Execution phase (test and implementation of databases and training of the personnel);

- Conception and realisation of the web site and of an interactive CD-Rom for the ABePEC;
- Purchase of antivirus solutions: SOPHOS Pure Message /Pure Message Anti Spam.

In 2015, the Centre will relaunch the Project with Mauritania, Cameroon and try to finalize the project of Guinea.

ICDT is provided with a Roster's of Experts in international trade, nationals of Member States. The Centre updates this roster on a regular basis and resorts to it for the working out of studies and projects pertaining to its field of activities.

The TINIC has been revised and restructured in 2007 and 2008 to meet the needs and expectations of the private sector and professional associations.

It should be noted in this regard that the Arabic version of the ICDT's website is available since July 2008 and the French version since the first quarter 2012.

It is operational and accessible at http://www.icdt-oic.org. The visitors ICDT's Site can find all existing databases in TINIC/CD-ROM. A well laid out a Research Engine has been developed around the main database to help Internet visitors to our site to find the desired filtered information easily. In addition, registration forms are also available and operational on our site to help visitors wishing to register in our databases, to do so directly from the Internet to save time and for greater efficiency.

Following the results of the first and second meetings of the Statistical Working Group of the OIC, the ICDT has developed new comprehensive databases on Intra-OIC Trade (by HS 2-digit) and customs tariffs since November 2010 on its website and statistics with SH 4 digits are available on the site since January 2012.

Within the framework of the development of intra-OIC trade and contribution to the gradual elimination of non-tariff trade barriers, ICDT is planning to launch in the TINIC, a database on non-tariff barriers to trade in the OIC Member States in 2015.

The objective is to identify non-tariff barriers and define a method for the gradual elimination of these obstacles (in compliance with the relevant articles of the PRETAS) so as to facilitate intra-OIC trade. This database is open to the economic operators of Member States in order to denounce the practices thus slowing trade.

- Technical assistance:

ICDT provided technical assistance to the Republic of Guinea for the establishment of a documentation and trade Information centre within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and SMEs.

Within this framework, ICDT has received a request for technical assistance made by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Republic of Cameroon, with a view to setting up a Trade Information Network at the Ministry of Trade, the Republic of Senegal through the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Dakar and the Republic of Benin through the Benin Agency for the Promotion of Foreign Trade (ABePEC). These requests are currently being examined by ICDT in close collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank.

Websites Project for the Embassies accredited to Rabat:

Within this framework of the technical assistance provided to the OIC Member States and referring to the proposal of ICDT made at the 10th Meeting of Economic Advisers to OIC Embassies accredited in Rabat on 12 January 2012 to accompany them in any project of economic and trade nature through the use of information and communication technology, ICDT has initiated a program for creating websites for the benefit of Embassies with a view to developing electronic commerce.

The pilot began April 5, 2012 with the Embassies of the Republic of Benin and Tunisia. It is in towards this end that ICDT has promptly started to prepare a 'project type' in collaboration with the Guidelines Group Company, which project was presented and circulated to the Economic Advisers at the meeting of 12th January 2012. Given the obvious interest of the Embassies of Benin and Tunisia, a first meeting was held on 5th April 2012 at ICDT's Headquarters, which was mainly devoted to the project of creating a website for the benefit of the Embassies of Benin and Tunisia accredited to Rabat. This pilot experience could be extended to other embassies and trade promotion agencies (TPOs) of the Islamic Ummah.

On 18th April 2012, the Embassy of the Republic of Senegal and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania have also expressed their interest to join the project. It is for this purpose that ICDT held meetings with the Embassies on 18th April 2012 in Rabat so as to better explain to them this project.

On 17th July 2012, the Embassy of the Republic of Guinea joined the project; then ICDT's team visited the Embassy for a presentation of the project in more details.

On January 16, 2013, the website of the Embassy of the Republic of Senegal was officially launched at SOFITEL hotel in Rabat on the occasion of the Eleventh Meeting of Economic Advisors to the Embassies of the Member States of the OIC accredited to Rabat.

This launch was a preview in the context of technical assistance to the Embassies of the OIC Member States accredited to Rabat and will be extended to other embassies at their request.

On 8th May 2013, a team from ICDT visited the Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia in order to explain in a comprehensive manner the benefits of the project. Tunisia has given the green light to ICDT for their web design and the work is in progress.

The Gambia also benefited from this assistance and their website was launched in January 2015 during the 15th meeting of the economic advisers to the embassies of the OIC Member States accredited to Rabat.

The website of the Benin embassy is also operational since August 2016. It remains to revive Guinea, Sudan and Tunisia.

For 2018, the ICDT will provide technical assistance in the realization of websites at the request of the various OIC embassies accredited to Rabat and the various organizations and / or professional associations.

- **Launching of the "Global Network of TPOs in the OIC Member States: OIC TPO Network":**

Operationalization of the TINIC platform of TPOs network of the OIC Member States which falls within the framework of the implementation of the

recommendations of the Forum of the Global Network of the OIC TPOs, ICDT will launch in 2016 a dedicated website in TINIC for the OIC TPOs so as to facilitate the exchange of information between them.

This network's address will be: www.icdt-oic.org/oictponet.

Through this global network of TPOs, it is planned to:
- Publicize and promote among the economic operators products and services of the country and the OIC institutions and in particular, the IDB Group and ICDT;
- Feed regularly the TINIC's Databases (Business opportunities, Statistics, Virtual Fair, economic operators, trade regulations, tariffs, NTBs ...);
- Undertake any actions necessary for the regular participation of the OIC Member States in the Trade Fair of the OIC Member States (OIC/EXPO) as well as specialized exhibitions organized by ICDT.
- Encourage economic operators of the OIC countries to actively participate in forums and seminars organized by ICDT and the IDB Group;
- Develop a partnership among the Member States' TPOs and energize the existing cooperation agreements and promote the transfer of technical advice and know-how of advanced TPOs to other TPOs which so wish.

ICDT has launched its portal for the Trade Promotion Organs (TPO) (http://tpo.oicinvest.org/Default.aspx) on 23th May 2016 in Riyadh on the sidelines of the 15th Trade Fair of the OIC Member States. This portal was presented to all the participants in the 2nd Forum of Trade Promotion Organs of the OIC Countries.

The administration module protected by a username and password (http://tpo.oicinvest.org/Admin/) enabling national focal points to update the information about their country were sent by an official email, in order for them to update information on their respective countries.

The main databases are the following: Business Opportunities; Foreign Trade Operators; Foreign Trade Statistics; Commercial Events (fairs, exhibitions ...); Economic Indicators; Bilateral and Multilateral Trade Agreements between Member States; Regulation of Trade in Services; Guides for Exporter; Guides for Importer; Guides of the Investor; Tariffs; Non-Tariff Measures, Partnership and Investment.

- **Launching of an observatory of Non-Tariff Barriers within the website of the ICDT:**

Non-tariff measures (NTMs) are a major source of barriers to international trade and a particular challenge for exporters and importers in developing countries. Enterprises, especially small and medium ones, lack the means to adapt and respond to such demands. Without sufficient information, policy makers and their administrations are often limited to develop appropriate responses to the needs of the private export sector.

Within the framework of its collaboration with the OIC Member States, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, a subsidiary organ of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in charge of promoting trade and investment, has launched in June 2016 an online portal dedicated to trade barriers. This portal is an interactive tool designed to facilitate

the identification and the elimination of obstacles to trade by economic operators in the OIC region (hereafter the website http://ntb.icdt-oic.org /main/).

The aim of this online platform is to allow the economic operators of the Member States to record the main obstacles faced when exporting or importing their products and to instantly alert the relevant national authorities (through an email alert system) in order for them to provide appropriate solutions. Users can also be alerted on the reported barriers for the products and markets of their interest.

The goal through this online platform is to enable economic operators of Member States to record the main obstacles they are facing when exporting or importing their products and to instantly alert competent national authorities (through an email alert system) and the committee of trade negotiations of the Framework Agreement of OIC Trade Preferential System (TPS/OIC) in order for them to provide appropriate solutions.

In addition, the portal on non-tariff barriers, aims to meet the need for transparency on trade regulations and procedures, which represent a challenge for exporters and importers.

Eventually, all the reports on NTMs made in other developing countries will provide an essential material to validate large-scale observations and conclusions made in each case and thus support trade facilitation initiatives by the TPS/OIC Trade Negotiations Committee.

Under the new OIC 2016-2025 ten-year program to increase intra-community trade to 25% by 2025, the Islamic Center for Trade Development (ICDT) attaches great importance to phasing out non-tariff barriers to intra-OIC trade and has made an effort to improve the understanding and dissemination of information on non-tariff legal measures.

It is in this context that the ICDT intends to strengthen its already established NTB portal on its website www.icdt-oic.org and improve it to collect complaints from operators in order to find a solution in order to bring intra-OIC trade at 25% by 2025.

- **Training on "The Role of Electronic Commerce in Promoting Craft Products for Women Entrepreneurs of OIC Member States":**

As part of its gender program, the Islamic Center for the Development of Trade (ICDT) will organize a Training Workshop on "The Role of Electronic Commerce in Promoting Handicraft Products for the benefit of women entrepreneurs of enterprises". OIC Member States in collaboration with OADIM.

The objective of this workshop will be to sensitize women artisans on the importance of the use of ICT in the promotion and marketing of handicrafts products and to inquire about the latest techniques of electronic commerce. This Workshop will be an opportunity for participants to learn about successful national experiences and enhance cooperation on technical assistance in the creation of commercial sites.

- **Regional Online Marketing Workshop in collaboration with the WIEF Foundation, KSA, 2018:**

As part of the cooperation with Malaysia and the World Islamic Economic Forum Foundation (WIEF), ICDT and EFFAT UNIVERSITY are planning to organize a WIEF Foundation Regional Online Marketing Workshop for Businesswomen in Saudi Arabia during April 2018.

The objectives of this workshop are to assist economic operators in the design of their website and the marketing of their products and services online and, secondly, to provide them with the necessary tools to familiarize them with online marketing strategies on the one hand and on the other hand to inform the private sector of the OIC Countries about trade and investment opportunities in certain regions and countries and the OIC.

- **Virtual Fair**:

ICDT will keep on updating the virtual fair of the economic operators' products of the OIC Member States on the TINIC. It will also continue the promotional campaign of this platform so as to make this fair better known by the private sector and Trade Promotion Organs in the OIC Member States.

- **Business Guide of the OIC countries (OIC Business Guide):**

Restructuring and updating of business guides of the OIC Member States and inclusion of countries not yet covered for publication in TINIC for the benefit of the business community of the Islamic Ummah and economic operators worldwide.

This guide will introduce to businessmen not only the general business climate in each country as well as practical information for foreign trade operators.

- **Documentation:**

- Further development of the ICDT's documents through the acquisition of publications on international trade and investment and CD-ROMs relating to market research, directories of importers/ exporters, statistics, tariffs, trade facilitation, etc ...;
- Setting up of an intranet for the consultation of the documents;
- Consultation from the Internet of ICDT's documents;
- Electronic archiving of the magazine "Tijaris", studies and publications of ICDT and the photo library of the various events that ICDT organized or in which it took part.