



Islamic Organization for Food Security  
l'Organisation Islamique pour la Sécurité Alimentaire  
المنظمة الإسلامية للأمن الغذائي



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### **IOFS Brings Together Scientists from the Center of Excellence for Development of Rice in Asia**

The Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) organized the first virtual meeting of Center of Excellence for Development of Rice of Asia Group II on October 21, 2020. The national research institutions representing their host countries: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Uzbekistan, gathered to discuss the perspectives and challenges of rice development in the Asian region and define the work plan of the proposed Centers.

The establishment of Centers of Excellence follows up the *Resolution N° 1/46-E* on the Development of Strategic Commodities (wheat, rice, and cassava), adopted at the 46th Council of Foreign Ministers in Abu Dhabi on March 1-2, 2019. Rice is one of top three staple crops, (including wheat and maize) that provide more than half of all calories consumed by the entire human population. Rice cultivation in the OIC region accounted for 23% of total world production. In the global context, 90% of the world's rice production and consumption occurs in Asia.

The main objective of Centers of Excellence for Rice is to provide a platform for knowledge and experience exchange between the academia from OIC/IOFS countries. Such format would enable the member states to enhance their human and technological capacities and contribute to the rice development activities in their designated areas.

As the OIC ASG for Science and Technology, H.E. Askar Mussinov noted, 'agriculture occupies the central stage in the development strategies of all nations. This is even more important for OIC countries, where more than 50% of the total population live in rural areas, and depend on agriculture for their livelihood.' In support of the Centers of Excellence, Director-General of IOFS H.E. Yerlan Baidalet stated that 'along with traditional approaches, advanced and innovative solutions are needed to determine new strategic guidelines for the development of rice industry'.

Over 30 experts have taken part in the event, with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) featured as Observers. The participating scientists shared the history of their national research institutions, their rice breeding programmes and country experience in the cultivation of rice. They recounted current pressing issues of the rice development, shared the research conducted, their perspectives and plans, and proposed solutions.

**Islamic Organization for Food Security**

**Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan**

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