

**ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL OF THE AGREEMENT ON SIMPLIFICATION
OF VISA PROCEDURES FOR BUSINESSMEN AND TRANSIT DRIVERS
OF ECO MEMBER STATES**

The members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (hereinafter referred to as ECO), the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan (hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Parties);

Reiterating their commitment vis-à-vis the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen of ECO Member States as one of the significant achievement of ECO that could greatly contribute towards movement of businessmen of ECO member states and consequently the promotion of intra regional trade;

Convinced that in order to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen of ECO Member States will be instrumental and, therefore, have agreed as follows:-

Article I

All the Diplomatic and consular Missions of ECO Member Countries will issue visas to businessmen, transit drivers of goods and passengers and other relevant transport crew of the other ECO member countries upon presentation of an introductory letter from the relevant competent national authorities in commercial affairs once endorsed by the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Member States. Introductory letters may be accompanied with a unified ECO visa application form and other related documents, provided in the best interest of the ECO member countries where there would be security concerns, prior No Objection Certificate (NOC) of concerned country will be required)

Article II

All the Diplomatic and Consular Missions of ECO Member Countries will issue, within 72 hours or otherwise reply to the application for, entry visas including multiple valid unto a maximum period of 30 days to businessmen, transit drivers of goods and passengers and other relevant transport crew of the other contracting parties upon presentation of an introductory letter from the relevant competent national authorities in commercial affairs once endorsed by the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Member States. Introductory letters may be accompanied with a unified ECO visa application form and other related documents.

Article III

The competent authorities shall extend, on the basis of applicable regulations, visas or resident permits issued to the businessmen who are engaged in export, import or investment activities till the expiry of the contracts signed between the relevant parties provided that the visa holder shall not involve himself/herself in any activity in the host country inconsistent with his/her status. The resident permits or visas issued so, would be extendable until the end of business activity subject to the provision of documents by the person concerned.

Article IV

Transit drivers of goods and passengers carrying a valid visa for the final destination will be issued a seven days transit visa at the border of each member state falling in their transit route. In case of violating the anti-narcotic drugs laws by transit drivers, these laws will apply to such drivers in person, without infringing the legitimate rights of vehicles owners and companies. The provisions of this Article shall not be in contradiction with the provisions of TTFA.

Article V

In order to facilitate businessmen, traders and investors of the ECO member countries, a unified visa application form will be prepared by the ECO Secretariat with the close consultation of the member states and acceptable to them.

Article VI

For viable supervision and complete implementation of the Agreement, there will be permanent mechanism for settlement of disputes. For that purpose the ECO Member States shall set up a standing committee of national focal points to ensure supervision and smooth implementation of the Agreement and settle the disputes arising during the implementation.

Article VII

The ECO Member States shall agree to adopt a unified and gradually reduced visa tariff structure with a view to facilitating the meaningful integration of the region.

In order to facilitate businessmen, traders and drivers of goods and passengers of ECO Member Countries, a unified visa form and special visa stickers to be prepared by the ECO Secretariat in close consultation of Member States and acceptable to them.

Article VIII

This additional protocol shall enter into force on the date of ratification by at least five ECO Member States and shall remain in force for an indefinite period. Any contracting party may withdraw from this protocol by giving sixty days' notice to that effect to the ECO Secretariat.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorized thereto, have signed this protocol.

DONE, at Tehran on this day 9th March, 2009, in English, in two original copies to remain deposited with the ECO Secretariat which shall transmit a certified copy to each contracting party.

ON BEHALF OF THE ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

R. Dack

ON BEHALF OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

ON BEHALF OF THE
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

9-3-2009 / محمد علی...

ON BEHALF OF THE
REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

ON BEHALF OF THE
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

ON BEHALF OF THE ISLAMIC
REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

Muhammad Ali...

ON BEHALF OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

ON BEHALF OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

ON BEHALF OF
TURKMENISTAN

ON BEHALF OF THE
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN