

TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu: Correct evaluation of Davos outcomes will point the way towards a permanent growth

The Davos summit received its share from COVID-19. For the first time in history, The World Economic Forum will be held outside of Davos, Switzerland; in Singapore and online, due to pandemic restrictions. The forum's agenda includes many global subjects from politics to economy. Because it seems like this virus will hang around for a while, its economic repercussions will stay for much longer. This is the worst economic recession the world economy has seen since the Great Depression. It is predicted that this recession will cause a national income loss of approximately 28 trillion US Dollars worldwide within the next five years.

In a nutshell, all countries must face a rough and an unclear journey that is open to new challenges. During this time, the mankind faces two great tasks: fighting against the crisis today and building a better tomorrow. We have learned three lessons from the pandemic so far.

The first one is that an economic improvement is only possible if we can beat the virus everywhere in the world; so, we need a strong international cooperation especially in terms of vaccination development and distribution. The second is that countries must sustain their supports for workers and enterprises until there is a permanent exit from this health crisis. Least but not last, we need to invest more in the mankind, i.e. the human capital.

The pandemic brings new opportunities along with challenges. The digitalization that was expected to take years happened in only under a year. Hence, the production and distribution of new technologies were expedited. Digitalization and remote operations were what kept many companies up and running during the pandemic. With the increasing digitalization and distribution of technologies, countries can now transform their economies to be smarter,



more sustainable, and more comprehensive in the future. All of these are only possible through a greener economy and a fairer trade.

The virus has helped us see the importance of an operational health system. But it is time we start seeing the negative effects of climate change. We are already facing scarce water resources and the risk of drought. The direct damages caused by climate-related disasters in the last decade is almost 1.3 trillion US Dollars. Judging from how much we hated this health crisis, we will most definitely hate the upcoming climate change crisis. Carbon-based and polluting economic growth models require urgent adjustments.

The Aftershocks made the companies more digital and more durable



According to Deloitte's Technology Trends Report, despite all the shocks and aftershocks of 2020, many institutions expedited their digital transformation undertakings not only to make their companies more agile and efficient operation-wise, but also to answer the fluctuations in demand and customer expectations. The report underlines that digitalization is now more important than ever, even in the developing countries. The report also emphasizes that many companies are now more digital and more durable following the aftershocks of 2020. Analysts

unite on the idea that years and years of planning in the pre-COVID-19 period was realized in only a matter of weeks, and thus the companies that can keep pace with the changing global trade have successfully passed the durability test. The new economic order, which is also referred to as 'the Great Nullification', will enable companies that integrate their products and services into digital solutions to increase their turnovers. In other words, most industries will be present in the market only as much as they digitalize their services and products.

According to Deloitte's 12th Technology Trends Report, enterprises adapted themselves to the challenging fluctuations in 2020, expedited their digital transformations and became more durable than ever. In that period, companies expedited their digital transformation efforts not only to make their companies more agile and efficient operation-wise, but also to answer the fluctuations in demand and customer expectations.

Deloitte's Technology Trends Report underlines that the companies that fought against 2020's seismic shocks are now evaluating a plan for the next 18 to 24 months as well as opportunities, strategies and technologies that will create confidence in the application. Despite the expectations towards the next period being extremely different from January 2020's realities, Chief Information Officers (CIO) map out a route that is more optimistic and hopeful for 2021 and on, as stated in this year's report. Companies expedite their digital transformation undertakings not only to make their companies more agile and efficient operation-wise, but also to answer the fluctuations in demand and customer expectations.



With TOBB Digitalization Virtual Fair Companies will increase their “Digital Speed”

With the “TOBB Digitalization Virtual Fair”, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) provided its support for the digital fairs organized under the leadership of Minister of Commerce Ruhsar Pekcan to carry the fairs, which were postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic, to the digital platform. TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu said, “With this fair, we bring the companies which stand out in the digital platform together with the companies and entrepreneurs who wish to improve their

capabilities in this respect.”

The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) Digitalization Virtual Fair was held with the participation of the TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu and Minister of Commerce Ruhsar Pekcan and many other attendees. In the fair which they opened online, Hisarcıkloğlu stated that they brought the leading companies in the digital platform together with the companies and entrepreneurs who wanted to improve themselves in this regard,

and emphasized that they want to create new collaborations through one-to-one meetings, and improve the companies or entrepreneurs who want to digitalize their activities.

Digital activities accelerated due to the pandemic

Stating that the entire world has entered a very rapid digital transformation process with the pandemic, President Hisarcıkloğlu evoked that they adapted to many technologies in a few months which would normally take many years. Hisarcıkloğlu also said, “Videoconference, which has become an integral part of our lives, is a good example of this”, and added, “On the other hand, traditional commerce is also changing, and e-commerce is gaining speed. And finally, fairs are shifting to the digital environment. In 2020, almost all fairs and delegation organizations were either cancelled or postponed. At this point, our Minister of Commerce Ruhsar Pekcan stepped in and introduced the virtual fair practice. She ensured that our business world quickly adapted to this situation. Now, all of our companies can readily exhibit their products and production capacities here.”

“We want to develop our relations with Asia in multiple dimensions”

Speaking at the 1st Asia Cooperation Dialogue Member Countries Chambers of Commerce and Industry Conference, M. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu, President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), stated “Turkey connects Asia and Europe, and is a bridge between East and West. Our country wants to develop its relations even more with Asia in multiple dimensions.”

Organized by TOBB and hosted by TOBB President M. Rifat Hisarcıkloğlu, the “1st Asia Cooperation Dialogue Member Countries Chambers of Commerce and Industry Conference” was held online with the participation of Minister of Commerce Ruhsar Pekcan, Presidential Investment Office Vice President Ahmet İhsan Erdem, and President Hisarcıkloğlu. In his opening speech, Hisarcıkloğlu emphasized that they advocate an



open and fair trade in a rule-based global system and promote a transparent and predictable business environment.

“Power Shifted from West to East”

Stating that everyone needs more cooperation, dialogue and solidarity, Hisarcıkloğlu stressed the importance of international cooperation. He said that Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) was a unique platform in this respect, and added “ACD includes 35 countries in Asia. We all know that Asia has become the center of manufacturing, and power has shifted from

West to East. This part of the world represents the future of the world economy.”

Emphasizing that Turkey has also good connections with Western institutions, Hisarcıkloğlu said, “Turkey connects Asia and Europe, and is a bridge between the East and the West. Our country wants to develop its relations even more with Asia in many dimensions.” Hisarcıkloğlu stated that, an industrial center in its region, Turkey is one of the most important parts of the European Union (EU) supply chain due to its geographical proximity to the Customs Union and its logistical advantages.



Artvin specializes in Medicinal aromatic plants

Seçkin Kurt, Chairman of the Artvin Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated that Artvin was a city with almost no grey-economy, and added that it improved its agricultural and animal husbandry activities in addition to its base metal industry. Mr. Kurt said, "Established in 2007, Artvin Çoruh University specialized in aromatic plants. I believe our city will progress significantly towards becoming a Brand City thanks to the activities of our

University." Seçkin Kurt, Chairman of the Artvin Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that Artvin contributes significantly to Turkish economy with the Hydroelectric Power Plants in the Çoruh Basin, and added that they endeavor to activate the city's foreign trade commerce potential. According to Turkish Statistical Institute's 11-month data for 2020, Artvin achieved \$51.2 million in exports, exceeding the entire amount of its exports

in 2019, and the imports went down to \$16.8 million in the same period. Kurt said "Artvin added the activities regarding medicinal aromatic plants to the added value brought about by the base metal industry, and it will turn its richness of endemic plants into a global success story of commerce in medium-term. Therefore, we gradually continue to the progress towards our goal of becoming a Brand City in a niche area."



A haven of creative gastronomy, Hatay draws its power from its multicultural roots

Drawing its power from its ancient past and multicultural roots, Hatay has always been a meeting point of civilizations during its 8000 years of history. The diversity brought about by each civilization, religion and experience has led to the emergence of a unique cuisine and a spectrum of local tastes.

In Hatay, which already has nine products with geographical indications, the word "food" is almost synonymous with "unity"

In Hatay, "food" means unity, happiness, crowded feasts and unique tastes. Considering the fact that products with high added value bring in substantial profits in the new

generation of commerce, one can find an enduring place in the global markets only by creating unique products. At this point, geographical indications stand out amongst others with their distinctive features. Included in the "Creative Cities Network" by UNESCO in the field of gastronomy, Hatay is one of the richest cities in this sense with its cuisine culture and its traditional recipes passed down through generations.

Nine products with geographical indications

With its local products and flavors, Hatay has received geographical indications registration for nine products until today. Desiring to increase this number in the future, the city administration has filed new applications already. In this regard, Antakya Kunefe, Hatay Laurel Soap, Antakya Cottage Cheese (Sürkü), Antakya Blue Cottage Cheese, Antakya Paper Kebab, Antakya Salty Yoghurt, Samandağı Nay, Dört Yol Mandarin, and Hatay Silk are our unique products which have been registered.