NOTE ON
ICDT’s PROGRESS REPORT
ON
THE TRADE PREFERENTIAL SYSTEM
AMONG THE MEMBER STATES OF THE
ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

SUBMITTED BY
THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

TO THE
31st SESSION OF
THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND
COMMERCIAL CO-OPERATION OF THE OIC
(COMCEC)

Istanbul – Republic of Turkey
23rd - 26th November 2015
THE TRADE PREFERENTIAL SYSTEM
AMONG THE MEMBER STATES OF THE
ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION

I- HISTORY:

The idea of establishing a Trade Preferential System specific to O.I.C Member States is based on the recommendations of the General Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the OIC Member States and more precisely of the MECCA Declaration and the Plan of Action to strengthen economic and commercial cooperation among the OIC Member States set up by the 3rd OIC Summit Conference in 1981.

In fact paragraph II item 7 of the Plan of Action recommended:

"To make an inventory of the existing preferential schemes applied by groups of Member States with a view to strengthening and linking them in order to establish a system of trade preferences through a step by step approach by all interested Member States.

It should be based on the principles of mutuality of advantages yielding benefits to all participants and taking into account the respective levels of economic and industrial development, trade regimes and international obligations of individual Member States with the ultimate aim of establishing a free trade area....".

In implementation of these relevant resolutions of the third and the fourth summit of the OIC, which included trade among the priority sectors, the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) and ICDT have strived jointly since 1984 for the working out of a draft Framework Agreement on TPS/OIC.

In fact since the holding of its first session in 1984 in Istanbul, the COMCEC recommended the setting of a working group to define the principles and rules that are to rule negotiations; this group held its first session in Izmir (Turkey) and was followed by the presentation by ICDT of the first version of TPS/OIC.

In order to solemnly corroborate the necessity of setting up a trade preferential system specific to the OIC Member States, the COMCEC adopted at its fourth session held in Istanbul in September 1988, a declaration of intent on the establishment of Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States specifying the basic principles and the orientations to be followed for the setting up of such a system.

During this period of time, ICDT finalised the draft agreement, in consultation with the GATT and the UNCTAD and submitted it to experts for appreciation, who met twice, in December 1989 in (Turkey) and in 1990 in (Casablanca) to put the finishing touches to the draft agreement.

Six years after its inclusion in the agenda items of the COMCEC’s meetings, the Framework Agreement on TPS/OIC was endorsed by the sixth session of the COMCEC, which submitted it to the OIC General Secretariat for signature and ratification.

Legally, TPS/OIC came into force in October 2003.
II- ENFORCEMENT OF THE AGREEMENT:

The TPS/OIC agreement was deposited in 1990 in the OIC General Secretariat for signature and ratification, in compliance with article 18; it will enter into force three months after ten Member States have deposited their instruments of ratification.


The legal quorum (10 states) required for the entry into force of the Framework Agreement on Trade Preferences among Islamic Countries has therefore been exceeded recently, following the ratification of the Republic of Cameroon in September 2002.

18 Member States of the OIC have ratified the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS), these are: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of Bahrain, People's Republic of Bangladesh, State of the United Arab Emirates, Republic of The Gambia, State of Kuwait, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Kingdom of Morocco, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Sultanate Oman, State of Palestine, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, State of Qatar, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic and the Republic of Turkey.

The PRETAS became effective on 5 February 2010.

32 countries have signed the Rules of Origin of the TPS/OIC, namely Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, United Arab Emirates, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. In addition, 18 countries have ratified: Bahrain, Bangladesh, UAE, Gambia, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria and Turkey.

To date, the following 13 OIC Member States: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Turkey, Malaysia, Syria, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Jordan have sent to the TNC Secretariat the List of Products for tariff concessions under the TPS/OIC.

Besides, during the seminar on the rules of origin of the TPS/OIC Agreement organized by the COMCEC Office and Turkey’s TOBB in January 2015 in Ankara, it was recommended to the participating countries to update their products’ list of concession into an Harmonized System with 8 digits, 2015 Version in order to facilitate the launching of a new round of trade negotiations among the OIC Member Countries.

III. ICDT’S ROLE AS MEMBER OF THE TNC SECRETARIAT:

The 19th Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation has entrusted to ICDT and the COMCEC coordination Office the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiating committee.

Within this framework, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade provides to Member States technical assistance under the form of training sessions intended for the executive staff operating in the field of foreign trade or by submitting explanatory notes on the framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States and on the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS/OIC (PRETAS) and the protocol on the Rules of Origin.

The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade provides comprehensive explanatory notes related to issues debated within the framework of negotiations on the Trade Preferential System (TPS/OIC), the Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme (PRETAS and the Protocol on the Rules of Origin.

In this regard, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade has recently prepared explanatory notes on “the Framework Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States, the PRETAS Protocol, intended for the Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and Indonesia.

Upon the successful conclusion of the 1st and 2nd Rounds, the Trade Negotiating Committee will carry on its work that will focus on two main actions: on the one hand, the implementation of the PRETAS, notably by applying the fast track and the consideration of issue relating to the removal of para- and non-tariff measures on the other.

Within the framework of the operationalization of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its protocols, ICDT sent circular letters to participating Member States in March, April and May 2015 relating to checklist of the implementation process of the Rules Origin, the conversion of tariff lines from 2003 to 2015 version of applied tariffs with a view to facilitating trade negotiations between these countries. The deadline for the submission of this information was 31st July, 2015 as recommended by the 31st Session of the COMCEC Follow-up Committee held in May 2015 in Ankara.

1. Training and Awareness-raising Seminar on the TPS/OIC and its Protocols:

Tripoli-Libya, 13-14 March 2012.

ICDT organized an awareness-raising seminar on the TPS/OIC and its Protocols for the benefit of the Executives of the Ministries of Economy, Foreign Affairs, the Export Promotion Centre, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, the Union of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Libya and the Arab Labour
Organisation in Tripoli on 13th and 14th March 2012.

The ICDT’s Delegation was composed of Dr. El Hassane HZAINE, Director General, Mr. Houcine RAHMOUNI, Advisor to the Director General and Mr. Mustapha ALLALI, Consultant at ICDT.

The presentations dealt with the following topics:
- General Presentation of the main provisions of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols;
- Structure and Methodology of negotiations;
- The TPS/OIC Agreement and the WTO Agreements;
- Outcomes of negotiations;
- The probable impact of the Agreement on the Libyan Economy.

More than 60 Libyan officials attended this seminar.

On the sidelines of this seminar, ICDT held a meeting with the Ministry of Economy and the Export Promotion Centre with a view to developing cooperation relationships with these entities. During this meeting, ICDT and the Export Promotion Centre of Libya have scheduled to sign an MOU in the near future.


Within the framework of the implementation of the TPS-OIC and of its protocols, ICDT organized an awareness-raising seminar on the TPS/OIC and its Protocols in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of the State of Kuwait for the benefit of the Countries of the Arab League on 14-15 May 2012 in Kuwait City.

The State of Kuwait was represented by the Ministries of Commerce, Industry and Finance and by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

This event was also attended by the Representatives of the Ministers of Commerce and Industry of Saudi Arabia and Sultanate of Oman and the General Secretariat of the GCC. During the seminar, the presentations of ICDT dealt with the following topics:
- General Presentation of the main provisions of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols;
- Structure and Methodology of negotiations;
- The TPS/OIC Agreement and the WTO Agreements;
- Outcomes of negotiations;
- The impact of the TPS-OIC Agreement and of the Free Trade Area of the OIC Countries on the Economies of the Countries of the League of Arab States.

3. Seminar on “The proliferation of Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements and their impact on the regional integration process in Arab Countries”: Casablanca – Kingdom of Morocco, 4-6 June 2012.

Within the framework of their technical assistance programme relating to the issues linked to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), The Islamic Development Group (IDB) and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized a Seminar on “The proliferation of Bilateral and Regional Trade Agreements (RTA) and their impact on the regional integration process in Arab Countries” from 4th to 6th June 2012 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco.

This Seminar aimed to assess the implications of RTAs on the development policies of the OIC Member States and emphasized on practical lessons regarding the various
options available to the regional integration process.

It was attended by International and Regional Organization (World Trade Organization, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, International Trade Centre, Arab Maghreb Union, Technical Unit of Agadir Agreement) and the following OIC Member States: Arab Republic of Egypt, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, State of Kuwait, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Kingdom of Morocco, Sultanate of Oman, State of Palestine, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Sudan and Republic of Tunisia, WTO, UNCTAD, ITC, AMU, ICDT, IDB Group and the Technical Unit of Agadir Agreement.

Experts reviewed the following issues:

- Analysis of the relation between Article XXIV of the GATT Agreement and the Rules of the WTO relating to the Regional Economic integration agreements;
- Review of the prospects of the OIC Member States to integrate the multilateral trade system and to meet the commitments with the WTO;
- Study of the adequate conditions and national strategies to be adopted to derive benefit from regional integration;
- Presentation and analysis of the experiences of some regional Arab and African agreements;
- Presentation of national experiences relating to the current negotiations of the regional and bilateral agreements.

During this seminar, ICDT’s experts made presentations on the importance of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its protocols for the economies of Arab Countries. The Countries’ Representatives expressed their interest in this Agreement and its protocols and declared that they will sensitize their governments to sign and ratify them.

4. **National Seminar for the popularization of ICDT’s and IDB’s Group Services:**
   Casablanca – Kingdom of Morocco, 7th June 2012.

Within the framework of the promotion of their services, ICDT and the IDB Group organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies of the Kingdom of Morocco, with the support of the Regional Office of the IDB Group in Rabat, a National Seminar for the popularization of ICDT’s and IDB’s Group Services on 7th June 2012, in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco.

On this occasion, ICDT’s Experts presented the latest developments in the field of trade between the OIC Member States, the OIC Fairs and Exhibitions to be organized by the Centre, the Trade Information Network for Islamic Countries (TINIC) and the Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States (TPS/OIC). Likewise, the Representative of the IDB Group presented the services related to financing, export insurance and financing of projects.

This Seminar was attended by the Presidents of the Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industries and the Representatives of professional associations, banks and Moroccan public operators.

5. **Training Seminar in the field of International and Islamic Trade intended to the Officials of the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Iraq:**
   Casablanca – Kingdom of Morocco, 26-30 June 2012.

Within the framework of its program of technical assistance for the benefit of the OIC Member States, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) in cooperation
with the International Islamic Trade Finance corporation (ITFC/IDB Group) organized a training seminar in the field of International and Islamic Trade for the benefit of the Officials of the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Iraq at ICDT’s Headquarters in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, from 26th to 30th June 2012.

On this occasion, the Centre made the following presentations:

- Activities of the OIC and the Ten Year Program of Action;
- Intra-OIC Trade: Current situation and prospects;
- The Working out of market studies;
- The Trade Promotion Organs Network of the OIC Member States;
- Trade Promotion;
- Role of Trade Information in Trade Promotion;
- The Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States;
- Matters related to trade negotiations and accession to the WTO;

During this seminar, the Iraqi executives expressed their interest in the TPS/OIC Agreement and its protocols and pledged to sensitize the Authorities of the Republic of Iraq to sign and ratify this agreement and its protocols in a near future.


The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) organized a meeting with H.E Mr. Ahmet YAMAN, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Republic of Turkey on 1st October 2013 in Ankara.

The meeting was attended by:

- ICDT represented by its Director General, Dr. El Hassane HZAINE and Mr. Mamoudou Bocar Sall, Head of the Department of Studies and Training;
- ITFC represented by Ing. Hani Sonbol SALEM, Deputy CEO and Mr. Habib Syed, Director General of TCPP

Participants discussed, inter alia on the organization of the next 3rd Round of Trade Negotiations Committee between the OIC countries upon the receipt of the schedules of concessions of 10 Member States.


A seminar on the TPS/OIC was held on 2nd March 2014 at the headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sharjah, on the sidelines of the 16th Private Sector Meeting of the OIC countries held on 19th and 20th March 2014. The seminar was held in two sessions:

The first session, which was chaired by Dr. El Hassane HZAINE, Director General of ICDT recorded the participation of several contributors, of which H.E. Ambassador Hameed OPELOYERU, OIC Assistant Secretary General, in charge of Economic Affairs, Mr. Ali ISLER from the COMCEC Coordination Office, Mr. Houcine RAHMOUNI and Mr. Mustapha ALLALI from ICDT.

The second session was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Hameed OPELOYERU, which recorded the contribution of Eminent Personalities, namely, Dr. Béchir Mustapha from
Algeria, Dr. El Hassane HZAINE, Director General of ICDT, Mr. Abdel Kader Ghaleb from Bahrain and Dr. Abdel Sattar Khouldi from the International Islamic Centre for Conciliation and Arbitration.

These presentations were followed by a fruitful discussion which highlighted the preferential agreements, as effective instruments for intra-OIC trade promotion from which the private sector should benefit. More than sixty persons attended this seminar.


Within the framework of cooperation strengthening between the Sultanate of Oman and ICDT the Supreme Council for Planning of the Sultanate of Oman and ICDT, organized a Training Seminar on TPS/OIC and its related protocols in Muscat-Sultanate of Oman on 15-16 September 2014 in collaboration with the cooperation office of the COMCEC.

The purpose of this seminar is to sensitize public sector executives and the economic operators of the importance of TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols in a bid to contribute to boosting trade between and the other OIC Member States.

The seminar was attended by 50 managers from the public and private sector in the Sultanate.

The experts presented the following modules:

- Presentation of the OIC and the ICDT
- Overview of the key provisions of the TPS / OIC Agreement and its Protocols;
- Structure and methodology of negotiations;
- The TPS/OIC Agreements and the WTO Agreement;
- Results of Negotiations;
- The impact of the Agreement on the Omani economy;
- Economic integration and the legal impact of the TPS/OIC;
- The accession procedures to TPS/OIC and technical instruments.


Within the framework of the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and ICDT, both parties held a national training workshop on TPS/OIC and its Protocols in Riyadh from 22 to 24 September 2014.

The purpose of this seminar was to arouse the awareness of the public sector executives and the economic operators of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia of the importance of TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols in a bid to contribute to boosting trade between this country and the other OIC Member States.

On this occasion, the ICDT’s experts presented the following modules:

- Presentation of the OIC and the ICDT
- Overview of the key provisions of the TPS / OIC Agreement and its Protocols;
- Structure and methodology of negotiations;
- The TPS / OIC Agreements and the WTO Agreement;
✓ Results of Negotiations;
✓ The impact of the Agreement on the Saudi Arabia economy and the OIC Countries;
✓ Economic integration and the legal impact of the TPS/OIC;
✓ The accession procedures to TPS/OIC and technical instruments.

Over 60 executives in the public and private sector of Saudi Arabia took part in the seminar.


Within the framework of the implementation and development of cooperation among the OIC Member States and ICDT in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Trade Negotiating Committee of the TPS/OIC, the Centre jointly organized with the Cooperation and Integration Department of IDB, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Turkey and the COMCEC office, a training seminar on TPS/OIC and its protocols for the benefit of the Executives of the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation ( OCE) in Istanbul from 7\textsuperscript{th} to 9\textsuperscript{th} April 2015.

The objective of this seminar is to raise the awareness of the executives of these countries of the importance of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols and its tariff dismantling process and the selection of the lists of concessions and the impact of the aforesaid Agreement on intra-OIC trade of ECO Member countries.

More than 30 participants from the following countries and organizations participated in the seminar: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Cooperation and Integration Department of the IDB, ICDT, the COMCEC Office and ECO.

On this occasion, the experts of ICDT, COMCEC and ECO presented the following themes:
   - Presentation of the activities of ICDT, COMCEC and ECO;
   - Overview of the main provisions of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its Protocols (ICDT);
   - Structure and methodology of negotiations (ICDT);
   - The TPS/OIC Agreement and WTO agreements (ICDT);
   - Results of the two rounds of negotiations (ICDT);
   - Presentation of the Protocol of the Rules of Origin (COMCEC);
   - Presentation of the Legal impact of the TPS/ OIC and its effect on the trade of the ECO countries (ICDT).


Within the framework of the implementation of cooperation among the OIC Member States and ICDT, the Ministry of Economy of the State of Qatar of Commerce and the Centre organized a national training seminar on TPS/OIC and its Protocols in Doha from 13\textsuperscript{th} to 14\textsuperscript{th} April 2015.

The objective of this seminar is to raise the awareness of the executives of the public and private sector of the State of Qatar of the importance of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its
Protocols in order to contribute to the development of trade between this country and the other OIC Member States.

On this occasion, the ICDT’s experts presented the following themes:

- Presentation of the OIC and the ICDT;
- Overview of the main provisions of the TPS/OIC Agreement and its protocols;
- Structure and methodology of the negotiations;
- The TPS/OIC Agreement and the WTO Agreements;
- Negotiations results;
- The impact of the Agreement on the Qatari economy;
- Economic integration and Legal impact of the TPS/OIC;
- The membership procedures to TPS/OIC and technical instruments.

More than 20 public and private sector executives of the State of Qatar took part in the seminar.

**Seminar on TPS/OIC and its protocols for the benefit of the private and public sector of Suriname and Guyana:** Paramaribo, Suriname, 1st June 2015.

Within the framework of the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the OIC General Secretariat and boosting cooperation Among the OIC Member States and the ICDT, the Centre in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce and the Industry of the Republic of Suriname, organised an awareness-raising seminar on the TPS/OIC and Its protocols for the benefit of the public and private sector of the Republic of Suriname and the Republic of Guyana and Paramaribo on 1st June 2015. The Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Suriname attended the opening session of the Seminar. The objective of this seminar was to raise the awareness of the staff of the public and private Sectors of the importance of the Agreement on the development of intra-OIC trade of their countries. Over 50 participants attended the seminar. The ICDT’s experts presented the Agreement and Its Protocols, the results of the rounds of negotiations, dealt with its compatibility with WTO rules and its impact on intra-OIC trade of both countries.
LIST OF THE MEMBERS STATES WHICH HAVE SIGNED AND RATIFIED THE AGREEMENTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF ICDT AND COMCEC

As of November 2014

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Source: COMCEC, OIC GS, ICDT.