

**Speech to be Delivered at the Opening Session of the OIC-VET Pilot Project Entitled  
“Study Visit on Occupational Health and Safety”**

**Ankara, 24 May 2010**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

*Assalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu*

It gives me great pleasure to address this important gathering on the occasion of the inauguration of the OIC-VET Pilot Project entitled “Study Visit on Occupational Health and Safety”, which we have the honour to organise it jointly with the Turkish Centre of Occupational Health and Safety in Ankara. Let me, at the outset; express my sincere appreciation and thanks to all of you for accepting the invitation and designating time to attend this very important project. Our special thanks go to the Turkish Centre of Occupational Health and Safety for their logistic support provided to the participants in facilitating this important event.

As we all aware, the issue of occupational health and safety has been on the agenda of many developing countries in the world during the past half century. The promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations constitutes the core of every actions and efforts in occupational health and safety. However, it is well recognised that the real impact of measures in this field goes beyond the workers and encompasses the people who are influenced by the workplace environment, such as co-workers, family members, employers, customers, suppliers, nearby communities etc. Occupational health and safety has thus become an integral part of civil life, affecting the quality of the lives of millions of people who are somehow exposed to work environment.

In this context and in an attempt to enhance our efforts, as SESRIC, to develop the human capacity of relevant institutions towards establishing healthier and safer work places in our member countries, we have recently launched a new capacity building programme on occupational health and safety. The programme is based on the analyses of the needs and capacities of the member countries in this through the responses of the related questionnaires, and matching these needs and capacities through sending experts among these countries to offer the needed training programmes. Depending upon

the request of member countries we are planning to organise several training programmes and workshops with the participation of experts from various background. I would like to express once again our gratitude to Turkish Centre of Occupational Health and Safety for their valuable support during the preparation of this highly important programme.

In this connection, I would like to express our readiness at SESRIC to strengthening our cooperation with the occupational health and safety institutions of our member countries and we are confident that only with your support and encouragement, we can extend and enrich our training programmes for more benefits to our member countries in this important area.

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am very pleased to inform you that this significant project is the first partnership project to be implemented under the OIC-VET Programme, which is the Vocational Education and Training Programme for OIC Member Countries.

The OIC-VET Programme is a programme originally designed by SESRIC in order to improve the quality of vocational education and training in the public and private sectors with the aim of supporting and enhancing the opportunities for individuals in member countries to develop their knowledge and skills and thus to contribute to the development and competitiveness of the economies and societies.

The OIC-VET Programme was developed to establish closer cooperation among member countries in meeting today's developmental challenges by providing opportunities for organisations to build OIC partnerships, exchange best practices, increase the expertise of their staff and develop the skills and competencies of the participants. We believe that through close cooperation and networking among member countries, the OIC-VET Programme will establish a larger community of beneficiaries.

As you may already know that the OIC-VET Programme was launched by Abdullah Gül, President of the Republic of Turkey and Chairman of COMCEC during the COMCEC Economic Summit held in Istanbul on 9 November 2009 with the participation of the heads of states and governments. It is indeed noteworthy that in the same Summit, H.E. Gül, articulated his belief towards the vision

of this Programme to improve the quality of human capital resources and realise socio-economic development in OIC Member Countries. Marked by this event, the SESRIC also launched OIC-VET Portal in order to increase awareness of the OIC-VET Programme in member countries and to make the process of the implementation of the OIC-VET Programme more functional.

I believe that this important programme would generate benefits for the professionals of occupational health and safety to improve their knowledge and skills through close partnerships and networking among similar institutions operating in our member countries.

In this study visit we expect to solidify the existing relationships between occupational health and safety centres in OIC member countries in order to help them produce a better outcome in providing enhanced services to the individuals in their countries. Therefore, we hope that our gathering here will take place in a fruitful and most productive atmosphere.

Therefore, it is indeed heartening that representatives of occupational health and safety centres are participating in this project to share their knowledge and exchange experience regarding the safety and healthiness of working places in our member countries. It is my hope that open and inclusive dialogue will be the hallmark of this study visit and its concrete outcome will provide guidance for more coordinated action.

I am confident that the work you are about to accomplish would, ultimately, approximate and contribute significantly to the collective welfare for the Islamic Ummah. As we all look forward to the successful outcome of this project, I wish you all the success in your deliberations.

Thank you for your kind attention.

*Wassalamu Alaykum we Rahmatullahi we Barakatuhu*