

**Statement by Ambassador Nassima Baghli,
Permanent Observer of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the
United Nations Office in Geneva**

**Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on
Financing for Development
Geneva, 25-27 January 2021**

Mr. President,
Excellences, Distinguished Participants,

At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude to the high-level panelists for their insightful and forward-looking presentations.

The OIC delegation would like to join the previous speakers in recognizing the efforts made by the Division of Globalization and Development Strategies in organizing the Fourth Session of this Intergovernmental Group of Experts.

I would also like to thank Dr. Kozul-Wright for his elaborate presentation of the background note prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat on strengthening the coherence and consistency of multilateral financial, investment, trade and development policy. The OIC took careful note of the recommendations contained therein.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges with severe economic and social consequences in all regions of the world.

OIC countries, for their part, are doing their best to cushion the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic.

The OIC and its specialized institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF) created special mechanisms to provide assistance to the OIC Member States, especially the least developed ones.

As an immediate response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the IsDB Group launched a USD 2.3 billion Strategic Preparedness and Response Program to the benefit of OIC countries in support of their efforts in addressing the adverse effects of the sanitary crisis.

The Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF) allocated an account to assist OIC Member States to strengthen their capabilities in response to the pandemic, particularly in the health sector.

Mr. President,

Despite their efforts aimed at improving their socio-economic situation, and according to the figures collected by the Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Center for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), many OIC countries continue to face persistent development challenges due to several factors including the lack of adequate resources, high incidence of tax evasion, debt burden, to name just a few.

Moreover, unilateral coercive economic measures adversely affect the economies and the development efforts of developing countries in particular.

Mr. President,

In order to address the development finance challenges, alternative mechanisms are being voiced across the globe.

The Islamic finance tools are among these new mechanisms which can be helpful in financing for development and supporting infrastructure projects. This is why the OIC-2025 Programme of Action prioritizes the development of Islamic financial products.

The OIC recognizes that the Islamic social finance instruments, such as Waqf and Zakat, can effectively support the socio-economic development programs in OIC Member States when it is properly developed, managed and utilized with transparency and efficiency.

Through the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the OIC is contributing to the development of a sustainable infrastructure and fostering community-led development in OIC Member States.

The outcomes of the International Symposium on Financing for Development, which was organized by the SESRIC and Islamic Development Bank in November 2018 in Istanbul, provided alternative perspectives on challenges and opportunities of financing for development in developing countries, with a particular focus on the OIC Member States.

The Islamic finance contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the role of the Islamic Development Bank Group in unlocking resources for implementing the 2030 Agenda and containing the effects of the coronavirus pandemic is to be highly commended.

The Islamic Development Bank and UNDP have established the Global Islamic Finance and Impact Investing Platform (GIFIIP) that promotes market-based solutions to sustainable development challenges, with the aim of positioning Islamic finance and impact investing as leading enablers of global SDG implementation through private sector engagement.

In conclusion, I would like to underline that the OIC supports the call for an effective multilateral response to alleviate the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and encourages the international community to redouble its efforts in addressing huge financial debts, food insecurity, rampant unemployment, abject poverty and widening regional inequalities.

I thank you.