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ECO CHRONICLE





Foreword



This Chronicle sheds light on the most important ECO activities made between January and June 2022. While finalizing its contents, we have endeavored to cover some prominent events, activities and engagements of the Organization. Hopefully, this sequel would be an informative publication for all readers, especially diplomats, scholars and journalists.

ECO Member States are mutually engaged in fostering regional cooperation in various areas including, trade, transport & connectivity, tourism, energy, economic growth & productivity, agriculture, environment, social welfare, capacity building, etc. Based on the aspirations of ECO leadership, the Organization is determinedly

pursuing its agenda through multilateral approach.

I avail this opportunity to re-acknowledge the increasing role of Uzbekistan in ECO and our developmental activities that furthered socioeconomic progress in the region. Under Uzbekistan's visionary leadership, the 2022 was declared as "Year of Strengthening Connectivity". The year also remained special for us as it marked the 30th Anniversary of the ECO Expansion. Moreover, I commend Azerbaijan for effectively continuing the Chairmanship of the Organization in 2023 and introducing a vigorous yearly theme: "Green Transition and Interconnectivity".

The ECO's progress, on the whole, is smooth and in conformity with the principles and objectives of Izmir Treaty as well as the targets set forth in Vision-2025. Yet, the time is exigent especially in the post-COVID scenario and in view of the emerging global issues. In this era that poses multiple challenges across the globe, the firm and shared ambition of the ECO Member States for their joint economic welfare and wellbeing is highly commendable. With such a momentum and motivation, I believe, we would certainly overcome every obstacle in our way, moving ahead for a more prosperous and stable ECO Region.

Khusrav Noziri
ECO Secretary General



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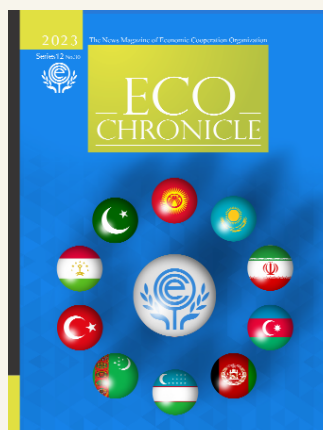
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In The Name Of God

Front Cover



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Ambassador of Bangladesh visits ECO Secretariat

ECO CHRONICLE The Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. A.F.M. Gousal Azam Sarker, visited the ECO Secretariat on January 4, 2022.

While highlighting the project-oriented and result-based nature of the Organisation, the Secretary General briefed the Ambassador about the ongoing activities of the ECO in key areas of cooperation including Trade, Transport & Connectivity, Energy, Tourism, Economic Growth, Social Welfare, and Environment. The overall functioning of the ECO also came under limelight.

Ambassador Sarker, while

thanking the Secretary General for detailed briefing, appreciated the role of the ECO in promoting regional cooperation. The Ambassador of Bangladesh expressed keen interest in the activities and projects of the ECO in various sectors and expressed his willingness to explore the possibility of developing cooperation mechanism between the two sides especially in transport sector. He also informed the ECO Secretary General about the vision of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh of economic and trade diplomacy to achieve economic goals of the country.

In the end, the two sides agreed to maintain regular contacts and reiterated their interest to explore areas in where cooperation can be established in future for timely realization of mutually beneficial goals.



Visit of ECO Delegation to Pardis Technology Park

ECO CHRONICLE Delegation of the ECO Secretariat, headed by the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, visited Pardis Technology Park on January 5, 2022, on the invitation of the President of the Park Mr. Mahdi Safarinia. The ECO delegation comprised Mr. Mohsen Esperi, the Deputy Secretary General and Mr. Zahid Hussain Abbasi, the ECO Director for Trade and Investment.

The ECO delegation was briefed by the team of the Park authorities about the operation of Iran Silicon Valley. A presentation was given to the delegation on proposed possible collaboration among the relevant organizations of the ECO Member States working in these areas through the platform of the ECO. The Secretary General, whilst welcoming the proposal for collaboration, explained the process for collaboration



under the auspices of the ECO, assured fullest cooperation of the Secretariat in the initiative. He also elaborated the project-oriented approach of the Secretariat with focus on result-oriented outcomes.

During the briefing, the two sides discussed a host of important proposals related to innovation, capacity building, policy harmonization and collaboration among the ECO Member States for promotion of knowledge-based innovation and technological advancement in the region.

The visiting delegation then was taken to various production facilities of the Pardis Technology Park. At the end, the Secretary General expressed readiness of the Secretariat to further cooperate in areas of mutual interests of the Secretariat and the Park.



ECO Secretary General Meets Head of UNAMA Liaison Office



ECO CHRONICLE The ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri received the Head of United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) Liaison Office in Tehran, Mr. Hideo Ikeba, at the ECO Secretariat on January 12, 2022. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the prevailing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

The interaction explored the mutually-coordinated ways to address prevailing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Moreover, it mulled over the possibility of establishing ECO-UNAMA

cooperative relationship to support socio-economic development in Afghanistan.

The ECO Secretary General briefed the visiting dignitary on reconstruction and developmental efforts of the ECO in Afghanistan especially under the ECO Advocacy Program for Afghanistan (EAPA).

Both sides appeared ready and receptive to make collaborative actions for addressing the needs and requirements of the people of Afghanistan in particular reference to the country's current situation.

Ambassador of Belarus Visits ECO Secretariat



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The Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Dmitry Koltsov paid a visit to

the ECO Secretariat on January 13, 2022.

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, while welcoming the Ambassador, briefed him on the activities of the ECO and highlighted the key

features of the ongoing projects and future objectives of the Organization in mandated areas of cooperation.

The Ambassador of Belarus expressed keen interest to identify areas in which cooperation between the ECO and the Republic of Belarus is made possible for the realization of mutually rewarding targets.



32nd Regional Planning Council Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE The 32nd Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) was held on January 17-26, 2022 in hybrid format. The Representatives of the ECO Member States, ECO Regional Institutes, Specialized Agencies, Affiliated Bodies, and ECO Observers attended the event.

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, while welcoming the participants, highlighted the significance of the RPC and its pivotal role to analyze and evaluate the Organization's ongoing activities

and to consider and develop new projects and programs to be implemented to further regional development process.

Referring to the situation emerged in the wake of corona virus, he highlighted that it was highly exigent for the ECO to plow ahead with its cooperative agenda for the continuity of regional development process. Despite the post-pandemic challenges, the Organization managed to convene a number of important meetings in 2021 in in-person, online and hybrid formats.





The Secretary General also congratulated the Republic of Uzbekistan for assuming the Chairmanship of the ECO for 2022, assuring his full-fledged support and cooperation to ensure the implementation of initiatives by Uzbekistan aiming at maintaining and accelerating the Organization's performance for continued socio-economic progress in the region.

In his statement, the Chairman of 32nd RPC Meeting, Mr. Ashraf Khodjaev, Director of the Department of Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, expressed deep pleasure over the first-time assumption of ECO Chair by the Republic of Uzbekistan. He further assured that Uzbekistan was all-determined to effectively meet the assigned responsibilities to strengthen regional cooperation under ECO Framework.

Mentioning the objectives of the ECO Vision 2025, the Chairman underlined that Uzbekistan considered it fundamentally important to practically harness the potential and the avail the available opportunities for the shared progress and prosperity of the ECO Region, particularly in the fields of trade, transport, energy, investment, and tourism.

He recalled that a plethora of proposals for

the development of multilateral partnership for ensuring sustainable development were propounded by the Honorable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan during 15th ECO Summit. The Uzbekistan side also proposed the 2022 to be declared as the "Year of Strengthening Connectivity", he added

Heads of delegation of the ECO Member States and Observers also delivered statements during the meeting, focusing on an increased collaboration to deal the post-pandemic situation.

While reviewing sector-wise activities of the Organization, the Meeting took into account the ECO priority areas of development, including (i) Trade & Investment; (ii) Transport & Communication; (iii) Energy, Minerals & Environment; (iv) Agriculture & Industry; (v) Tourism (vi) Economic Research & Statistics; (vii) Human Resources & Sustainable Development; (viii) Judicial & Parliamentary Coordination and ECO Advocacy Program for Afghanistan; (ix) ECO Regional Institutions/Specialized Agencies/Affiliated Bodies and International Relations.

In the Plenary Session, the Council adopted the Report of the Meeting, Work Program and Calendar of Events, containing the Organization's activities to be implemented during the year 2022.

United Nations Resident Coordinator Visits ECO Secretariat



Resident Coordinator that ECO attaches immense importance to its relations with the UN and its Specialized Agencies by virtue of harmony of interests. The Secretary General further highlighted the ongoing ECO-UN cooperation in different sectors and emphasized the importance of technical and financial assistance of the UN Agencies for ECO's programs and activities. Ambassador Noziri expressed his readiness to strengthen institutional linkages and boosting partnership with the UN Agencies to materialize the shared goals enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ECO Vision 2025.

The UN Resident Coordinator expressed keen interest in the activities and projects of the ECO and expressed willingness to promote cooperation between the two Organizations. He informed the ECO Secretary General that UN-RCO was in the process of finalizing the framework of cooperation between Iran and the UN for 2023-2027 and the ECO, being a regional organization, can prove to be an excellent platform to implement various UN projects especially under the umbrella of South-South Cooperation.

Following in-depth exchange of views, both sides agreed on action plan for future cooperation, inter alia, UN-ECO cooperation on priority areas especially in the areas of sustainable development, health, and environment, tourism, and drugs control. The two sides also agreed to organize joint activities of mutual interest in Tehran in 2022. In the end, the ECO Secretary General thanked the UN Resident Coordinator for visiting the ECO Secretariat and expressed confidence that cooperation between the two organizations would further enhance in times to come for the realization of shared goals and objects.

ECO CHRONICLE Noziri, the ECO Secretary General, welcomed the UN Resident Coordinator at the ECO Secretariat.

The ECO Secretary General and the UN Resident Coordinator held a candid discussion on issues of mutual interests and focused on channels to enhance level of cooperation between the UN-RCO and the ECO Secretariat. The ECO Secretary General briefed H.E. Mr. Stefan Priesner about the major activities of the ECO in mandated areas of cooperation including Trade, Transport and Connectivity, Energy, Tourism, Economic Growth as well as Social Welfare and Environment.

Ambassador Khusrav Noziri apprised the UN Resident Coordinator of ECO Vision 2025 and highlighted the main initiatives pursued by the ECO to materialize the Vision. The UN Resident Coordinator was also detailed about the history, evolution, expansion, structure, composition, decision-making and Economic Cooperation Organisation and several bodies associated with it.

The Secretary General informed the UN

11th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport



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The 11th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport was held virtually under chairmanship of the Republic of Türkiye on February 2, 2022.

The Ministerial Meeting held virtually on January 31, 2022 under the theme "Facilitation of Transit for Post Pandemic", was preceded by the High-Level Expert Group Meeting. The Ministers and Heads of Delegation from 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 Türkiye, the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the representatives from UNECE, IsDB, IRU, ADB, OTIF, OSJD, and ECO-TDB attended the meeting.

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri highlighted the activities and achievements of the Organization in transport sector during 2021 particularly operationalization of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Road Corridor under TIR System in cooperation of IRU, resumption of the ITI Train as one of the longest aspirations of the region, finalization of the joint project with IsDB and UNESCAP on commercialization of KTI Railway and signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Railway Administrations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the implementation of KTI Railway Freight Corridor, implementation of the joint project with UNECE and IsDB to promote eTIR and eCMR in the region, organization of several important sectoral meetings, namely on road, rail, maritime and customs as well as active participation in important international conferences and forums.

The Ministerial Meeting after due deliberations adopted the Ankara Declaration 2022 as its outcome document and adopted its Report as per Agenda of the Meeting.

The Meeting welcomed the offer of the Republic of Uzbekistan to host the 12th Ministerial Meeting on Transport in Tashkent.

ECO Convenes First CPR Meeting under New Chair

ECO CHRONICLE The 261st Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held on February 7, 2022, under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

While making opening remarks at the meeting, the former CPR Chair, Ambassador of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov underlined major achievements made during Chairmanship of Turkmenistan.

The Republic of Uzbekistan assumed ECO Chair in January 2022 and the Ambassador of the Republic Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to ECO, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullaev assumed his duties as CPR Chairman.


H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullaev outlined the goals and objectives of Uzbekistan's Chairmanship as defined in the Concept of Uzbekistan's Chairmanship in ECO for the year 2022, which would be implemented under the motto "2022 - the Year of Strengthening of Connectivity".

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, while extending sincere gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Gurbanov for his excellent chairmanship of Council during 2021, congratulated Ambassador Bakhodir

Abdullayev as new Chairman of the CPR. The Secretary General expressed confidence that the vast experience and knowledge of new CPR Chairman would definitely help the Council to continue the momentum of activities for greater regional cooperation.



36th FAO Ministerial Meeting of Near East Regional Conference

 The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri addressed virtually to the 36th Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Ministerial Meeting of the Near East Regional Conference (NERC-36), held on February 7-8, 2022, in hybrid format in Baghdad, Iraq.

The Secretary General of the ECO emphasized on the compelling need for improvement of food security and human health, which had been adversely affected by COVID-19. He also stressed that the economic consequences of the pandemic on food security had affected developing countries more severely. Restrictions on movement within and across countries had disrupted entire food supply chains and affected the availability of food.

The ECO Secretary General added that the Organization was committed to the Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger, the accomplishment of which would lead to greater food security, health and welfare. "The ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security (ECO-RCC) and the FAO have updated the ECO Regional Program for Food Security (ECO-RPFS) according to the pandemic situation and will accordingly make its utmost to facilitate moving towards the implementation stage aimed at improving and enhancing ECO Member States resilience to future shocks", said the Secretary General.

He further invited countries, international and regional organizations to work together



to strengthen cooperation during pandemic. He stressed on the role of collective action as an imperative need for ensuring that the pandemic would not threaten food security and nutrition more, and as a prerequisite to improve resilience to shocks in all regions of the world.

The Senior Officers Meeting (SOM) for the 36th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC-36) was held virtually on January 10-13, 2022 with participation of the ECO Secretariat.

ECO Secretary General Meets United Kingdom Ambassador



ECO
CHRONICLE

The Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Simon Shercliff paid visit to the ECO Secretariat

on February 13, 2022.


Ambassador Khusrav Noziri welcomed the visiting guest and briefed him on priority areas of the ECO, focusing on

transport and connectivity, energy, trade, environment and tourism.

The Ambassador inquired on possibilities to establish beneficial cooperation between the UK and the ECO in the spheres of mutual interest such as Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, combating drug trafficking, etc....



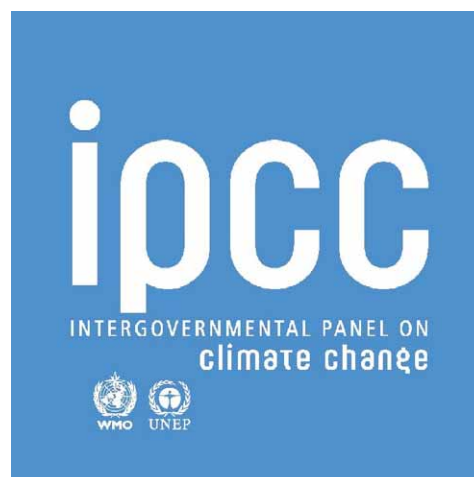
55th Session of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

 On February 14, 2022, on the invitation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the ECO delegation, headed by the ECO Deputy Secretary General, Dr.Huseyin Avni Bicakli, attended the opening session of the 55th IPCC and the 12th Working Group II, hosted virtually by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The meeting was dedicated to the approval of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the Working Group II contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report and acceptance of the underlying scientific technical assessment. After its conclusion, IPCC-55 will meet to accept the actions

taken at the WGII-12 Session.

Being an observer in the IPCC, cooperation in tackling global challenges of climate change and other environmental issues such as biodiversity and land degradation have always been put in the prioritized area of regional dialogue within the Economic Cooperation Organization. As one of the strong supporters of achieving SDGs by its Member States, ECO will further enhance regional outreach to contribute common challenges to add value for their national and global commitments in addressing environmental concerns, particularly fighting against global warming and climate change.



ECO Secretary General Meets APDIM Director



The Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, met the Director of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM), Ms. Letizia Rossano, at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran.

The meeting held on February 14, 2022 witnessed two sides discussing means of cooperation on disaster risk reduction and their joint project on disaster risk reduction and management for cascading risks in the ECO region.

Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, expressed gratitude to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNSCAP) and the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) for generously extending technical support to the joint ECO-APDIM Project on enhancing capacity to scale up disaster management framework for cascading risks. He also expressed hope that the APDIM and the ECO could enhance cooperation on Disaster Risk Reduction within the ECO region.

Ms. Letizia Rossano discussed the recent documents produced by the Centre on Sand and Dust Storms Risk Assessment in Asia and the Pacific and Guideline on Monitoring and Reporting the Impact of Sand



and Dust Storms through the Sendai Framework Monitoring. She also discussed the APDIM Preliminary Assessment of the Gaps and Needs for Disaster Risk Information and Data Management Platforms in Asia and the Pacific Region and expressed hope that the consultative meeting on the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management for Cascading Risks in the ECO Region can identify the requirements and priorities of the region on cascading risks and find common ground on developing a regional plan of action for cascading risks.

The ECO Member States and the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) of ESCAP held the consultative meeting on disaster risk reduction and management for cascading risks from natural and biological hazards on Monday, February 14, 2022 to discuss the sources and implication of risks and biological hazards within the ECO Region.

ECO-UNFCC Environmental Discussions

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On February 28, 2022, the Directorate of Energy, Minerals and Environment (EME) of the ECO Secretariat, led by Director, Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev along with Program Officer, Mojtaba Faraji, held a virtual meeting with Mr. Gaurav Monga, Partner Engagement Officer for Resource Mobilization and Partnerships of the Secretariat of United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCC).

The meeting was aimed at building partnership relations between the ECO and the UNFCC to deal environmental issues. Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev briefed the participants about the collective environmental profile of the ECO Member States. He named various projects and programs of the ECO Secretariat for overcoming environmental problems and expressed that the ECO was ready for a durable, tangible and fruitful



cooperation with the UNFCC.

Mr. Gaurav Monga expressed satisfaction for enhancing cooperation between the UNFCC and the ECO on environmental issues especially in the field of climate change. He then briefed the meeting about the role and position of the UNFCC for encouraging the global response to the threat of climate change. He explained about the tasks of the UNFCC Secretariat including facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change and supporting a complex system of structures that serve to advance the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

At the end of the meeting, both sides welcomed the expansion of ties and stressed the need for continued contacts and communication to achieve a framework for cooperation in the field of environment and climate change.

ECO Secretary General Meets Ambassador of Finland



The Ambassador of Finland accredited to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Kari Kahiluoto paid a visit to the ECO Secretariat

on March 1, 2022.

The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri welcomed Ambassador of Finland and briefed him

on the activities and overall functioning of the ECO, focusing on trade, transport & connectivity, energy, environment and tourism.



The Finnish Ambassador inquired about the possibilities of establishing ties between the ECO and Finland in spheres of mutual interest.





Bandar Abbas Hosts ECO-CPR Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE The 262nd Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held on March 2, 2022 in Bandar Abbas, the Islamic Republic of Iran under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The CPR meeting proceeded by joint meeting of the Governor General of Hormozgan Province, H.E. Mr. Mahdi Doosti with Permanent Representatives of the ECO Member States.

The Governor General, while delivering opening remarks, highlighted major achievements of the Province and shed light on prospects of cooperation between the ECO Member States and Hormozgan in trade, investment, transport, connectivity, and tourism.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the ECO and Chairman of the meeting, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev, while extending sincere gratitude to provincial authorities, emphasized on strengthening cooperation for economic growth and socio-economic development of the region especially through expansion of transport corridors amongst the ECO Member States.

The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri touched upon the importance of regional connectivity. The year

2022 has been declared as "ECO Year of Strengthening Connectivity" as proposed by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, during the 15th ECO Summit and approved by the meeting of Council of Ministers (COM).

On March 3, 2022 the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri attended the Conference on Cooperation between Hormozgan and ECO Member States, hosted by Bandar Abbas Chamber of Commerce, Mines and Agriculture and chaired by its President, H.E. Mr. Mohammad Reza Safa, with participation of the Governor General of Hormozgan Province, H.E. Mr. Mahdi Doosti.

The Secretary General in his statement highlighted strategic, economic and commercial significance of Bandar Abbas for the region as the trade and investment hub.

A visit to Shahid Rajaei Port was also organized by the General Administration of Port and Maritime Affairs of Hormozgan Province.

The participants familiarized themselves with Shahid Rajaei Port facilities which are considered intercontinental route for ships as it is located at the intersection of the North-South Transit Corridor, which is main trade route of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The port covers about 2400 hectares with 100 million tons of cargo handling capacity.

ECO Secretary General Meets Mexican Ambassador



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The Ambassador of Mexico to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Ambassador Guillermo Alejandro Puente Ordorica paid a

visit to the ECO Secretariat on March 6, 2022.

The visiting dignitary was received and welcomed by the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri. The ECO Secretary General briefed the guest on the

activities of the ECO in areas of transport & connectivity, trade, energy, environment, tourism, sustainable development and Advocacy

Programme for Afghanistan as well as outcomes of the last 15th ECO Summit held in Ashgabat on November 28, 2021.

The Ambassador of Mexico expressed keen interest in exploring areas of cooperation between ECO and Mexico for the realization of mutual interests.



29th Executive Committee & 19th General Assembly of **ECO-CCI**



 ECO delegation led by Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in the 29th Executive Committee Meeting & the 19th General Assembly Meeting of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI), held on March 7, 2022, in virtual format.

The ECO Secretary General stated that trade had been a major driver of economic growth and private sector had always played a leading economic role leading to socio-economic development through job creation and subsequent poverty alleviation. "The ECO Member States are no exception to this trend", said Ambassador Noziri. He apprised the participants of the fact that the leadership of ECO Member

States had firmly affirmed their commitment to regional integration as reflected in the outcome document of the 15th ECO Summit 'Ashgabat Consensus for Action'.

"The ECO Secretariat attaches immense importance to a healthy collaboration among private sectors in the region and we commend the role of ECO-CCI in harmonizing policies and programmes contemplated by the Member States", said Ambassador Noziri. He further highlighted that the trade facilitation measures would further boost productions, creating a



competitive environment at global level. He further informed the Forum about important ECO events held in 2021 and expressed his continued

support for future events to be fruitful in 2022.

Whilst apprising the participants about the Transport Ministers of the ECO Member States acknowledging the contributions of private sector in



development of transport sector, during the Ministerial Meeting on 2nd February 2022, the Secretary General invited ECO-CCI to contribute towards implementation of the 'ECO Transport Excellence Award', approved by the Transport Ministers to recognize and appreciate the best performing transport companies, associations and other related stakeholders in road, railways, maritime and civil aviation.

He emphasized that post-Covid economic recovery of the ECO Region depended upon increased intra-regional trade volumes, which could be achieved through a proactive role of the National Chambers of the ECO Member States and their better coordination with respective governments for implementing preferential trade regime in the region by trade liberalization under ECOTA, trade facilitation under the Trade Facilitation Strategy/Trade Facilitation Agreement, collaboration among the ECO Zones, cost reduction

in trade, and investment attraction to set up Regional Value Chains (RVCs).

Whilst alluding to ratification of the "Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI)" by four ECO Member States, he hoped that it would be operationalised soon to bolster the investor confidence. The operationalization of the ECO Reinsurance Company (ERIC), he informed, was also expected sooner, which was essential for a safe and secure trade in the region.


While concluding, he expressed hope that the Specialized, Executive Committee and General Assembly meetings of the ECO-CCI would be productive and result-oriented, benefiting the Member States and the region by providing guidelines to pave the way for a bright future.

It is pertinent to mention that



ECO-CCI was founded by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines, and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in 1990, to promote commercial, industrial and economic cooperation among Member States. At present, ECO-CCI has ten members.

Second Antalya Diplomacy Forum

 Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in the Second Antalya Diplomacy Forum. The event was held in and hosted by the Republic of Türkiye on March 10, 2022.

Within the framework of the event, the ECO Secretary General met the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye and the Director for European Affairs, H.E. Mr. Faruk Kaymakci. The interaction featured discussions on issues of mutual interest as well as ways and means for expanded cooperation for greater regional integration.

The Secretary General briefed the Deputy Foreign Minister about the activities engagements, and the fast evolving project-oriented-and-result-based approach of the Organisation. The measures for implementation of the decisions taken during the 15th ECO Summit and 25th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held in November last year at Ashgabat, also came under limelight. The Secretary General commended the efforts and role of the Republic of Türkiye for welfare and collective wellbeing of the region.

The Deputy Foreign Minister, while acknowledging the activities of the ECO and its contribution towards regional development, assured Türkiye's continued support to the Organization to realize its aims and objects. The Deputy Minister



expressed hope that the ECO Projects related to transport, energy, tourism and cultural activities, would help enhance regional trade.


ECO Secretary General Meets Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan



Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov.

While mentioning the continued support of Azerbaijan to the ECO, Minister J. Bayramov emphasized that Azerbaijan attached special importance to ECO and noted that there were huge prospects of cooperation among ECO Member States in the fields of trade, transport, logistics, tourism, etc... The Minister highlighted regional projects initiated by Azerbaijan AND stressed that the ECO Member States might benefit from these projects, especially ECO Clean Energy Center in Baku approved by the 25th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (CoM) held in Ashgabat in 2021.

The Secretary General acknowledged the contributions of Azerbaijan towards the cause of the ECO, made under the kind patronage of the honorable Foreign Minister, and informed the Minister about the activities undertaken by the ECO under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Uzbekistan, mentioning an important development that as proposed by H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the honorable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan during 15th ECO Summit, the year 2022 had been proclaimed as "Year of Strengthening Connectivity"

 Within the framework of Antalya Diplomacy Forum, held on March 11, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri held a bilateral meeting with the

ECO Secretary General Meets Foreign Minister of Kyrgyz Republic



ECO
CHRONICLE

Within the framework of Antalya Diplomacy Forum, held on March 11, 2022, the ECO Secretary General H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Ruslan Kazakbaev.




During the meeting, the ECO Secretary General and Foreign Minister exchanged views on a variety

of issues concerning ECO as well as emerging regional and global economic scenarios. They also took into account the organization of upcoming important events, including Brainstorming Meeting of the ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers, which was scheduled to be held in May, 2022 in Tehran. Emphasis was given to the implementation of economic agenda of the Organisation, focusing on further development of regional transport and communication network for enhanced regional connectivity that is essential for an overall economic growth in the region.



ECO Secretary General Meets OTS Secretary General

 The ECO Secretary General, mAmbassador Khusrav Noziri met with the Secretary General of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), H.E. Mr. Baghdad Amreyev, on the sidelines of the Second Antalya Diplomacy Forum held on March 11, 2022.

The ECO Secretary General highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation between the two Organizations especially in the post-Covid era.

Given the concurrent membership of all the OTS member countries in the ECO, the OTS Secretary General highly valued OTS' observership in the ECO, reaffirming readiness for continuing cooperation in the priority areas such as transport, tourism, education, etc. for mutual benefits.





ECO-CICA Secretaries- General Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, on the sidelines of the Second Antalya Diplomacy Forum, held on March 11-13, 2022 in Türkiye.

During the meeting, the two sides renewed their commitment to strengthen cooperation in priority areas of development, especially in trade and transport. The intent of such collaborative engagements was joint pursuit of the identical regional development goals of the ECO and CICA.

The CICA Executive Director invited the ECO Secretary General to participate in the 6th CICA Summit to be held on October 12-13, 2022 in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

ECO-D8 Secretaries General Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE On the sidelines of the Second Antalya Diplomacy Forum, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Secretary General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, who assumed the position of the Secretary-General on January 1, 2022.

The two sides agreed to strengthen their cooperative engagements and ensure implementation of joint development projects, particularly in agriculture, food safety, trade, transportation, industry, energy, health and tourism.

Round Table:

Asia Anew Initiative: For a Sustainable Regional Growth

ECO CHRONICLE Within the framework of Antalya Diplomacy Forum on March 12, 2022, the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated at the Round Table: Asia Anew: For a Sustainable Regional Growth. The Foreign Ministers of Uzbekistan and Bangladesh, Heads of CICA, IORA, the ACD, as well as representatives of public and private business companies of Türkiye also attended the round table.

While addressing the meeting, the ECO Secretary General briefed the participants about the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and its main areas of activity,



including trade, transport, agriculture, energy, social welfare, tourism, and environment.

The ECO Secretary General apprised the audience about ECO Vision 2025 and highlighted the main initiatives being pursued by ECO in order to attain the Vision's targets.



ECO Secretary General Meets Lebanese Trade Minister

**ECO
CHRONICLE** Ambassador
Khusrav Noziri
met the Minister of Economy
and Trade of the Republic of
Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Amin
Salam on the sidelines of the
Second Antalya Diplomacy
Forum.

The Minister underlined
the scope and opportunities
that exist in Lebanon in
the areas of energy, water,
food and agriculture,
healthcare, information and
communications technology
(ICT). He added that his
government published an
economic plan focusing on
restructuring the financial
sector and attracting foreign
assistance.

The Secretary General
briefed the Minister about the



ECO especially the core objectives of the
organization that are envisaged in the ECO
Vision 2025.

The two sides expressed readiness for
cooperation between the ECO and
Lebanon for the promotion of trade and
communication as well as creating
opportunities for business development
with the ECO Member States.



Interview to Turkish News Outlet



ECO CHRONICLE Within the framework of Antalya Diplomacy Forum on March 12, 2022, the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri was interviewed by the Anadolu Agency and the Milliyet Newspaper of Türkiye.

During the interview, the ECO Secretary General underscored the core objectives of the Organization that were based on the principle of shared progress and prosperity of ECO Member States. He further stated that the ECO Vision 2025 envisaged the idea of enhanced connectivity for an accelerated socioeconomic development in the region.

He further said that the main areas of cooperation determined by the member countries to achieve the perceived targets included, inter alia, transportation trade, energy and tourism.

Partners Roundtable for ECO Clean Energy Centre



ECO CHRONICLE On 16 March 2022, the virtual meeting titled "The Partners' Roundtable for the Launch and Operationalization of the ECO Clean Energy Centre", was jointly organized by the Secretariat of Economic Cooperation Organization, the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The Meeting was attended by the delegates from ECO Member States, diplomatic missions accredited to the Republic of Azerbaijan, international organizations, international financial institutions and private sectors involved in development of clean energy.

The ECO Secretariat was represented by ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, ECO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, and ECO Director for Energy Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev.

The meeting focused on CECECO's role



and its potential to add value to the regional energy transition efforts. The CECECO partners presented the Centre's roadmap while showcasing the rationale for establishing such partnership framework and highlighting the urgent need to move forward with the launch and operationalization phase of the Centre.

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri delivered a welcome statement, underlining the joint ECO-UNIDO Project on the establishment of an ECO Clean Energy Centre as an explicit example of sustainable energy transformation efforts of Organization's current energy policy. He added that the Centre would become a member of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers, currently being implemented across the globe.

The Secretary-General also recalled the decision of the 25th ECO Council of Ministers Meeting (CoM) on the selection of the Republic of Azerbaijan as a host country to the Centre. He encouraged the Member States to sign the Charter of CECECO in order to immediately

reap the benefits and advantages that the Centre would provide.

The Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Samir Valiyev emphasized in his remarks that the Government of Azerbaijan, as a host country, was fully committed to the operationalization of the Centre. He encouraged all the partners to consider supporting the Centre's establishment and its activities, particularly at its early stage.

Ms. Petra Schwager, Chief of the Energy Technologies and Industrial Application Division of UNIDO Department of Energy emphasized, in her statement mentioned that the success of the newly-created ECO Clean Energy Centre depended on fruitful partnerships with international donors, clean energy industry, and academia. She pointed out that UNIDO had partnered with the ECO to establish the CECECO, a dedicated regional agency to foster a sustainable energy market. The centre would provide the required regional technical capacity to attain the ECO region's objectives, while becoming, at the same time, an integral part of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC). Currently, UNIDO was coordinating the network, in partnership with various regional economic communities.

In the final session, Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev (Director of Energy, Minerals and Environment of the ECO Secretariat), Mr. Orkhan Zeynalov (Head of the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan) and Mr. Martin Lugmayr, (GN-SEC Coordinator at UNIDO) highlighted background and opportunities stemming from regional cooperation and the operationalization of the ECO Clean Energy Centre.

In conclusion, delegates from the IRENA, the Kuwait Fund, Pakistan and BP Company made interventions to express their possible support in the future on functioning of the Centre. The meeting ended with an emphasis and call for action to complete the next phases of the establishment of CECECO.



ECO Secretary General Receives Iraqi Envoy



ECO
CHRONICLE

The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri received the Ambassador of Iraq accredited to the Islamic Republic of Iran,

H.E. Mr. Naseer Abdul Mohsen Abdullah Al-Karawi, at the ECO Secretariat on April 6, 2022.

During the meeting, both sides explored and discussed the possibility of establishing cooperative relationship between the ECO and the Republic of Iraq in the areas of shared interest.

The ECO Secretary General highlighted the priority areas of the ECO particularly trade and investment, transport and communication, energy and environment, tourism, human resources, and sustainable development.



The visiting Ambassador, while appreciating the briefing on affairs of the ECO, expressed keen interest to move forward towards establishing working relations with the ECO in the mutually beneficial fields of cooperation.

ECO holds 263rd CPR Meeting



ECO CHRONICLE The 263rd Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held on April 11, 2022 at the ECO Secretariat under the Chairmanship of Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to ECO, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev.

The Council discussed issues related to the follow-up of the outcomes of 15th ECO Summit and 25th Council of Ministers (COM) meeting, ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events 2022, etc...

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Secretary General thanked the honorable Chair for the commemorative medal. While expressing his pleasure to receive the Medal, dedicated to the 20th

Anniversary of the establishment of the SCO, he extended his special gratitude to the former SCO Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Vladimir Norov for decorating him with the medal of great worth and value.



ECO- Islamic Development Bank Consultative Meeting



A virtual consultative bilateral meeting between the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) was held on April 14, 2022, to devise a mechanism to further enhance collaboration between the two organizations.

The Deputy Secretary General ECO, Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, while highlighting salient features of ongoing partnership between the ECO and the IsDB appreciated the role of the IsDB in integrating common member countries of the two organizations.

During the meeting, Director of the Regional Cooperation and Integration of the IsDB, Mr.

Riad Raqueb, thanked the Secretariat for hosting the event and stated that the ECO and the IsDB had a long-standing partnership and mentioned that the Bank was currently assisting the ECO in different projects in transport and connectivity.

Mr. Akbar Khodaei, Director for Transport and Communication of ECO, acknowledged cooperation between the Organizations in development of transit transport in the region. He stated that under the new initiative, more transport projects could be implemented.

Director for Trade & Investment of ECO, Mr. Zahid Hussain Abbasi, while emphasizing trade as a priority area of the ECO, highlighted the synergies between the RCI of the IsDB and the ECO Vision 2025 and ECO-IsDB collaboration would contribute towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev, Director for Energy, Minerals & Environment of ECO, emphasized that the two organizations should take into consideration the interest and needs of the common Member States and proposed several activities in the area of energy and climate change.

Mr. Muhammad Farooq, Head of International Relations of ECO, valued the proposed joint plan of action, spanning for 3-5 year period, for enhancing the mutual cooperation and assured the Bank that the ECO Secretariat would share the updated draft mechanism for future cooperation between the two Organizations.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the two sides expressed their desire to continue the process of mutual consultations to finalize the mechanism for enhancing mutual collaboration.

ECO Secretary General Meets Ambassador of Pakistan



ECO
CHRONICLE

On April 17, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri received the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of

Pakistan to Iran and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the ECO, H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi.

Ambassador Noziri welcomed the visiting dignitary and while updating on the

Brainstorming Session on Reform Process and Prospects of Cooperation in the ECO region, briefed him on the preparation of the 3rd General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Member States (May 16-17, 2022, Baku).

Ambassador Qureshi thanked the Secretary General for briefing, assuring Pakistan's full to the cause of the ECO.





ECO Secretary General

Meets Tajikistan Ambassador



ECO
CHRONICLE

The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri received the Ambassador of the Republic

of Tajikistan to Iran and Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the ECO, H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, at the ECO Secretariat Tehran.


The two sides discussed ECO events including Brainstorming Meeting of the ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers and the

Second High-Level International Conference on International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028.



Special emphasis was paid to the implementation of economic agenda of the Organization, focusing on development of regional connectivity networks that were deemed to be essential for economic growth in the region.

12th High Level Working Group Meeting on ITI Corridor

 The 12th Meeting of High Level Working Group on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Train, jointly organized by the ECO Secretariat and the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), was held virtually on April 25, 2022, in Tehran.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of three ITI en-route countries, i.e. the Islamic Republic of Iran (host), the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Türkiye. The delegation of the ECO Secretariat was headed by the Director Transport and Communications, Mr. Akbar Khodaei.

The Chair of the meeting, Mr. Shahram Jafari, Director General for Foreign Commerce of Iranian Railways (RAI), highlighted the main points and while noting the importance of the Meeting underlined that despite facing some challenges, three shipments had been undertaken via ITI Train.

Mr. Akbar Khodaei, Director of Directorate for Transport and Communications of the ECO Secretariat in his welcoming remarks appreciated the RAI for hosting the meeting and noted that the 11th Meeting of ECO Transport Ministers had commended the resumption of the ITI Train and called upon the stakeholders to further utilize the cargo train service for enhancing regional trade and, in this connection, expressed interest to explore maximum possibilities for the extension of the said corridor to Europe and China.

The meeting deliberated extensively the various topics, inter alia, the latest developments on the infrastructure and



rolling stock capacity of en-route countries relating to ITI train service specifically rehabilitation of the Zahedan-Taftan-Quetta portion, latest status of establishment of the logistic center in Zahedan, tariffs, time table, nomination of further forwarders and standard operational procedures. The participants from the railways and forwarders also raised various technical and operational challenges of the ITI train and came up with recommendations to enhance the existing cordial cooperation among all the relevant stakeholders to increase the volume of trade on the route.

The ITI train's initiative was made upon the decision of the 8th Ministerial Meeting on Transport and Communications held on June 28-29, 2011 at Ashgabat. Subsequently, the relevant High-Level Working Group consisting of Representatives from en-route Member States was established for further coordination to help materialize the ITI initiative.

—Validation Meeting on— **Projects in Minerals**



ECO CHRONICLE On April 26, 2022, the Validation Meeting on Projects in Minerals was jointly organized virtually by the Secretariat of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Geological Survey of Iran (GSI) and Experts from Tabriz University.

The representatives from ECO Member States namely 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, and the Republic of Türkiye attended the meeting.

Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General of the ECO, while making opening remarks, stated that ECO endeavored to assist its Member States in materializing sustainable socio-economic development through collective efforts and exchange of experiences and expertise. The Deputy Secretary General then emphasized the importance of meeting as it offered an exceptional opportunity

to the Member States to discuss and consider possibility to determine validity of mineral projects to be financed by the relevant agencies of the ECO.

The chairman of the meeting, Deputy Director General of Geological Survey of Iran, Dr. Jafar Omrani recalled, in his keynote speech, the outcome of the Sixth and the Seventh ECO Experts Group Meetings on Minerals and highlighted benefits of the proposed projects of Iran that might play an important role in mineral collaboration in the ECO Region.

Participants of the meeting discussed following projects by GSI:

- "Preparing ECO-Environmental Quality Index (ECO-EQI) Map of the ECO Region
- "Landslide Hazard Zoning (LHZ) of ECO Region
- "Geochemical Exploration of Precious and Industrial Minerals in Desert lands in ECO region
- "Spiroclast Map of Mobile Belt between Gondwana and Eurasia

As an outcome of the meeting, Member States agreed to cooperate in possible launching of the projects.

Fourth ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources (EGRES)

ECO CHRONICLE On April 27, 2022, the Fourth ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources was hosted virtually by the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Delegates from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Republic of Uzbekistan featured in the event. Representatives from the ECO Secretariat and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) also attended the meeting.

The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri delivered a welcome statement and noted that this interaction would enable the Member States to review energy agenda in renewables and

energy efficiency issues. He expressed strong hope that current expert group framework would contribute towards deliberations for Fifth ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy, expected to be hosted by the Republic of Uzbekistan during the last quarter of 2022.

As chairman of the meeting, the Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan Mr. Sherzod Khodjaev, emphasized that the Republic of Uzbekistan paid special attention to energy efficiency. He further stated that an Energy Efficiency Fund had been created under the Ministry of Energy and a lot of work had been done to build power generation units for households. He also expressed the hope that the Fifth Energy Ministerial Meeting under the chairmanship of the Uzbekistan would be fruitful for laying the foundation for energy security projects in the region.



ECO-UNCTAD

Meeting on Trade, Investment and Tourism



ECO
CHRONICLE

A Virtual Meeting was held between the delegations of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the ECO Secretariat, on April 28, 2022. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Zahid Hussain

Abbasi, Director (Trade & Investment), ECO Secretariat. The UNCTAD delegation was headed by Ms. Chantal Dupasquier, Chief of the Investment Policy Review Section.

The meeting discussed the state of collaboration between the organizations and focused on the need to bolster mutual cooperation in the future to pursue shared socio-economic development of the peoples of the region. While dilating on the decisions of the relevant ECO Fora, Mr. Abbasi tabled the proposal to UNCTAD to initiate cooperation to conduct a policy review of Investment Policies and Investment Climate in the region to indentify the gaps and plug them through effective policy matrix and cogent projects in the ECO region.

Ms. Chantal Dupasquier, Chief of the Policy Review Section of UNCTAD, underscored the

significance of mutual cooperation between UNCTAD and the ECO and informed that UNCTAD had been endeavoring to maximize the positive impact of trade liberalization and trade facilitation by assisting developing countries and the economies in transition integrating into International Trading System.

UNCTAD, with its various specialized directorates, reviews policy issues and provides recommendations on investment policies to the countries and regions on their requests; carries out objective evaluation of their regulatory framework for the regulation of FDI as well as Local Investment, with a view to suggest suitable policy matrix to attract increased Foreign Direct Investment to the countries and regions for the benefits for the economies of the region.

Both sides agreed to mull over revitalization of the MoU and Joint Action Plan to enhance cooperation in all areas of trade and investment.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from both sides.



ECO Secretary General

Meets Ambassador of Kingdom of Thailand



ECO CHRONICLE The Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, met the Ambassador of Kingdom of Thailand accredited to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Worawoot Pongrapapant, on May 5, 2022, at the Royal Thai Embassy in Tehran.

The Ambassador of Thailand extended a very warm welcome to the ECO Secretary General on visiting the Royal Thai Embassy.

The ECO Secretary General signed the visitor's book that was especially opened in connection with the Coronation Day of Thailand which marked the coronation anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. H.E. Ambassador NOZIRI congratulated the Ambassador of Kingdom of Thailand on the occasion of Coronation Day.

During the meeting, the ECO Secretary General briefed H.E. Worawoot Pongrapapant about the background of



the Economic Cooperation Organization and its activities in various spheres including trade, transport, agriculture, energy, social welfare, tourism, environment and drugs control.

The meeting focused on ASEAN-ECO cooperation with a view to exploring possibilities of revitalizing collaboration of the two organizations. Since Thailand assumed the Chairmanship of the ASEAN Third Committee, the Secretary General of the ECO highlighted the possible role of Ambassador of Thailand in enhancing the cooperative relations between the ECO and ASEAN. Referring to the importance the ECO attached to ASEAN, the Secretary General described a brief history of cooperative relationship between the two organizations.

The Secretary General of the ECO enlightened the Thai Ambassador that the visit of the ASEAN Secretary General to Tehran in 1995 paved the way for formalizing contacts at the level of the Secretaries-General and subsequently the First ASEAN-ECO Joint Ministerial Meeting was held on the sidelines of the 50th UNGA Session in September 1995 in

New York. The signing of the MoU between the two organizations in 2006 marked another significant development in consolidating institutionalized ASEAN-ECO cooperation. The Secretary General informed the Ambassador that so far 14 ASEAN-ECO Joint Ministerial Meetings had been organized and in the course of these meetings the leadership of the two regions had continuously stressed upon strengthening and expanding the ongoing cooperation.

The Ambassador of Thailand thanked H.E. NOZIRI on the detailed briefing and expressed his gratitude to the ECO Secretary General for attaching great value to enhancing the ECO- ASEAN cooperative relations in the coming years. He expressed his readiness to support the initiative of the Secretary General to revitalize the ASEAN-ECO Joint Ministerial Meeting and the implementation of the MoU between the two organizations.

The two sides also agreed to continue mutual consultations in the areas of common interest including ECO-ASEAN cooperation in the coming period.

Secretary General — Meets IOFS Chief —



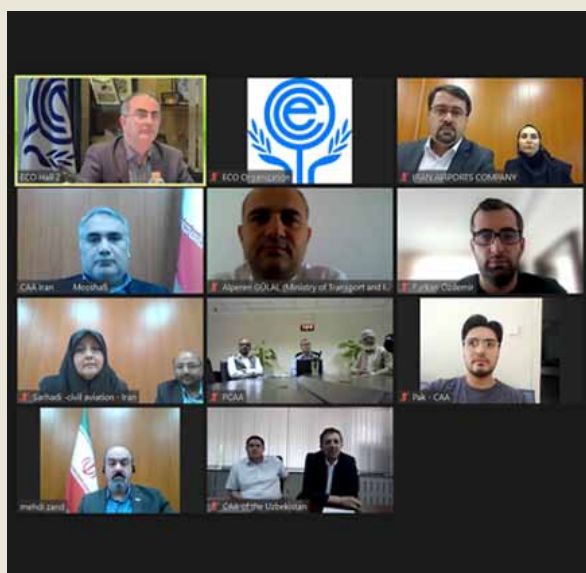
ECO CHRONICLE On May 9, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri received the Director General of the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS), Mr. Yerlan Baidaulet. The interaction held at the ECO Secretariat was to bilaterally discuss the possible ECO-IOFS cooperation on agricultural and food security matters.

The visiting dignitary, while explaining the IOFS's background, structure and membership, briefed the ECO Secretary General on their various activities and initiatives undertaken to promote, monitor and manage food security in the Member States. Underlining their priority to address food security issues in Afghanistan, he emphasized on the creation of an all-inclusive, integrated and sustainable structure to support food security and related issues in their domain. Moreover, he requested his ECO counterpart to

encourage non-IOFS Member States of the ECO to join them in the greater regional and global interest, proposing MoU to be signed for initiation and promotion of the desired collaboration between the ECO and IOFS.

Supporting the proposed ECO-IOFS partnership, the ECO Secretary General noted that the post-COVID conditions appeared to be quite discouraging for the food systems and security across the globe. He added that working for the establishment of ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS), ECO Veterinary Commission (ECO-VECO) and ECO Agricultural Biotechnology Network (ECO-ABN) was relentlessly going on, which was aimed at enhancing food security in the region. He agreed for developing ECO-IOFS cooperative relationship and nominated focal points to facilitate the initiative.

Meeting of ECO Working Group on Civil Aviation



ECO CHRONICLE The Second Meeting of the ECO Working Group on Civil Aviation, jointly organized by the ECO Secretariat and the Civil Aviation Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was held virtually on May 10, 2022 in Tehran.

The meeting was attended by the delegations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The delegation of the ECO Secretariat was headed by Mr. Akbar Khodaei, Director of Transport and Communications of the ECO Secretariat. The Meeting was inaugurated by Mr. Hasan khoshkhou, Deputy President of Civil Aviation Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Director of Transport and Communications of the ECO Secretariat noted that that platform was of paramount importance for discussing future plans

for further development of civil aviation in the region. He also briefed the session on the challenges facing the civil aviation industry in the region and called for workable solutions to enhance regional cooperation.

The meeting deliberated extensively the various topics, inter alia, latest progress in the areas of civil aviation, the challenges and opportunities in the post-Covid world, cooperation on improvement of airports and aviation infrastructure, establishment of an ECO Air Hub in Central Asia, facilitation of travel and tourism through expansion of new air routes, increasing flight frequency and number of connections, access to visitor markets and establishment of preferential air service agreements as well as facilitation of visa procedures and establishment of network of accredited airlines and travel agencies of ECO.

Moreover, representatives of the Member countries discussed the capacity-building programs (training courses and consultancy services) in different fields and certification of operators of aircraft and airfields (heliports) of civil aviation, licensing of aviation personnel.

Establishing of a Working Group on Civil Aviation was initiated during the Ninth Ministerial Meeting on Transport on May 1-3, 2018 in Turkmenbashi (Turkmenistan).

UNCCD 15th Session of Conference of the Parties



Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on May 9-11, 2022.

The Conference was attended at the invitation of the UN Undersecretary General and Executive Secretary of the Convention to Combat Desertification. The ECO Deputy Secretary General highlighted the priorities of the ECO Region on combating land degradation and desertification. Moreover, the environmental profile of ECO Member States also came under limelight.

The ECO Deputy Secretary General emphasized the significance of overcoming land degradation by highlighting economic and ecological consequences of the issue.

He also called for international community to step up efforts address land degradation in ECO countries and beyond. Dr. Bicakli encouraged participants to contribute and cooperate with the ECO particularly in its flagship project "ECO LANDCARE PROGRAM".

The Deputy Secretary General reiterated that ECO had always been committed to raise awareness among people and launch programmes to achieve the targets under the SDGs and would invariably be ready


and receptive to conduct joint activities in mandated areas of cooperation with the neighboring nations, interested countries and partner regional/international organizations.



On behalf of the ECO Secretariat, the Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, participated in the high level segment of 15th

Sari-ECO Tourism Capital for 2022



 Sari, the capital city of the Mazandaran Province of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was declared as ECO Tourism Capital for 2022. The occasion, organized on May 10, 2022, was graced by the presence of the Governor General of the Mazandaran Province, ambassadors and diplomatic community based in Iran, Secretary General of the ECO, and heads of Iranian Tourism Business Associations.

The opportunities to further the ECO cooperation in tourism industry, especially in the post-COVID era, were explored during the event.

The Governor General of the Mazandaran, H.E. Seyed Mahmoud Hosseinipour made a detailed presentation on industrial and transit-transport potential of the Province, noting that the tourism industry that bore diversity of attraction in nature, health, agriculture etc., had got a huge job and investment creation potential. He emphasized that the ECO Member States could benefit from the geographical location of the Province

which possessed three seaports on the shore of the Caspian Sea and well-developed land routes, having strength to serve as the extension of the North-South International Transport Corridor.

Expressing views during the ceremony, the CPR's Chair and Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Iran, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev, recalled aspects of the tourism-related proposals forwarded during the 15th ECO Summit at Ashgabat in November 2021. He appeared confident that the Sari event would oxygenate the ECO's activities in tourism sector. He added that the Fourth Ministerial Meeting on Tourism planned to be convened at Bukhara was expected to adopt an ECO Action Plan with a view to addressing and overcoming the post-pandemic challenges aimed at reviving the regional tourism. Moreover, he briefed on the measures undertaken by the Government of Uzbekistan in tourism sector informing that the 25th Session of the UN World Tourism Organization would be convened at Samarkand in 2023.

The ECO Secretary General, Mr. Khusrav Noziri underscored the importance of tourism that occupied a central place on ECO's agenda. He conveyed the Organization was deeply determined for promoting regional tourism through formulation and implementation of proper policies, strategies, and projects. He considered that the proclamation of Sari as ECO Tourism Capital for 2022 reflected ECO's commitment and it would hold indigenous population to earn better livelihoods.

The Secretary General presented a Certificate to the Governor General of the Mazandaran Province regarding the declaration of Sari as ECO tourism Capital for 2022.

The Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Ezzatollah Zarghami, explained that the core idea behind the ECO Tourism Capital (s) was to encourage the Member States for developing national plans and programs with

the ultimate aim of poverty alleviation in the region. Besides, it was targeted at seeking large-scale attention to nature, religious, health and culture tourism to cushion the overall socioeconomic wellbeing of the region. He believed Sari to be the right choice for ECO Tourism Capital since the city was regarded as the symbol of whole Iranian land. He also underlined the importance of Road Tourism considering the linkages amongst the ECO Member States.

During their visit to Sari, the delegates attended the opening



session of exhibition on commercial, agricultural, fisheries, mining, handicrafts, cultural heritage and tourist attractions of the Mazandaran province. They also visited Dashte Naz farming Company to familiarize with agro tourism potential of the area.

The delegations were also taken to the various tourist sites of the province for their exposure and ecstasy.



Sari Hosts 264th CPR Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE The 264th Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held in Sari, Iran on May 10, 2022, followed by declaration of Sari as ECO Tourism Capital for 2022.

Chairing the meeting, the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev extended warm gratitude to the city's administration for hosting this important ECO meeting. He expressed confidence that the

Sari event would boost the activities in tourism sector.

Ambassador Khusrav Noziri also extended felicitations to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sari authorities for excellent arrangements and warm hospitality to host the CPR Meeting and organizing this subsequent gathering for declaring Sari as the ECO Tourism Capital for the year 2022.

Under its formal agenda, the CPR discussed a wide range of issues related to the follow-up of the outcomes of the 15th ECO Summit and 25th COM, some forthcoming events and issues concerning the ongoing and future activities of the Organization.



ECO Secretary General Meets Governor General of Mazandaran

ECO CHRONICLE During his visit to Sari, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri held a brief meeting with the Governor General of the Mazandaran Province, H.E. Mr. Seyed Mahmoud Hosseinipour, on May 11, 2022.

While welcoming the Secretary General to the Mazandaran Province, the Governor General expressed gratitude to the Organization for proclaiming Sari as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2022. He considered it to be an excellent opportunity




for expanding tourism cooperation between Iran and other ECO Member States.

The ECO Secretary General pointed out that the cooperation in the area of tourism as a first-rate priority of the Organisation as set out in the ECO Vision 2025.

He added that the Organization was determined to promote regional tourism through via facilitating formulation of tourism-friendly policies.


ECO Secretary General Attends Iran-Kyrgyz Bilateral Event



 At the invitation of the Kyrgyz Ambassador to Iran, the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri attended a ceremony to mark the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kyrgyz Republic.

The event was organized at the ECO Cultural Institute on May 15, 2022.

The ECO Secretary General underlined the importance of the event. He stated that both countries had membership in the ECO and the Organisation considered them highly valued members for realization of its aims and objects. He encouraged other ECO Member States to consider observing such celebrations that, he believed, could pave the way for enhanced multilateral activism in the region.

 The Third General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO) was hosted by the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku on May 16-18, 2022.

The event was organized under the Chairpersonship of Speaker of the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan, Her Excellency Prof. Dr. Sahiba Gafarova. The Heads/Deputy Heads of Parliaments of the ECO Member States, including Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Uzbekistan, as well as the ECO Secretary General participated in the Conference.

In her inaugural remarks, Dr. Sahiba Gafarova extended sincere gratitude to the delegates and welcomed them to the magnificent city of Baku. Assuming the presidency of the PAECO, she noted that more dedication and strong efforts were needed to make the forum institutionalized with extended ownership/partnership on part of all ECO Member States. She believed that by doing so, the relevancy and effectiveness of the PAECO would increase to support the ECO, which was based on the mutual interest and joint socio-economic development of the Member States. She added that the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan was more than enthusiastic and determined to contribute towards transforming the PAECO into a successful model of regional parliamentary diplomacy.

She said that although the world had begun to recover from the horrible consequences of Covid-19, return to normalcy would take some time.

The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri, extended felicitations to the Speaker of the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan Her Excellency Dr. Sahiba Gafarova, for organizing the Third PAECO Conference.

In his statement, he highlighted the

Third PAECO General Conference

increasing role of the parliaments in the regional and international relations. He underlined the establishment of the PAECO as one of the most remarkable developments in the history of the Organisation. Regarding working during the pandemic conditions, the Secretary General briefed the forum on the ECO's prioritized activities to ensure maximum trade and connectivity, torching on some specific initiatives on trade promotion, liberation and facilitation. He also mentioned the under-consideration proposals for the establishment of a Regional Payment System, ECO Clearing Union, ECO Clean Energy Center, ECO Regional Electricity Market, ECO Tourism Action Plan, and Regional Consultation Mechanism for Technical Cooperation on Communicable Diseases, especially COVID-19, Regional Capacity on Intra-Regional Trade of Pharmaceuticals, and ECO Regional Program for Food and Security.

"The post-pandemic economic recovery is linked to an enlarged and scaled-up cooperation amongst the Member States. In order to bring trade volume to pre-pandemic level, collaboration is needed. The role of the ECO parliaments is quite significant to conclude ECO Legal Frameworks. The operationalization of the PAECO is prerequisite to realize aims and objects of the ECO", said Secretary General.

The event featured discussions on several important issues including the matters of the PAECO Secretariat and the PAECO Rules of Procedure of the Committees. In exclusive meetings, the



committees on Trade & ECOTA, Communication and Connectivity, Women, Youth and Cultural Affairs mulled over the possibilities for maximizing regional cooperation to determine the challenges and opportunities for smooth recovery in the post-pandemic period. A Baku Declaration was also adopted by the PAECO's General Conference to support the ECO's broad objectives, making emphasis on the need of strong, cohesive and joint targeted actions to recover from the COVID consequences. The document, inter alia, highlighted the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation for realization of the UN 2030 Global Agenda of Sustainable Development. Earlier in the day before the Conference, the delegates were taken to the tomb of the National Leader of Azerbaijan for wreath-laying ceremony.

During the conference, the Islamic Republic of Iran announced to host the 4th General Conference of PAECO in 2023.

ECO Secretary General Meets Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan



ECO CHRONICLE Ambassador Khusrav Noziri visited the Republic of Azerbaijan to attend the Third General Conference of the ECO Parliamentary Assembly (PAECO) held in Baku on May 16-18, 2022.

During visit, the ECO Secretary General called on the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The Foreign Minister welcomed Ambassador Noziri, recalling their interaction on the sidelines of Second Antalya Diplomatic Forum in March, 2022. He considered holding General Conference a step forward towards ECO parliamentary partnership.

Moreover, he mentioned that there was a strong need to enhance cooperative relations

in priority areas such as regional connectivity that, he believed, was the pre-requisite to materialize the efforts for socio-economic development of the region. To this end, he commended the initiative of the Republic of Uzbekistan for proclaiming 2022 as "Year of Strengthening Connectivity". Moreover, he underscored the importance of ECO Research Center that could play an effective role in multiple ways. He also welcomed the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center in Baku.

The ECO Secretary General appreciated the Foreign Minister for hospitality and congratulated for successfully organizing the Third General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO (PAECO). While touching upon the significance of parliamentary diplomacy, the Secretary General shed light on activities of the ECO particularly in area of trade and connectivity. He shared the perspective that well-developed transport infrastructure of Azerbaijan and its corridors possessed huge potential to function as a Transit Station in the region.

Reiterating his pleasure over the establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Center, he mentioned that an under-consideration ECO Electricity Market, once established, would steer the ECO to an advanced level of regional cooperation on energy. Moreover, he reassured ECO's desire and commitment to jointly work for supporting the rehabilitation and development process in the Azerbaijan's recently liberated territories.

ECO Secretary General Meets Speaker of Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan

ECO CHRONICLE While visiting Baku to attend the Third General Conference of the ECO Parliamentary Assembly (PAECO) on May 16-19, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri called on the Speaker of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Her Excellency Dr. Sahiba Gafarova. During the interaction, the ECO Secretary General congratulated the Honorable Speaker for hosting and organizing the Third General Conference of the PAECO.

He emphasized the significance of regional parliamentary cooperation, underlining that, once fully operationalised, the PAECO could become a difference-making forum to push and facilitate the ECO's regional development agenda. He recalled that the Second PAECO event in Islamabad focused on the necessity of enhanced regional connectivity that was believed to be a prerequisite for increasing intra-regional trade. He expressed confidence that the Third PAECO event would take the Organization to further advancement and an elevated level of cooperation, making the region more integrated than ever before.

He also noted that the PAECO's Charter came into force in June 2021 after deposition of the fourth instrument of ratification by Azerbaijan, stating that the remaining Member States were also being encouraged for joining, signing and ratifying the PAECO Charter.

The Honourable Speaker acknowledged that the role of the ECO was crucial for economic cooperation in the region. Noting the importance of the PAECO as a key ECO body



to institutionalize ties amongst the regional parliaments, she expressed desire for the fortification of this regional parliamentary network. She assured that the Milli Majlis of Azerbaijan was completely determined to collaborate with the parliaments of the region with a view to securing every aim and objective enshrined in the PAECO Charter. She also expressed concerns over the lack of complimentaries amongst the ECO Member States that apparently seemed to hamper progress in the region.

She also looked forward to an increased collaboration between the ECO and the PAECO Secretariats, believing that this would create a synergic approach to serve the interests of the ECO region.



ECO-TDB President Visits ECO Headquarters

ECO CHRONICLE On May 22, 2022 the Secretary General Economic Cooperation Organisation, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, while welcoming the President of the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB), Mr. Yalcin Yuksel, appreciated the Bank and its management for financing ECO Projects.

The Secretary General shared the initiative taken by the ECO Secretariat to pursue the mandate given to the Organizations by the 15th ECO Summit. He further invited the Bank to contribute towards various initiatives of the Secretariat for implementation of regional projects, in collaboration

with international partners like the ADB, the IsDB, and the UNIDO, etc.

The President of the ETDB gave detailed briefing about mandate of the Bank, its role and the activities being undertaken for regional development. The President of the Bank acknowledged the significance of cooperation between regional and international organizations with a focus on financing bankable projects for infrastructure development in the ECO region. He highlighted that the ECO region had been through a difficult time due to pandemic conditions and was putting efforts to tackle its repercussion.

Both sides discussed cooperation in the priority sectors like trade & investment and transport & connectivity to meet the targets set for intra-regional trade and contribution to global economic growth through mutual assistance in projects and feasibility studies.



ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers Brainstorming Session

ECO CHRONICLE A two-day Brainstorming Session on ECO reform process commenced on May 23, 2022 at the ECO Secretariat Tehran.

The event was chaired by the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Mr. Furkat Sidikov. Deputies Foreign Minister and Representatives of the ECO Member States also attended the Session. The high-level gathering, inaugurated by the ECO Secretary General, Mr. Khusrav Noziri, covered an opening and two working rounds.

The Session, recommended by

the 32nd Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) in January 2022, was aimed at mulling over some specific issues especially intensifying the level of cooperation in post-pandemic period. The first day of the interaction featured discussions on the issues of regional trade and connectivity as well as considered the problems that appeared to hamper smooth implementation of some fundamental agreements, particularly ECOTA and TTFA.

The Brainstorming Session would conclude its last round of discussion on May 24, 2022, expecting deliberations on various important issues including the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization, ECO Specialized Agencies, development of coordination mechanism for financing and implementing ECO Projects.

ECO

Secretary General Meets Deputy Foreign Minister of Türkiye

 On the May 23, 2022, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Mr. Faruk Kaymakci, who was in Tehran to attend the Brainstorming Session on the ECO Reform Process.

The Deputy Foreign Minister acknowledged the role of the ECO in socioeconomic development of the Region and re-affirming Türkiye's continued support the ECO and activities undertaken under its framework.

The Secretary General briefed the visiting dignitary about the affairs of the Organization.

He stated the Brainstorming Session was meant to gather high-level representatives of the Member States to consider various issues and figure out possible ways to address challenges hampering regional cooperation.

He commended Türkiye for its continued support in pursuit of aims and objects of the ECO.



ECO

Secretary General Meets Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan



ECO CHRONICLE Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, met the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, H.E. Mr. Furkat Sidikov, on the sidelines of the Brainstorming Session held at ECO Headquarters, Tehran.

The ECO Secretary General updated the Deputy Minister on notable achievements of the Organization especially in the area of trade, transport and energy. He mentioned that the major object behind convening

Brainstorming Session was to shed light on challenges affecting regional cooperation. He praised the Uzbekistan for its active role in the in the ECO during its Chairmanship.

The visiting dignitary mentioned that the cooperation among ECO Member States was essential for socio-economic development of the region. He said that Uzbekistan was ready and open to receive proposals that could result in prosperity and development in the region.

ECO

Secretary General Meets Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan



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Within the framework of the Brainstorming Session, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Deputy Minister of

Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Vepa Hajiyev.

During the meeting, the ECO Secretary General and the Deputy Foreign Minister exchanged views on a variety of issues concerning the agenda of the Organization as well as the measures to implement decisions taken during the 15th ECO Summit and the 25th Meeting of the Council of

Ministers (COM), held in November last year at Ashgabat.

The two sides also took into account the upcoming events including Ministerial Transport

Conference for Landlocked Countries scheduled to be held in August in Ashgabat. Special emphasis was paid to the implementation of economic agenda of the Organization, focusing on further development of regional transport and communication network for enhanced regional connectivity that was essential for an overall economic growth in the region.





ECO

Secretary General Meets Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan



of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Adil Tursunov at ECO Headquarters in Tehran.

The Deputy Foreign Minister stressed the importance of regional connectivity

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The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

between the ECO Member States to explore opportunities and address challenges in important areas of activities.

The ECO Secretary General mentioned the aims of the Session were to remove all impediments affecting socio-economic development of the region.



ECO Attends

78th Session of UNESCAP

ECO CHRONICLE Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, the Secretary General of the ECO, participated in the 78th Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) held in a hybrid format on May 25, 2022.

This year the Session was organized under the theme of "A common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific".

Ambassador Noziri highlighted the growing importance of regional and international organizations especially in the wake of Covid-19 and in achieving the targets set under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He particularly underlined the importance of complimentary role of the sub-regional organizations in achieving a secure and sustainable future for the Asia-Pacific region.

He further emphasized on more productive relations between the ECO and ESCAP towards realization of mutual goals. In view of the recent MoU concluded between ECO and ESCAP, the Secretary General invited the ESCAP for a long-term strategic partnership in the joint socio-economic and infrastructure development projects in the ECO region.

While making opening remarks, the



Executive Secretary of ESCAP, H.E. Dr. Armida Salsiah, welcomed the participants and stated that ESCAP had recently enhanced its cooperation with regional organizations, including the ECO, in Asia and the Pacific. She also mentioned the impediments confronting the region in achieving SDGs in post-Covid world.

The Session was also attended by H.E. Mr. Ersala Ruwan Weerakoon, Secretary General of SAARC, H.E. Mr. Zhang Ming, and Secretary General of SCO, H.E. Mr. Mikhail Myasnikov, Chairman, Eurasian Economic Commission, and H. E. Mr. Tenzin Lekphell, Secretary General of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The representatives from other regional organizations also marked the attendance.



ECO Secretary General Meets UNFPA Representative

ECO CHRONICLE On May 26, 2022, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri had a bilateral meeting with the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Iran, Mr. Sathya Doraiswamy, at ECO Headquarters in Terhan.

The visiting dignitary, while summarizing the targets of the UNFPA for sustainable development and human resources and expressed his keenness to develop an ECO-UNFPA partnership.

Ambassador Noziri noted the significance of the role and contribution of the UNFPA for assisting various regions in their efforts to actualize sustainable development. Briefing the UNFPA's Representative



about functioning of the ECO, the Secretary General underlined the diversity of cooperation in the ECO particularly in the areas of trade & connectivity, human resource and sustainable development as well as energy sector.

He reciprocated, with thanks, the offer to establish ECO-UNFPA's working relationship that, he believed, would serve the ECO's project-oriented approach, mainly to support small and medium-size development in the region.



Iran & 30-year-old BSEC: Prospects for Cooperation

ECO CHRONICLE The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in an international conference held on May 30, 2022 in Tehran under the title of "Iran & the 30- year-old BSEC: Prospects for Cooperation". The conference was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran in collaboration with the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

The conference was attended by over 100 high-level dignitaries from Iran, international organizations as well as UN bodies. H.E. Mr. Mahdi Safari, Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy, H.E. Mr. Stefan Priesner, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Iran, and H.E. Mr. Lazar Comansecu, Secretary General of BSEC also attended the event. The Conference recognized the significance of pragmatic approaches for enhanced regional cooperation in Asia and Europe.

During the inaugural session of the Conference, the ECO Secretary General appreciated organizers for providing an opportunity to the relevant stakeholders for exchanging views to meet the challenges of the contemporary world and highlighted the importance of close cooperation for realization of the Sustainable Development Goals especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. H.E. Noziri



specifically mentioned activities and projects of the Organization in the field of transport. He further maintained that there was need to establish linkages among the ECO and the BSEC for promoting regional cooperation in the fields of mutual interests.



Towards the end of the conference, two special sessions were dedicated to enhance regional connectivity and public-private partnership, where the participants exchanged views and shared experiences for enhanced cooperation in the wake of emerging regional scenario.



ECO Secretary General Receives BSEC Secretary General

ECO CHRONICLE The Secretary General of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), H.E. Mr. Lazar Comansecu, visited the ECO Secretariat on May 30, 2022. The ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri welcomed the Secretary General of BSEC at the ECO Secretariat.

During the meeting, the Secretaries General discussed issues of mutual interests and focused on options to develop cooperation between the two organizations and emphasized the significance of mutual cooperation between the ECO and BSEC in order to materialize the shared goals of the two organizations.

While mentioning the project-oriented and result-based approach of the ECO, the Secretary General briefed the visiting dignitary about the targeted activities and working of the Organisation.

"The ECO attaches immense importance to its relations with its external partners", said Ambassador Noziri.

The Secretary General of BSEC expressed keen interest in the activities and projects of the ECO and conveyed willingness to establish formal relations between BSEC and the ECO. Both sides agreed to initiate the process for developing cooperative relations for the realization of common goals and objectives.

17th ECO Project Monitoring Group (PMG) Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE The 17th meeting of the ECO Project Monitoring Group (PMG), chaired by ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, was held at the ECO Secretariat on May 31, 2022.

The meeting discussed the status of projects and fresh proposals. The ECO



Secretary General stressed the need for equitable projects distribution among the six core areas of ECO activities. The Secretariat briefed the PMG about the ongoing ECO projects and deliberated on the ways to improve effectiveness of projects.

The Project Monitoring Group agreed on timely implementation of projects in close interaction with the member-states, various institutions, and structures of the Economic Cooperation Organization.



ECO Secretary General Meets ECO Cultural Institute President



During the meeting, the ECO Secretary General assured the President of full support to the ECI.

Ambassador Khusrav NOZIRI informed the ECI President that the ECO Secretariat was in a process to frame new networking mechanism between the ECO Secretariat and its Specialized Agencies including the ECI for better coordination of the activities of these agencies.

ECO CHRONICLE The Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ambassador Khusrav NOZIRI, met the newly-appointed President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), H.E. Mr. Murodjon Buriboev, on May 31, 2022 at the ECO Secretariat Tehran.

Mr. Murodjon Buriboev appreciated the ECO Secretary General for supporting the Cultural Institute and assured the Secretary General of ECI's commitment to promote cooperation in broadening the scope of cultural projects in the region.

International Conference on Cultural Heritage of Iran and Central Asia

ECO CHRONICLE Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in the International Conference entitled "Iran and Central Asia in the Mirror of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Mongol and Ilkhanid Era alongside of the Silk Road", organized by the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) of Iran on June 1, 2022.

Ambassador Khusrav Noziri expressed gratitude to the organizers for taking this initiative for promoting culture, customs, art, and literature.

The ECO Secretary General reiterated the commitment of the ECO to support Member States in achieving sustainable socio-economic development as well as to enhance visibility of shared regional culture and preservation of the cultural heritage alongside of the Silk Road.

Among other prominent participants were Dr. Muhammad Hassan Shaykh al-Islami, President of IPIS; Ms. Rosanna Giannandre, Officer-in-Charge of UNESCO Cluster office in Tehran, the representatives of international organizations, scholars and researchers.





International Conference on International Decade for Action —— Water —— for Sustainable Development



At the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and in accordance with the ECO Calendar of Events for 2022, the Secretary General of Economic Cooperation Organization Ambassador Khusrav Noziri visited Dushanbe to participate in the Second International High-Level Conference on International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 held on June 6-9, 2022. He was accompanied by Director for Energy, Minerals and

Environment, Mr. Rovshan Mirzayev. The gist of his visit and participation in the international event as well as some sideline activities is as follows.

Regional Water Cooperation Forum in Central Asia

On June 6, the Secretary General attended the Regional Water Cooperation Forum in Central Asia jointly organized by the World



Bank Group and the International Fund for Saving Aral Sea. The Forum provided the participants an opportunity to make thorough exchange of views, discuss and demonstrate their exposures on water coordination efforts in Central Asia and the related activities undertaken to promote interactions with the representatives of the national governments and international community. Speakers urged for strengthening cooperation and increasing awareness on water issues in Central Asia through enhanced partnership and global consolidation to address problems across-the-board covering the core issues and aspects of water management.

Second High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028"

On June 7, the Secretary General took part in the Opening Session of the Second High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028

hosted by the Republic of Tajikistan in collaboration with the United Nations and other international partners. The Conference was aimed at considering and ascertaining the roles of national governments, UN and its agencies, other international, regional, and local stakeholders for accelerating water actions and partnerships to contribute to the implementation of the relevant targets set forth in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change etc.

H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan inaugurated the event. In his inaugural remarks, the honourable President stressed the importance of water resources for achieving sustainable development and the ongoing impact of various water-related challenges. In this context, the President outlined the global situation and developing trends, as well as Tajikistan's efforts to highlight, attract and ensure global consideration of voluminous water problems in the regional and global agendas.

While illuminating their endeavours for the implementation of some relevant initiatives, including the International Year of Clean Water, 2003, the International Decade for

Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015 and the international Year of Water Cooperation, 2013, he conveyed that these initiatives have facilitated the active global cooperation in the management of water resources, implementation of projects as well as execution of modern technologies and innovations in the water sector. Talking about Tajikistan's latest initiative i.e. the international Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", the honourable President expressed thanks over the extensive international cooperation and the expansion of partnership in the given framework, believing that such approaches and postures to achieving the envisioned targets in water resources and sanitation would, no doubt, meet sane aim with our joint actions and determination.

The Second Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference was also to serve as a platform for soliciting and consolidating inputs to facilitate the UN 2023 Water Conference to be held in New York under co-chairmanship of the Republic of Tajikistan and Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Statement of the ECO Secretary General at the Plenary Session of the Conference entitled: Catalyzing Water Action and Partnership at the local, national, regional and global levels

The Secretary General highlighted the ambitions and aspirations of the ECO Member States for enhancing water cooperation as one of pre-requisites to secure sustainable socioeconomic development in the region. He conveyed ECO's desire and keenness to closely collaborate with regional and international organizations as well as other stakeholders on water related areas. Noting the climate change as an overwhelming factor that appears to significantly contribute to water crisis, the Secretary General particularly

emphasized on the significance of the initiative of President Emomali Rahmon put forward during the 15th ECO Summit regarding the declaration of 2025 as the International Year for Preservation of Glaciers, and to establish an International Glacier Protection Fund.

Considering the initiative very important, the Secretary General believed that it could be one of triggering points for addressing and contributing in tackling one of the climate



change facets on global water challenges. The Plenary Sessions continued with thematic panel discussions on water implications in different areas.

Bilateral Meetings

In the margins of the Dushanbe Water Conference, the ECO Secretary General Mr. Khusrav Noziri held a meeting with Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana, Secretary General of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) on June 6. The bilateral interaction, inter alia, explored the possibility of ECO and ACD cooperation

in the areas of mutual interests, giving special focus to the areas of trade, transport as well as water-food-energy nexus.

The two sides agreed on the experts' level follow-up of their discussions.

On June 7, the Secretary General met with Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius, the EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries. Mr. Virginijus underscored the trade and economy as very important sectors



for development. He noted that the war in Ukraine has affected the ECO and other regions, talking about the countries that are seen most impacted as well as resilient ones.

The Secretary General also emphasized the importance of trade, stating that it is one of the priority areas on ECO agenda with its unexploited potential to be exploited. Regarding the war in Ukraine, he said that ECO is, of course, one of impacted regions particularly in the area of food security. He expressed ECO's desire and optimism for

early resolution of the conflict through diplomatic ways and means.

The interaction also took into account the connectivity issue in reference to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the prospects of assistance that ECO may render to this end. Additionally, the EU Commissioner asked about the connectivity possibilities with participation of Afghanistan. In this context, the Secretary General illuminated the status of ECO current projects in transit transport which are aimed at providing access to the Central Asian countries and Afghanistan through Iran to the Persian Gulf for their entry into the sea and ocean waters in particular consideration of their land-locked positions. He continued that given the economic nature of the ECO, the Organization is bound to only promote conditions for sustainable socioeconomic development of its Member States with no political agenda.

Moreover, the Secretary General expounded the untapped economic resources of the region and briefed on ECO activities in trade, transport and energy sectors. He also proposed an ECO-EU collaborative partnership in the areas of common interest through joint implementation of regional projects. Relevantly, the Secretary General cited some MoUs that ECO maintains with its global partners, as well as the Organization's status of observer-ship in several international organizations.

During the discussions, the EU Commissioner noted the significance of the recent visit of President of Tajikistan to Iran that he considered quite encouraging for creating more conducive and supportive working conditions in the region. The Secretary General acknowledged the importance of such bilateral interactions between the ECO Member Countries, adding that this would serve to the overall interest and agenda of the ECO. Both sides agreed on the follow-up of their

meeting at experts' level to materialize the possible aspects of ECO-EU cooperation.

On June 7, the Secretary General also met with Mr. Zhang Ming, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The two sides reaffirmed the commitment and interest for further strengthening their relations, recalling that most of the ECO-SCO countries enjoy concurrent memberships of the two organizations. During the meeting, trade and transport were especially pinpointed as possible areas of cooperation within the ECO-SCO inter-regional frameworks. In addition, the likelihood to expand the scope of existing MoU, signed between the ECO and SCO some ten years back, was also explored, with a view to amplifying the prospects of their future partnership. Besides, the two sides exchanged invitations for their reciprocal visits to make further deliberations for the continuity and enlargement of cooperative engagements between the two organizations.

On June 8, the Secretary General called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin and discussed various aspects of cooperation within the ECO's cooperative framework. The honourable Minister underscored that Tajikistan enjoys cordial and friendly relations with all ECO Member States, expressing deep optimism for an early settlement of some border issues with the adjacent Kyrgyz Republic.

Commending the role of Tajikistan to promote regional cooperation and multilateral activism, the Secretary General briefed the Foreign Minister on the outcomes of the recently held Brainstorming Session of ECO Deputies Foreign Minister and High-Level Representatives, emphasizing that the recommendations and conclusions made by the Session are quite important to help meet the Organization's envisioned targets, making it more effective, efficient and visible. The Secretary General stressed that the

Member States were required to consider an expeditious execution of their signed/ratified frameworks of regional cooperation, establishing feasible mechanisms for making accelerated progress in some priority areas, including trade, transport, energy, agriculture, etc. In this context, he referred a few notable projects, looking forward to a more expanded role of Tajikistan to help ensure prompt operationalization / implementation of the region's transit



transport corridors, ECO Regional Electricity Market, ECO Clean Energy Center, as well as ECO Trade Agreement.

The honourable Foreign Minister reassured Tajikistan's continued support and facilitation to ECO's agenda of shared progress, prosperity and collective socioeconomic development in the region.

On June 8, the Secretary General also met with Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Under- Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs. The



intent behind this interaction was primarily to re-visit and assess the ECO relations with the UN and its specialized bodies, as well as ascertain some fresh ways and means of ECO-UN collaborative engagements to fuel their activities for an expeditious accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

While acknowledging the significance of ECO-UN current partnership, the Secretary General stressed that there was a need to enhance the existing level of their cooperative activities, particularly, to support important regional projects in the areas of trade & connectivity, energy, environment, human resources & sustainable development etc. Moreover, he stood poised to offer ECO's complete cooperation to the UN agenda for global development, as well as contribution to the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York to be co-chaired by Tajikistan and Netherlands. The Secretary General looked forward to strengthening ties with relevant UN agencies and establishing a workable dialogue mechanism, especially aimed at developing ECO's skills and expertise as well as acquiring technical and financial assistance for the overall wellbeing of the region.

The UN Under-Secretary General reciprocated the supportive approach of the ECO Secretary General concerning an enhanced collaboration between the two sides. He underscored and commended ECO's role for the continued promotion of UN SDGs in its Member States, as well as effective advocacy for other regional and global initiatives. He opined that ECO might increase its efforts to reinforce cooperation with UN Specialized Agencies, in order to make more result-oriented activities to be in line with the both sides' aspirations. They agreed to re-join each other and continue discussion on the next UNGA's sidelines in September this year.

On June 9, the Secretary General held a meeting with the Vice-President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Mr. Shixin Chen. During the interaction, the importance of ECO-ADB collaboration as well as potential aspects of their nexus were thought over based on the two sides' mutual interest. Within the concept of their cooperative framework, they also discussed the joint implementation of regional projects in ECO's prioritized areas, giving particular attention to the expanded trade and connectivity as well as development of

some other essential sectors, including renewable energy, agriculture, tourism, human resources, disaster risk reduction etc. In this regard, the Secretary General proposed the possibility of signing MoU as an effective mean for enhancing and energizing the ECO-ADB working partnership.

Valuing the proposal put forward by ECO Secretary General, the President expressed his interest and ADB's openness to enter into a comprehensive dialogue process, adding that most of the ECO Member Countries meet the criteria given in the framework of ADB's Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC) that envisages many identical areas for interactive activities in the region. To this end, he suggested mutual participation of ADB-ECO Representatives in High-Level and Experts Group Meetings that may jointly be organized by the two sides to mull over a cooperative mechanism, leading to the prospects for MoU. The two sides agreed to nominate their focal points for further coordination in the matter.

Interview to the International Media

During the visit, the Secretary General was also interviewed by international media persons. Talking to the newsmen, he underscored the unavoidability of water for human life and survival, expressing concerns over the growing global water issues. He conveyed that protection of environment, sustainable use of natural recourses and tackling with the challenges of climate change are on top of ECO's environment cooperation agenda. He added that ECO is building partnerships to roll out an integrated response to these challenges, and to make swift progress at regional level.

In his interview, the Secretary General highlighted that their cooperation on UN

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) appears to make ECO nations more adjacent to each other for the continued promotion of their common objectives to create conducive and maintainable conditions aimed at securing shared progress and prosperity through enhanced regional and international cooperation. He expressed ECO's eagerness to work closely with other regional and international organizations as well as stakeholders on water related issues, adding that the Dushanbe Water Conference



provides an opportunity to reflect our determination and commitment for achieving wider water security, particularly to renew our inspiration, passion and ideas to meet the water challenges of the 21st century. The Secretary General emphasized that one of the ECO's priorities ahead is to build resilience through better management of water resources. He concluded with affirmation to continue supporting Member States in addressing their water security challenges.

UNOSSC and ECO Hold Online Meeting

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The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) Division for Arab States, Europe and the Commonwealth of independent States, held a videoconference on June 8, 2022.

The meeting was primarily arranged to brief the UNOSSC Representatives on functioning of the ECO and facilitate preparing the regional report on



South-South/East-East and Triangular Cooperation to be published by the UNOSSC in 2022.

The UNOSSC assured that the intended report would be prepared by the end of this year based on

the inputs expected from the ECO Secretariat by end of the current month. Moreover, the two sides appeared firmly ready to continue such joint interactions for securing their developmental goals.



ECO Secretary General Meets

UN Undersecretary General



Ambassador Khusrav Noziri met H.E. Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Undersecretary General for Economic and Social Affairs. The ECO Secretary General illustrated ECO-UN partnership and stressed out importance of enhancing it in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ambassador Noziri proposed ECO-UN cooperation in fields of mutual interests. Furthermore, he added possibility of ECO collaboration towards UN Water Conference to be

organized by the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of Netherlands in 2023.

The UN Undersecretary General appreciated the strong desire of the ECO to deepen ECO-UN relations. Additionally, Mr. Zhenmin emphasized significance of the ECO to promote the SDGs in the region.

The two sides agreed to continue dialogue during the upcoming UN General Assembly week to be held in New-York in September 2022.



Tajik Foreign Minister Receives ECO Secretary General



ECO CHRONICLE On June 8, 2022, during his bilateral visit, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Sirojiddin Muhridin.

The ECO Secretary General congratulated the Minister for successful organization of Second Dushanbe Water Conference and

expressed gratitude for extending invitation to the Economic Cooperation Organization to take part in the event.

The ECO Secretary General stated that the conference was a clear token that the Republic of Tajikistan as one of the valuable members of Economic Cooperation Organization, attached great importance to international and regional development through cooperation and partnership in the area of sustainable water use.

While discussing the outcomes of recently-held ECO Brainstorming Meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers, Ambassador Noziri acknowledged the contributions of ECO Member States. He also appreciated the Tajik Republic for implementation of agreements signed and ratified within the ECO Framework.

The ECO Secretary General shed light on important ECO projects in the fields of trade, transport, and energy and invited Tajikistan to play a meaningful role in implementation of transit corridors, ECO Regional Electricity Project, ECO Clean Energy Center, and ECO Trade Agreement.

The Minister of Foreign Minister of Tajikistan reaffirmed his country's continued support to the ECO and reiterated readiness to extend all necessary assistance to achieve set targets in priority areas of cooperation. The Minister noted that the prevailing friendly relations among ECO Member States would provide an impetus to regional cooperation.



ECO Secretary General on Outcomes of Dushanbe Water Conference

ECO-ADB Cooperation

ECO CHRONICLE On June 09, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, ECO Secretary General met ADB Vice President, Mr. Shixin Chen.

The ECO Secretary General deliberated on the expanding visibility of the ECO. Amb. Noziri highlighted that the ECO had signed MoUs with a number of regional and international organizations and we could do the same with the ADB.

ADB Vice President welcomed the proposal of the ECO and expressed interest to launch comprehensive dialogue.


Two sides agreed to appoint focal points further to discuss areas of cooperation.

ECO CHRONICLE During his interview, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri touched upon water as common value. He underlined that protection of environment, sustainable use of natural resources and mitigating the consequences of challenges of climate change, was a top-rate priority of the ECO.

Amb. Noziri highlighted that the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had brought the ECO nations together. "The ECO is very keen to work closely with regional and international organizations and other stakeholders on water related areas", said Secretary General.

He underscored that Dushanbe Water Conference could reflect our commitment to achieve water security. He concluded with affirmation to continue supporting Member States in addressing their water security challenges.

Online Training Course on Big Data Applications on Price Intelligence

 Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in close interaction with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the



Department of Statistics of Malaysia held a training course on "Big Data Applications on Price Intelligence".

The event was held on 14-16 June, 2022 in video conference format. The Training Course lasted for three days. The participants included

the representatives of ECO Member States, specialists from the ASEAN countries, Middle East and Maghreb.

The event covered a wide range of statistical themes, including Price Intelligence Data Acquisition, Data Visualization, Demonstration of PI Visualization using Tableau, Data Generation, Data Management, etc.

The ECO Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador J. Asanov highlighted the importance of well-developed statistical data in creating a broad picture of the current state of the economies of the ECO Member States. "The year 2021 was the landmark for the Economic Cooperation Organization as two summits of Heads of State and Heads Government of the ECO countries were held, which once again demonstrate the renewed interest of the ECO

Member States to increase trade volume and economic cooperation among themselves and this in its turn requires serious attention to statistics and economic research", said Ambassador J. Asanov.

He further expressed deep gratitude to the Statistical, Economic and Social Research Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the Department of Statistics of Malaysia for their commitment and dedication in holding online course and expressed hope for the continuation of such constructive interactions.



In their opening speeches Ms. Jamaliah Jaafar, Senior Director, Core Team Big Data Analytic, Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) and Mr. Fadi Farasin, Assistant Director General of SESRIC, mentioned the challenges in the field of statistics and data collection against the backdrop of unprecedented

expansion of e-commerce and deliberated on various modern tools of statistical information fishing.

It needs to be noted that the ECO Secretariat and the SESRIC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2018, envisaging co-organizing statistical capacity building trainings for the regional countries.





OSCE Asian Conference 2022

ECO CHRONICLE The ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri virtually participated in the OSCE Asian Conference 2022 on "Strengthening Security for All and by All - Synergies and Opportunities for Cooperation between Europe and Asia" organized by the Government of Sweden and OSCE in Vienna, Austria, on June 15, 2022.

Representatives of the 57 OSCE participating States, OSCE Asian Partners for Cooperation, international organizations, academia and the private sector discussed options for strengthening cooperation with a particular focus on the role of women in building confidence, peace and security, and climate related challenges to security.

The ECO Secretary General delivered statement during the second session entitled Climate-related challenges to security and opportunities for cooperation - building on the Stockholm decision.

He highlighted that the climate change was

no longer just a threat but a threat multiplier. "Climate change demands urgent attention and coherent actions for crafting inclusive, sustainable and resilient climate agenda at regional and global levels", said the Secretary General.

He, while highlighting gross inequalities and sheer asymmetries of the global order and their direct and indirect implications on the development especially on developing countries like most ECO Member States, particularly emphasized the importance of provision of development assistance in accordance with the commitments made by the developed world.

He also illustrated the interest of the ECO to engage with international partners and environmental forums for implementation of the UN Climate Change Agenda at different levels to tackle its adverse impacts in ECO Region and to enhance cooperation and coordination in line with the ECO Vision 2025.



ECO Heads of Tourism Associations, Unions and Tourism Stakeholders Meeting

ECO CHRONICLE The First Meeting of ECO Heads of Tourism Associations, Unions and Tourism Stakeholders, was held on June 20, 2022, in virtual format, under the chairmanship of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC).

The event was attended by delegates from the ECO Member States including private stakeholders and members of Tourism Associations from Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan; public representatives from the Ministry of Culture of Turkmenistan also attended the event .

Mr Aftab ur Rehman, Managing Director, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), emphasized role of tourism sector in the socio-economic development and expanding people-to-people contacts.

Ambassador Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General ECO, mentioned that the year 2021 was a milestone in the history of the Organization as two summits of Heads of

State and Heads of Government were held; and at the 15th ECO Summit, the Member States agreed to take swift measures, in line with other regional and global initiatives, to overcome challenges confronting tourism industry in post-Covid scenario. Ambassador Asanov further mentioned that the Chair of the Organization - the Republic of Uzbekistan- declared the year 2022 as "Year of Strengthening Connectivity".

During Tourism Ministerial Meeting in Bukhara in 2022, the Republic of Uzbekistan proposed to adopt a Regional Programme on Developing Safe Tourism in the post-Covid World. The meeting paid special attention to the development of pilgrimage tourism and other joint tourist products, widening of geography of aviation links, and development of tourism infrastructure in the region.

Presentations by the participants on tourism potential and historic sites of the Member-States as well as the activities of tourism organizations in the region were interesting and enriching.



ECO Secretary General Meets Minister of Culture of Azerbaijan

ECO CHRONICLE On June 20, 2022, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri along with the President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), Mr. Murodjon Buriboev, met the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Anar Karimov, at the ECI Headquarters in Tehran.

The ECO Secretary General briefed the Minister about the activities of the ECO Cultural Institute. He stated that ECI had always been a dynamic force in strengthening cultural relations and had fulfilled its mandate to meet the aspiration of the Organization. He further added that in order to realize the goals and objectives, ECI had hosted a series of literary and cultural events, organized exhibitions of folk, traditional and modern arts, held major sports events, and published materials in English and other major languages of the region on the common cultural heritage. The ECI recently hosted an event on the occasion of 30th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Secretary General added.

Ambassador Noziri emphasized that organizing cultural events, exhibitions and musical programs by the ECO Member States would further enlighten the people about norms, traditions and values prevailing in the region. He further noted that since culture was one of the key elements of regional convergence, the ECI could play an instrumental role in creating regional convergence as the region was one of the world's richest in terms of cultural and historical heritage.

The Minister of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, while commending and acknowledging the role of the Institute in bringing people of the region closer, highlighted that the ECO Cultural Institute was a value addition to the ECO. He further assured that the Republic of Azerbaijan would consider joining the Cultural Institute. In this regard, he added that Azerbaijani side would start working with the Institute to obtain necessary information through diplomatic channels.



ECO Secretary General Participates in a Webinar



At the joint invitation of the Iranian Diplomacy Association (IDA) and the School of International Relations (SIR), the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in a Webinar on June 21, 2022.

The ECO Secretary General underlined the importance of trade

and economic diplomacy as an effective channel to secure national and regional development targets. He underscored the significance of economic blocs and their utility to ensure socio-economic development.

He emphasized that the Organization was established primarily to promote and create conducive environment for sustainable socioeconomic development in the region, which was perceived to be materialized through multilateralism.

He summarized the efforts and activities of the ECO for greater regional integration. To this end, he referred some priority areas including trade & connectivity, energy, tourism, food & agriculture, health, disaster risk reduction, etc.

He further highlighted that the regional and global economies nosedived in the wake of the pandemic that depressed socioeconomic progress at all levels. "The ECO Member States experienced economic slowdown throughout the pandemic", he said. The Secretary General also illuminated on a few curative measures taken by the ECO for continuing the work space and resuming socioeconomic activities in the region.



21st ECO Trade Development Bank Annual Meeting



ECO delegation, headed by Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), participated in the Plenary Session of the 21st Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB), held on June 21, 2022, in video conference format.

The ECO Secretary General appreciated the ETDB for financing ECO projects considering the needs of the Member States amidst dire financial situation in post-Covid era. He stated that the ECO Vision-2025 had set the targets of doubling intra-regional trade volume and increasing share of the ECO in global trade, especially through exports by exploiting untapped and untouched resources of the region.

He highlighted that given the petty volume of intra-regional trade and minimal contribution of the ECO in global trade, the implementation of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) would yield significant dividends. He also shared the details of major ECO Projects in the fields of trade, energy and tourism to diversify economies for sustained growth and socio-economic development of half a billion people of the region.

Ambassador Khusrav Noziri enlightened the participants on different initiatives the Secretariat was pursuing with international PARTNERS such as IsDB, UNIDO and UNCTAD, to take existing cooperation to new heights. He invited IsDB to join the Secretariat for efficient translation of these initiatives into bankable projects, in line with the declaration of the 15th ECO Summit, namely 'Ashgabat Consensus for Action', wherein the leaders of ECO entrusted the task to the Secretariat and the Bank for greater collaboration to shoulder more proactively their role in supporting and financing ECO projects, forging cooperative ties with international development partners.



The ETDB was established on August 3, 2005, with its headquarters located at Istanbul, Türkiye and started operations in 2008.

World Drug Day



The Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ) of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted a ceremony on June 26, 2022 to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The event was attended by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi, the Minister of Interior, H.E. Mr. Ahmad Vahidi, the Minister of Education, H.E. Mr. Yousef Nouri, and the Minister of Sports and Youth, H.E. Mr. Hamid Sajadi. The members of diplomatic community and the UN representative based in Iran also marked their attendance at the event.

The ECO, represented by the Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Jandos Asanov, attended the ceremony.

The President underscored the need for cooperation amongst the states to address the issue of illicit drugs and other related challenges. He emphasized that the global law enforcement agencies were required to make concerted efforts based on their increased interactions, coordination and intelligence-sharing to contain and dismantle the organized drug networks.

The Interior Minister underlined the existing requirements of Iran on drugs control. He explained various initiatives of Iran to combat drug trafficking, drug consumption, and drug demand.



The Secretary General of the Drug Control Headquarters, Mr. Momeni noted the significant role of the Non-Government Organizations to support the programs and projects in connection with capacity-building and job creation for drug abusers.

The Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Iran, Mr. Alexander Fedulov delivered statements on behalf of the UN Secretary General and the UNODC Executive Director. He presented a detailed description of the liaison the UNODC with the Government of Iran and the DCHQ in the fields of border management and illicit trafficking, drug prevention, treatment and HIV care, and Alternative Development and Sustainable Livelihoods.

ECO-D8 Secretaries General Meeting



On June 27, 2022, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General of Economic Cooperation Organisation received H.E. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, Secretary General of Developing-8 Organisation of Economic Cooperation (D-8) at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran.

Ambassador Noziri briefed his counterpart about the evolution, expansion, composition, structure and functioning of the Economic Cooperation Organisation. Specialized and Regional bodies of the ECO and Result-based-Project-oriented nature of the work the ECO also came under limelight. Furthermore, it was mentioned to the Secretary General D-8 that the Organisation was aiming at maximizing its sphere of international relations, enhancing its visibility across the region and the world, and intensifying the level of cooperation with its external partners.

At present, ECO pursues 'Open Door Policy' vis-à-vis regional and international organizations; it welcomes partners for observership on the basis of reciprocity.

In connection to the Memorandum of Understanding between ECO and D-8 signed

in 2011, it was agreed to implement the MoU and enhance level of cooperation in mutual areas of interests.

While discussing the commonalities between the two organizations, Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam highlighted that the socio-economic landscape had witnessed massive transformations over the last few decades and especially in the wake of Covid-19; therefore, D-8 was striving to broaden scope of areas of cooperation into the fields of Health, Education and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), among its member states.

As the 265th Council of Permanent Representatives meeting was taking place at the ECO Secretariat, the Secretary General of the D-8 was welcomed as the Special Guest. He briefed the participants about the D-8, its membership, its vision, its future and strategies to materialise that vision.

The dignitary was hopeful to maintain cooperative relations between the ECO and the D-8 and to learn more about the prevailing best practices of the Economic Cooperation Organisation.

ECO Holds 265th CPR Meeting



ECO CHRONICLE The 265th Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held on June 27, 2022 at the ECO Secretariat, under the Chairmanship of the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the ECO, H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev.

H.E. Ambassador Isiaka A. Imam, Secretary General of the D-8 Organisation of Economic Cooperation, during his official

visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, visited the ECO Secretariat and addressed 265th Meeting of the CPR as "Special Guest".

The visiting dignitary briefed the participants about the D-8 and its overall functioning.

Within the Agenda of the meeting, the Council discussed a wide range of issues related to the follow-up of the Brainstorming Session held at the ECO Secretariat in May, 2022, the implementation of the outcomes of the 15th ECO Summit and the 25th Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting, and other issues concerning the activities of the Organization.

Draft Plan of Action on Elimination of Covid-19 Pandemic Consequences Information

ECO CHRONICLE The High Level Expert Group Meeting to finalize the Draft Plan of Action on Elimination of Covid-19 Pandemic Consequences in the Tourism Sector for Facilitating Recovery in the ECO Region was organized virtually on June 28, 2022 under the chairmanship of the ECO Secretariat.



The meeting was attended by the delegates from the ECO Member States, representatives from Tourism Ministries of Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan.

The ECO Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Mr. Jandos Asanov highlighted that 15th Summit of ECO the Member States recommended taking speedy measures, in line with regional and global initiatives, to cope with challenges confronting tourism industry due to outbreak of corona virus. He highlighted the significance of the Draft Plan of Action on Elimination of Covid-19 Pandemic Consequences in the Tourism Sector for Facilitating Recovery in the ECO Region, which was prepared by the Secretariat as a general framework for cooperation in tourism sector amongst the Member States.



Ambassador Asanov further highlighted that the Fourth Meeting of ECO Tourism Ministers was scheduled in Bukhara, Uzbekistan in the last quarter of 2022 and the meeting would discuss initiatives concerning transport, connectivity, marketing, branding, visa facilitation, quality standards, multi-seasonal product development, and public-private partnership and the meeting was expected to adopt the Plan of Action on Elimination of Covid-19 Pandemic Consequences in the Tourism Sector for Facilitating Recovery in the ECO Region.

The meeting discussed the draft para-after-para and agreed to amend the title of the document to Road Map on Facilitating Accelerated Recovery, Safe and Sustainable Development of Tourism after "Covid-19 in the ECO Region, based on content of the document and ongoing recovery process of Covid-19 pandemic.

While discussing human resources and tourism capacity development in the region, the representative of the Republic of Türkiye mentioned that they would consider organizing trainings for ECO Member States.



Sixth Meeting of Heads of National Statistical Offices



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The Sixth Meeting of the Heads of National Statistical Offices of ECO Member States and the Eighth High Level Expert Group Meeting on Statistics was held virtually on June 29, 2022 under the chairmanship of

the Bureau of National Statistics of Agency of Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The event was attended by delegates from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan (Host Country), the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The representatives of the UNICEF, the SECRI, and the UNFPA also participated in the Meeting.

Mr Jasser Zharkinbekov, Deputy Head of Bureau of National Statistics of Agency for Planning and Strategic Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasized the importance of strengthening the statistical capacity among the National Statistical Offices (NSO) of ECO Member States

through exchange of knowledge, expertise and experiences especially on statistics-related tools and methodologies relating to Artificial Intelligence, Big Data mining, System of National Accounts and, in overall, on sustainable improvements of National Statistical Systems (NSS).



The ECO Deputy Secretary General, Ambassador Jandos Asanov highlighted the need for stronger cooperation in statistics amongst ECO Member States as it was highlighted during the 15th ECO Summit in Ashgabat.



The Meeting considered and approved the ECO-FAO project proposal designed to strengthen the capacities of the NSOs in the member countries in the area of crop growth observation statistics.



To give greater impetus to data exchange operations, it was decided that the High Level Expert Group Meetings on Statistics would be convened one or two months prior to the

meeting of the Heads of NSOs - for wider coverage of matters relating to the ECO regional statistics.