



ECO Annual Work Programme 2017

*As developed by 27th Meeting of the
ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)*

WORK PROGRAMME 2017

PARAGRAPH	PROGRAMMES/ACTIVITIES	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN
<u>A. SECTOR: TRADE & INVESTMENT</u>		
Para 1	The Council took note of the postponement of 5 th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (ECO-MM on CFT) due to lack of quorum. The Council proposed that the 5th ECO MM on CFT would be more meaningful and result-oriented if the 7th Meeting of the ECOTA Cooperation Council is held.	
Para 2	The delegation from Iran informed the Council that the 7th Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council in 2016 was postponed twice. The Islamic Republic of Iran informed that it will not hold this meeting in 2017. The Council noted with great concern that not even one meeting of the ECOTA Cooperation Council could be held during 2016. The Secretariat informed that it is obligatory to hold at least two meetings of the ECOTA Cooperation Council in a year. Furthermore, extra-ordinary meeting can also be called to discuss some urgent issues.	
Para 3	The Islamic Republic of Pakistan suggested that the ECO Secretariat may hold extra-ordinary meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council before COM and Summit expected to be held in end of February 2017. The Republic of Turkey supported this proposal. The ECO Secretariat proposed dates of the meeting and informed the Council that the 7th Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council will be held on 23-24 January, 2017 in the Secretariat. The Council also requested the Member States to assure/confirm their participation in the meeting accordingly.	
Para 4	Noting the importance of completing all legal and procedural requirements for implementation of ECOTA, the Council requested the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Tajikistan to complete all legal and procedural requirements including submission of Product Lists and ratification of the Annexes to ECOTA before the 7th Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council to be held on 23-24 January, 2017 to pave the way towards effective implementation of the Agreement. The	

	Republic of Turkey expressed their desire to provide technical cooperation to the Republic of Tajikistan in case of technical difficulties.	
Para 5	The Council took note of the Islamic Republic of Iran's new proposal on implementation of ECOTA, which has already been circulated among the Member States by the ECO Secretariat. The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterated its proposal to amend ECOTA. The proposal circulated by the Islamic Republic of Iran would be discussed in the forthcoming meeting of the ECOTA Cooperation Council.	
Para 6	The Council requested the non-signatory interested Member States to join the ECOTA to fully harness the regional trade potential and enable their business communities to reap the benefits of preferential market access in the region so as to expand intra-regional trade to the desired level. The Council proposed that the non-signatory Member States can attend the ECOTA Cooperation Council Meetings as observers (as per ECOTA Cooperation Council Rules) to orient themselves with the expediency of the preferential trading arrangements under the title of ECOTA.	
Para 7	The Republic of Turkey underlined the importance of implementation of ECOTA in order to benefit the ECO region, where intra-regional trade is far below its potential.	
Para 8	It was recalled that the 4 th Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (MM on CFT) established the Joint Working Group (JWG) to prepare and finalize the ECO Multi-Dimensional Trade and Investment Strategy and Prospects of Establishing a Free Trade Area in the Region. The Secretariat informed the Council that the JWG will now hold a separate meeting. The Council requested that if no Member State volunteers to host the meeting, the Secretariat may hold the meeting alongwith hospitality support from its budget.	
Para 9	The 5 th Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (MM on CFT) and the Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) could not be held in 2016 due to lack of quorum. The Secretariat will announce the dates and venue of the meeting in due course of time.	
Para 10	The Council thanked the Republic of Turkey for hosting the 3 rd Meeting of the ECO Heads of Trade Promotion Organizations (ECO-TPOs) held on May 11, 2016 in Ankara. The Secretariat informed that;	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the Draft Regional Protocol on Organizing Joint Trade Promotional Activities was examined and amended by the participating Member States and it was approved by the ECO-TPOs Meeting. ii. the name of this Meeting has been changed from the Meeting of Heads of ECO Trade Promotion Organizations (ECO-TPOs) to ECO Trade Promotion Organizations Forum (ECO-TPOs) as meeting had to be rescheduled a number of times as the Heads of ECO-TPOs were not available. Now the senior officials can regularly meet for speeding up trade promotional activities in the ECO region. 	
Para 11	It was also highlighted that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan volunteered to host the 4th ECO Trade Promotion Organizations (ECO-TPOs) Forum in Pakistan in 2017. The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to announce the dates and venue for the 4th "ECO Trade Promotion Organizations Forum" at the earliest convenience in 2017.	
Para 12	Regarding the 4th ECO Business Forum, which was scheduled to be held on 23 rd November 2016 in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the delegate from the Republic of Azerbaijan informed that it was postponed because of lack of adequate participation from Private Sectors.	
Para 13	While deliberated the reasons for non-participation, the representative of the ECO-CCI informed the Council that the last ECO Business Forum held in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was funded by ECO Secretariat. He informed that it was done from the project worth US\$ 50,000, which was especially envisaged to hold such events. He informed that if such activities are to be held in future, the ECO Secretariat may earmark US\$ 50,000/- like before. These forums are important to increase participation and interaction amongst Private Sectors and Regional Trade Promotion Organizations and are especially important to increase these activities in the Central Asian States of the ECO.	
Para 14	The delegation from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan supported the proposal of ECO-CCI. The Council decided that for future Business Forums, such support will be provided from a special project which will be developed for this purpose.	
Para 15	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to initiate a two year renewable project	

	worth US\$ 50,000/-, to be provided by the ECO Secretariat from its budget (as was done in the past for the project titled“ expanding intra-regional trade”). This project will be called “Project on Trade Promotion and Strengthening Cooperation amongst the Private Sectors in ECO”.	
Para 16	The Council took note of the postponement of 3 rd ECO Trade Fair in first half of 2016. The delegation from Iran informed the Council that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not hold this event in 2017.	
Para 17	While noting that the 3 rd ECO Trade Fair could not be held in 2016, the Council requested the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) to hold the 3 rd ECO Trade Fair in first half of 2017 instead of 4 th ECO Trade Fair. The Council also requested to convey the exact dates, venue and hospitality details to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience.	
Para 18	While appreciating the information of the ECO Secretariat regarding developments with respect to ECO-ASEAN Joint Business Forum, the Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the ECO-ASEAN Joint Business Forum in first half of 2017 in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat, as the same was announced in 26 th RPC for holding the event in 2016, and the Council also requested to convey the exact date, venue and hospitality details to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience.	
Para 19	The ECO Secretariat intimated the Council about holding the ECO-SAARC Joint Business Forum in the first half of 2017 to be hosted by ECO-CCI, in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as the same was announced in 26 th RPC. The Council expressed its hope to make the event successful through active participation of the ECO Member States. The Council also requested ECO-CCI to convey the exact dates, venue and hospitality details to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience.	
Para 20	The Council recalled the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to allocate dedicated booth for ECO Member States in Expo Pakistan, in the light of decision made in 26 th RPC. The Council further requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to kindly allocate a dedicated booth for ECO in "EXPO Pakistan" in 2017.	
Para 21	The Council appreciated the Republic of Turkey for announcing the Meeting of the Joint Working Group for drafting an ECO Trade Facilitation Agreement in the light of the decisions made in the 4 th Ministerial Meeting, the same were postponed in	

	the past three occasions due to lack of quorum in 2016. The Council welcomed the readiness of the Republic of Turkey to host the event in 2017. The Council called upon the Member States to actively participate in this important meeting. The exact dates, venue and other details of the meeting would be communicated in due course.	
Para 22	The Council thanked and appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for holding the 7 th Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA) alongwith the 3 rd Meeting of the Sub-Committee of Customs Experts (SCOEs) in 2016. The Secretariat highlighted the main decision of the meetings, which witnessed immense success. The delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran also underlined that these meetings were held after 9 years and numerous pending issues were deliberated during these meetings, also attended by international partners like WCO and IRU.	
Para 23	The Council recalled the decision of 26th RPC and requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for holding the 8 th Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA) alongwith the 4 th Meeting of the Sub-Committee of Customs Experts (SCOEs) in 2017. The Council also requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to convey exact dates, venue and hospitality details at the earliest convenience. The Council also requested the Member States to assure/confirm their high level participation in the meeting accordingly.	
Para 24	During the 7 th CHCA and 3 rd SCOEs Meetings held in Tehran, the Republic of Turkey highlighted some grammatical changes in draft text of the Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters. The Turkish delegation informed the Council that text has been processed under procedural formalities. The Council requested the Republic of Turkey to resend their observations on the draft Agreement to the Secretariat at the earliest convenience to get the views of the Member States thereon.	
Para 25	The ECO Secretariat and the delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council about the decisions made in the referred meetings. In the light of decision of the 7 th CHCA and 3 rd SCOEs, the Council was informed that multilateral arrangements may be explored on Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) and multilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) for benefit of the	

	Member States.	
Para 26	While highlighting the importance of agreement on the establishment and operation of the ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank, the Council called upon the ECO Member States to sign the agreement on the establishment and operation of the ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank and the signatory countries (except Iran, Pakistan and Turkey) to ratify the Agreement on the Establishment and Operation of ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank at the earliest convenience. The delegation of the Republic of Turkey emphasized that there is a need for ratification of four Member States so that the Agreement could enter into force. By the ratification of the Agreement by 4 th Member State, Turkish Customs Administration will start to take concrete steps for the establishment of the Data Bank in cooperation with other Member States. The Council requested the Member States concerned to convey to the Secretariat the status of their accession to the agreement accordingly.	
Para 27	The Council requested the Republic of Turkey to ratify the Articles of Agreement of ECO Reinsurance Company at the earliest convenience. With a view to accelerating commercial activities in the region, the Council requested the remaining Member States to consider joining the ECO Reinsurance Company on priority basis.	
Para 28	The Council thanked and appreciated the Republic of Turkey for holding the 14 th General Assembly and 20 th Executive Committee meetings of ECO-CCI alongwith the 6 Specialized Committees, in Ankara on 21-23 December, 2015, in association with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB).	
Para 29	The Council thanked and appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for holding the 21st Executive Committee meetings of ECO-CCI alongwith the 6 Specialized Committees, in Tehran on 14-17 August, 2016, in association with the ICCIMA.	
Para 30	While appreciating the ECO-CCI for enhancing its role through number of steps for strengthening Private Sectors cooperation in the region, the Council thanked the ECO-CCI for holding the Meetings of the ECO-CCI's Specialized Committees, 22nd Executive and 15th General Assembly from 20-23 December, 2016 in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Council also requested the Member States to assure/confirm their participation in the Meeting actively.	
Para 31	Keeping in view the importance of promoting cooperation among the Member	

	States on E-Commerce, the Council appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the 2 nd Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on E-Trade Cooperation, as the same was announced in 26 th RPC. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan conveyed that the date and venue of the meeting will be communicated later through diplomatic channels.	
Para 32	The Council took note that the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan could not announce dates for holding the Meeting on Simplification / Harmonization of Visa Procedure in 2016 for businessmen and drivers and also requested to hold the event in first half of 2017. The Council also requested the Member States which have not signed or ratified the Protocol on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen and Transit Drivers, to do the needful at the earliest convenience, so that the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen may come into effect without further delay. The meeting will also discuss the details on the visa fee structures of the ECO Member States and ECO Visa Stickers for their facilitation.	
Para 33	The Council requested the Member States to ratify the Additional Protocol on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen and Transit Drivers for ECO region so as to implement at the earliest.	
Para 34	The Council requested the Member States to provide details on visa free structure for the businessmen of the ECO Member States, for single/multiple entry to the ECO Secretariat to be placed on the ECO Trade-Net Web Portal.	
Para 35	The Council took note of the postponement of the First Meeting of the Heads of the Commodity Exchange of ECO Member States and requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to host "the First Meeting of the Heads of the Commodity Exchange of ECO Member States" in Tehran in first quarter of 2017.	
Para 36	The Council while thanking the Republic of Turkey for hosting the Seminar on "Risk Based Analysis Management System" on May 24-26, 2016 in Ankara, requested the Member State to volunteer hosting the 2 nd Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration in 2017. The Council decided that if no Member State volunteer to host the Meeting, the Secretariat will hold the Meeting alongwith hospitality support from its budget.	
Para 37	The Council thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for volunteering to host "The First Meeting of ECO Heads of Capital Markets Supervisory Authorities" (HCMSA)	

	during 2016 in Tehran which could not be held due to lack of quorum. The Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that the Meeting would now be held in September 2017. The exact dates, venue and details of hospitality for the participants would be conveyed to the Secretariat later in due course. The Council requested the Member States to take part in the Meeting.	
Para 38	The 2nd Meeting of ECO Heads of Central Banks scheduled to be held in Tehran in 2016 could not be held due to lack of quorum. The Council requested the Member States to volunteer hosting the Meeting in 2017 and called upon the Member States to take part in the Meeting. The Council decided that if no Member State volunteered to host the Meeting, the Secretariat will hold the Meeting alongwith hospitality support from its budget.	
Para 39	The Council emphasized that so far five Member States have signed the Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI) among the Member States alongwith its Amendment Protocol and out of these five countries two Member State have ratified and deposited the instruments of ratification. Entry into force of the Agreement requires ratification and deposit of instrument of four Member States. The Council called upon the Member States, which have not already done so, to sign/ratify the APPI along with its Amendment Protocol. The Republic of Turkey informed that the ratification process of the APPI along with the Amendment Protocol is under process.	
Para 40	The Council requested the Member States which have not done so to confirm participation in the First Meeting of ECO Heads of Investment Promotion Agencies (ECO-IPAs) scheduled to be held in Islamabad on December 26, 2016. For future, the Council agreed to change the title of the Meetings into ECO Investment Promotion Agencies (ECO-IPAs) Forum.	
Para 41	The Council while appreciating that the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has become the member of the WTO on July 29, 2016 reiterated that ECO will fully support the remaining four ECO Member States to become member of WTO.	
Para 42	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the 3rd Seminar on Trading Patterns in ECO Region and Accession of ECO to WTO on May 02-03, 2016 in Islamabad and thanked the ECO Trade and Development Bank for providing financial support to organize the Seminar.	

Para 43	The Council agreed that seminars to support and encourage the remaining ECO Member States on Trading Patterns in ECO Region and accession to WTO should be organized on regular basis. In this respect, the Council requested the WTO Members of ECO to volunteer hosting/organizing such seminars and the ECO Trade and Development Bank to continue provide financial and technical assistance for organizing the seminars.	
Para 44	The Islamic Republic of Pakistan proposed that the scope of these seminars should not be restricted to WTO only and other issues related to regional trade may also be covered. In this respect the Islamic Republic of Pakistan also offered to host the event under the title “Seminar on Trading Patterns in ECO Region and WTO issues” in 2017, subject to financial support from the ECO Trade and Development Bank as was done for the 3rd Seminar in 2016. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed that it will convey the dates and venue for hosting the 4th Seminar to the Secretariat. The funding arrangement for the Seminar was confirmed by the ECO Trade and Development Bank representative, who was present during the Session on 6th December, 2016.	
Para 45	The Council thanked the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for offering to hold this event and requested to convey the program, dates and other details to the Secretariat.	
Para 46	While underlining that the current membership base of the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) includes six ECO Member States with the last participation of Kyrgyz Republic, the Council called upon the remaining four ECO Member States to start the membership process of the Bank at their earliest convenience to get benefit from its resources.	
Para 47	The Council underlined that the ECO Trade and Development Bank should be further supported to strengthen its role and enhance its capacity for financing trade and development projects of the Member States.	
Para 48	The Council appreciated that the Terms of References (TORs) for launching Regional Partnership Forum (RPF) prepared by the ECO Trade and Development Bank have been finalized with the support of the Member States. The Council agreed that ECO Trade and Development Bank with the coordination of the Secretariat and the Member States may start arranging relevant activities as envisaged by the TORs at the earliest convenience. The Council also urged the	

	Member States to encourage their relevant national institutions/organizations to actively participate in the subject Forum.	
Para 49	The Council referring to the earlier decisions of the ECO Council of Ministers requested the ECO Trade and Development Bank to create a Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) to assist development projects in the region in close consultation with the ECO Secretariat and the Member States.	
Para 50	The Council thanked the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the Experts Group Meeting and Trainings of Lead Master Trainers on July 18-20 July, 2016 in Islamabad within the framework of the implementation of the 3rd phase of the ECO-UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Project (TCBP).	
Para 51	The Council appreciated that under implementation of the 3rd Phase of the ECO-UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Project (TCBP), training the master trainers of the Member States in the field Standardization Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ) have been completed and ECO Regional Quality Policy and Guideline for National Quality Policy have been formulated.	
Para 52	The Council agreed that for promoting the ECO Quality Infrastructure at the country level and to implement the ECO Regional Quality Policy which will facilitate the elimination of Technical Barriers to Trade, the continuation with the next phase of the Project is required. In this respect the Council invited UNIDO, ETDB and IDB to provide financial and technical support for the implementation of the next phase of the Project.	
Para 53	The Council also requested all the Member States to give their full support to initiate the implementation of the next phase of ECO-UNIDO Trade Capacity Building Project.	
Para 54	The Council pointed out that the focal points of the Member States in the field of trade and investment to be placed in the ECO Trade Web Portal (www.tradeeco.org) needs to be updated. Therefore the Council requested the Member States to update the focal points in the Portal and inform the Secretariat the same at the earliest convenience.	
Para 55	The Council underlined that upgrading the existing ECO Trade Web Portal (www.tradeeco.org) to an ECO Data Base of Traders and Manufacturers will serve	

	as an effective source of business match-making in the region. Therefore the Council requested the Secretariat to take the necessary actions and the Member States to provide their full support for setting up the data base at the earliest convenience.	
Para 56	At the request of ECO Secretariat, the Council also called upon the Member States to designate Focal Points in the areas of Trade, Investment, Customs, Trade Facilitation, WTO, Tax, Banking, Capital Markets, E-Trade and Visa.	
Para 57	The Council pointed out that the 2nd Phase of the Empirical Study on Trading Patterns in the ECO Region will analyze the new economic developments in the region and make updated policy recommendations for the good use of the Member States. The Council while appreciating the Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan for conveying their supportive views requested other Member States to convey their views on submission of the updated project proposal to CPR to consider allocating the required funds from the General Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF) and the study to be conducted by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) who has conducted successfully the first study in 2011.	
<u>B. SECTOR: TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS</u>		
Status of Ongoing Activities, Achievements, and Proposals:		
(I) The 9th Ministerial Meeting on Transport		
Para 1	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to the recommendation of the 26 th Meeting of RPC, the Government of Turkmenistan was approached in the course of the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport, held on 26-27 November 2016 in Ashgabat, for considering the possibility of hosting the 9 th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport. Subsequently, the Government of Turkmenistan kindly accepted to host the next ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport in Ashgabat.	
Para 2	The council expressed its appreciation to the Government of Turkmenistan and requested the relevant authorities of Turkmenistan to convey details regarding the meeting i.e. date and other logistic arrangements.	
Para 3	The representative of Turkmenistan assured the meeting on timely provision of the required details through diplomatic channels.	

(II) Implementation of the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA):		
A. Status of ratification of the TTFA by Member States		
Para 4	Pursuant to the recommendation of the 26 th Meeting of RPC, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan were approached by the ECO Secretariat asking for the visit to meet with officials of their concerned authorities in order to provide them with the latest developments on the implementation of TTFA. Officials of Turkmenistan have been also asked on the latest developments on ratification of TTFA during the meeting with ECO mission on the occasion of the field visit to Sarakhs (Turkmenistan) border crossing point under ECO/IDB Joint Project on customs provisions of TTFA (March 2016). The Embassy of Turkmenistan has been also asked for encouraging the relevant authorities to finalize formalities with ratification of TTFA.	
Para 5	The delegate of Turkmenistan informed the Council that the updated status will be communicated through diplomatic channels.	
Para 6	The Council strongly recommended the ECO Secretariat to stay in touch with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in this regard.	
B. The recent meetings of the TTCC and its auxiliary bodies		
a) Insurance Committee		
Para 7	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to the recommendation of the 26 th Meeting of RPC, the concerned authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkey have conveyed to the Secretariat their comments and views regarding the proposals provided by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Financial Guarantee Mechanism of the White Card scheme.	
Para 8	The 4 th HLWG on ITI Road Corridor (Islamabad, 17-18 August 2016) noted that the issue of the Financial Guarantee Mechanism remains a serious concern in implementation of the White Card scheme where the level of road traffic and Financial Guarantee Mechanism needs to be considered by the enroute Member States and the resolve of the 3 rd party liability insurance for ITI road Corridor will be an important factor for efficient operationalization of the corridor. The meeting decided a special meeting of concerned officials of Insurance may be organized to resolve the insurance issue for this corridor.	

Para 9	The Secretariat informed the meeting that it has circulated a Note Verbale suggesting organizing a special meeting of representatives of the concerned authorities of the member states enroute Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor on the sidelines of the upcoming meeting of the Road Committee of TTCC, scheduled for 14 th November 2016 at the ECO Secretariat but the quorum was not reached and consequently the meeting could not be convened.	
Para 10	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the council that financial guarantee mechanism and bilateral agreement between national motor insurance bureaus are two main issues. In order to resolve the issue and find out a workable solution initially it will be appropriate to hold a special meeting of the representatives of the insurance authorities of the member states particularly on ITI corridor and that the issue needs to remain on the follow-up.	
Para 11	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran supported the view of Pakistani delegate.	
Para 12	The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed the council that it could not send a delegate for insurance meeting proposed on the sidelines of 8 th road committee. He further informed that Turkey will get in touch with related Turkish authorities to send its delegate to the next proposed meeting. He furthered asked that the next meeting to be informed well in advance to facilitate the Member States participation.	
Para 13	The Council suggested that ECO Secretariat will communicate with the member states about the meeting in advance in order to give member states sufficient time to nominate relevant officials for the meeting.	
b) The Railway Committee		
Para 14	The representative of the Secretariat informed the meeting that further to the 26 th RPC, the Member States were requested to consider hosting and intimating the dates and the venue of the 13 th Meeting of the Heads of ECO Railway Authorities/7 th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC. Accordingly, the kind offer for hosting this meeting has been received from Azerbaijan proposing to hold the said meeting in the first half of 2017.	
Para 15	The Secretariat requested Azerbaijan to intimate tentative date for the event. The representative of Azerbaijan informed the Council that it is ready to host the	

	meeting in the beginning of 2017 tentatively in April 2017, however, exact dates, will be communicated through diplomatic channels as soon as finalized.	
Para 16	The Council appreciated Azerbaijan for its kind acceptance of hosting the 13 th Meeting of the Heads of ECO Railway Authorities/7 th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC and requested to intimate the dates three months before the proposed date in order to enrich the level of participation of member states.	
Para 17	The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed the Council that due to coordination related reasons it could not organize the training course for Afghan Railway officials. However, he assured that training course will be organized soon.	
Para 18	The Council appreciated the continued intention of the Republic of Turkey to organize the training course for Afghan Railway officials.	
Para 19	Further to the suggestion provided by Azerbaijan at the 26 th RPC on the possibility of East West Rail Corridor connecting China to Western Europe through Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkey, to “include East-West Corridor in the list of priority programs and projects of ECO in the field of transport” , the proposal was circulated among the member states for their views and comments and received the support of Republic of Turkey.	
Para 20	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran inquired about the technical characteristics for the proposal. In response the representative of Azerbaijan responded that the technical characteristics will be provided to the Secretariat through diplomatic channel, at the earliest.	
c) The Road Committee		
Para 21	The representative of the Secretariat informed the council that further to the recommendation of the 26 th Meeting of RPC encouraging publication of the revised ECO Road Transit Routes Map, the ECO Secretariat in collaboration with Gitashenasi, published handy and larger (wall) versions of the map and circulated among the member States and relevant international organizations.	
Para 22	In line with the recommendations of the 7 th Road Committee the revised Table-I (maximum permissible axle loads applied in the territories of contracting parties in accordance with domestic legislations) has been posted on the ECO website. The information on the levies and charges being applied for the trucks passing the territories of other contracting parties provided by the Kyrgyz Republic and	

	Tajikistan has been circulated among the Member States and posted on the ECO website. The representative of the Secretariat requested the Member States to continue supporting the site through providing the Secretariat with regular updates.	
Para 23	The Secretariat briefed the Meeting on latest development and the progress made concerning necessary preparation required for starting the feasibility studies on ITI and KTAI Corridors including in securing financial means through CPR and contribution of IRU and also the completion of the national consultant nominations list for both corridors and indicated that they in touch with other international and UN relevant bodies.	
Para 24	The representative of the ECO Secretariat briefed the council about the decisions taken by 8 th Meeting of the Road Committee of TTCC held on 14 th November 2016 at the ECO Secretariat.	
Para 25	The representative of Pakistan while referring to the decision taken in the 8 th Raod Committee meeting on 14 th November, 2016 reiterated Pakistan's proposal to ECO Secretariat to start working out the modalities for operationalizing the Pakistan-Iran-Turkmenistan Road Transport corridor in addition to the existing corridors. The representative of Pakistan highlighted that for wider coverage of TTFA thereby promoting trade and transport activities, introduction of new corridors in the framework of TTFA is necessary.	
Para 26	The council emphasized on the need to convey regular technical data and inputs for updating ECO site, appreciated the Secretariat for the progress made regarding necessary steps for starting feasibility studies of ITI and KTAI corridor and encouraged the member states to accelerate the fulfilment of decisions of the TTCC meetings and implementation of road related provisions of the TTFA.	
d) The Customs Transit Committee		
Para 27	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the council about the decisions taken by the 5 th Meeting of Customs Transit Committee of the TTCC held on 15 th November 2016 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. The council was informed that major findings of the ECO/IDB Feasibility Study on Customs related provisions of the TTFA and modernization of border crossing points were presented before the meeting and the final report on the Study was adopted by the member states with	

	<p>consensus. He asked for continued support of the Member States for implementing the Plan of Action contained in the Study as well as the monitoring mechanism agreed to in the 5th Meeting of Customs Transit Committee of the TTCC. He added that with Pakistan's accession to TIR Convention, all member states are now a party to this important instrument, as a result of which a good progress for a more smooth and seamless transit transportation among the member states could be expected. He asked Pakistan of any possible update on completion of internal procedure concerning implementation of the instrument.</p>	
Para 28	<p>The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the council that most of the matters as per plan of action agreed between IRU and the government of Pakistan have been resolved. The guarantee agreement is about to be signed between guaranteeing organization and Pakistan customs. Issue of certificate of approval for road vehicles has also been resolved. TIR rules have been drafted. Customs border stations for TIR operations have been notified. Software integration between customs authorities, guaranteeing organization and IRU has been done. TIR National Authorization Committee for approval of eligible transport operators has been established. He further informed that within next two month Pakistan will be able to implement the TIR convention.</p>	
Para 29	<p>The representative of Turkey informed the Council that Turkish Customs Administration is ready to organize the Capacity Building workshop for Pakistani customs officials in cooperation with IDB and IRU. He further informed that in addition to the holding Capacity Building Workshops, Turkey is ready to provide technical assistance to Pakistani officials for effective implementation of TIR.</p>	
Para 30	<p>The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that Iran is also ready to provide technical assistance for TIR to Pakistani officials with financial support from donor agencies.</p>	
Para 31	<p>The Council asked the ECO Secretariat to explore the possibility of establishing a dialogue partnership status with TIR convention.</p>	
Para 32	<p>The council appreciated the offer of Turkey and Iran to organize capacity building workshops for Pakistani officials and requested to include Afghan officials for training.</p>	

e) The TTCC Meeting		
Para 33	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the council about the decisions taken by 8 th Meeting of TTCC held on 16 th November 2016 at the ECO Secretariat. He informed the council that the meeting approved the work programme for 2017 and also endorsed the feasibility study on customs adopted by the 5 th Customs Meeting of TTCC.	
Para 34	The council appreciated the briefing by the ECO Secretariat regarding decisions taken by the 8 th Meeting of the TTCC and emphasized on the need for continued support of the Member States for implementing the Plan of Action contained in the Study as well as the recommendations and the monitoring mechanism agreed to, in the 5 th Meeting of Customs Transit Committee of the TTCC and requested the Member States to take necessary measures to accede to the conventions and agreements mentioned in the TTFA and recommended by TTCC.	
f) ECO/IDB Joint Project for Preparation of a Regional Program for Implementation of the TTFA		
Para 35	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to IDB's concurrence with the commencement of Customs Component of the ECO/IDB Joint Project on customs related provisions of TTFA and modernization of the border crossing points, nominations of the national consultants from nine member states were received to provide contributions to the Project and the International Consultant to supervise the study was selected as per ECO rules. The Council welcomed the successful completion of the ECO/IDB Feasibility Study on customs provisions of TTFA and modernization of border crossing points in the ECO region, and adoption of the final report on the Study by the 5 th Customs Transit Committee of TTCC (Tehran 15 November, 2016).	
Para 36	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that there have been repetitive mandates by member states requesting ECO-TDB to arrange for a forum where they could invite relevant international financial institutions with a view to looking at ECO's approved projects and provide the Secretariat with feedback on the possibility of financing the projects. He further informed that there was also an agreement for establishment of Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) by TDB and announcing a kind of mobilization meeting which could not be materialized. He requested support of the member states in order to get an	

	affirmative response from TDB. He also informed the Council that Secretariat is also trying to sign a MoU with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.	
Para 37	The Council urged the Member States to strive for engaging TDB in approved activities of ECO and requested them to play their productive role in this regard.	
III) ECO Projects in the Field of Railway and Road Transport		
A. Projects in the field of Railway Transport		
a) ECO Container Train on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) route		
Para 38	Representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to the 26 th RPC, the relevant authorities of Pakistan have been asked to specify the exact dates and venue for the 9 th High Level Working Group Meeting of ECO Container Train on ITI route in 2016.	
Para 39	The representative of the Secretariat requested Turkey to update the Council on the latest status of BALO.	
Para 40	The representative of Republic of Turkey informed the Council that as regards the resumption of train, unfortunately no headway has been achieved with BALO, however Turkey is ready to discuss this issue in the 9 th HLWG meeting on ITI container train where representative of BALO will also be present.	
Para 41	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council that Ministry of Railway has decided to host the 9 th High Level Working Group Meeting of ECO Container Train on ITI route on 17 May, 2017.	
Para 42	The Council appreciated Islamic Republic of Pakistan for conveying dates for hosting the 9 th HLWG Meeting.	
b) ECO Container Train on Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty Routes		
Para 43	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to the request of the 12 th Meeting of the Heads of ECO Railway Authorities/6 th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC (Tehran, 17-18 May 2015) to the enroute countries to provide their proposals to the Secretariat, the updated tariff rates and other charges to be applied in 2016 in the territory of Turkey as converted in US Dollars have been received from the concerned authorities of Turkey and have been circulated among the enroute member states. Other enroute countries have been asked conveyance of their constructive proposals on the subject.	
Para 44	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that a Working Group	

	at expert level may be established to resolve the issue of tariff contributing to regular run of the train.	
Para 45	The Council requested the enroute Member States to provide the Secretariat with their proposal for reduction or unification of the tariff rates.	
c) Railway Project for the connection of China to Europe through Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Iran		
Para 46	The representative of the Secretariat informed the Council that the 26 th RPC was updated on the progress in the territories of the countries enroute KTAI. Iran informed about completion of the Sangan-Khaf segment, which is a part of the KTAI railway project to connect Iran and Afghanistan by rail. The segment was inaugurated on 7 th September 2016.	
Para 47	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan informed the Council that railway is one of the top priorities on the agenda of the government. He thanked Islamic Republic of Iran for construction of Sangan-Khaf segment. He further informed that the feasibility study for the segment from Heart- Mazar-e-Sharif has been completed whereas study for the segment from Mazar-e-Sharif to Kunduz, is in progress. He also apprised the Council that name of the Afghan national consultant for KTAI Road Corridor study has been communicated to the Secretariat.	
Para 48	The representative of Tajikistan informed the Council that updates will be provided to the Secretariat through diplomatic channels.	
Para 49	The Council requested the Republic of Tajikistan to convey the exact dates and details of hospitality for the senior officials and Ministerial Meeting of the enroute countries, through diplomatic channels.	
d) Railway between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI Railway)		

Para 50	The Council took note of the measures taken by ECO for commercializing the railway connecting Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI) via formulating and sharing the Concept Note with IDB and the enroute countries. The meeting was informed on the support received from all enroute Member States, last one from Turkmenistan in the course of recently held Global Conference on Sustainable Transport and thanked the member states for their valuable support which will enable the Secretariat to finalize the consultation with IDB to start developing the proposed corridor management mechanism. The Secretariat will announce the dates of Heads of Railway meeting in near future. He further informed the Council that this rail corridor could have a very promising future.	
Para 51	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to continue collaboration with IDB to finalize the basic technical document for obtaining financial support for the Project.	
Para 52	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to announce the dates for organizing a meeting of the Heads of Railway Administration of KTI. It was unanimously agreed that the enroute countries will closely collaborate with ECO under the Project.	
e) The Railway Project on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran)-Astara (Azerbaijan) Route		
Para 53	The 26 th RPC was informed on the ongoing works on the segments in the respective territories of the countries enroute Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran) - Astara (Azerbaijan) where the segment of the Qazvin-Rasht is planned to be completed by March 2017 and the segment Rasht-Astara still requires financing.	
Para 54	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council apparently some headway has been achieved in this particular railway project and requested Azerbaijan and Iran to update the Council on the progress.	
Para 55	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed that the Railway route from Qazvin to Rasht will be completed and inaugurated by the end of 2016. The construction of Astra line in (Azerbaijan) about 8.3 km and the bridge on the border river of Astra chai has been completed. The construction of 1.4 km inside Iran up to Wharf along with the primary installation will be completed by the end of 2016 by Iranian railways. Negotiation for finance and construction of Rasht-Astra line is implemented by Government of Azerbaijan. During the recent meeting of	

	presidents of two countries the agreement has been signed between the Ministry of Transport of Iran and Azerbaijan.	
Para 56	The representative of Azerbaijan agreed with the explanation of the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.	
Para 57	The Council was briefed by the Secretariat that the ECO Secretariat was asked to coordinate holding the 3 rd meeting of the High Level Working Group on the Project via diplomatic channels. Azerbaijan proposed to hold the 3 rd Meeting back to back with the upcoming meeting of the heads of railways. Iran supported the proposal. The Meeting asked the Secretariat to make necessary coordination to that effect.	
Para 58	The council while appreciating the briefing of the member states requested the ECO Secretariat to liaise with the enroute member states in order to determine the dates and venue of the 3 rd HLWG Meeting to be held back to back with the upcoming meeting of the heads of railways in Azerbaijan.	
B. Projects in the field of Road Transport: ECO Road Corridors on Kyrgyz Republic-Tajikistan- Afghanistan- Iran (KTAI) and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) routes <u>KTAI Road Corridor</u>		
Para 59	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that based on the decision of the 7 th Road Committee of TTCC (Ankara, November 2015) to proceed with each of the ToRs of ITI and KTAI Corridors on its own, the 4 th HLWG on ITI noted that the corridors will require additional funds for satisfactory completion of the projects and asked the ECO Secretariat to approach CPR for allocation of additional funds, which the Secretariat got approved from CPR. He further informed the Council that once the process of implementation of TIR is completed by Pakistan a test run of truck caravan will be initiated. He also informed about financial contribution of IRU to the Studies.	.
Para 60	The Council requested Afghanistan to inform about the progress report for the remaining 231 KM missing link between Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif.	
Para 61	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan informed the Council that construction of 231 KM missing link between Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif where the feasibility studies on three segments have been completed. He further informed that TIR regulations have been drafted and submitted to Ministry of Justice for process. The government of Afghanistan has established technical and national	

	committees for TIR. In order to impart awareness, training regarding TIR plan has been formulated for interested companies and drivers. He further informed the council that next plan of Afghan government is to construct TIR parking in Afghanistan. The Council was also informed that the government of Afghanistan is trying to seek financial assistance for completion of the missing link.	
Para 62	The representative of Islamic Republic of Iran asked the Afghan delegate whether there is any other missing link except 231 KM between Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif. He also pointed out that apart from infrastructure the security issue is also an important issue.	
Para 63	The representative of Afghanistan responded that 231 KM between Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif is the only missing link and there is no problem of financing except some legal problems with the contracting company. He further informed that security is the top most priority on government's agenda.	
Para 64	The Council also requested the concerned authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic to confirm/introduce the name of a national consultant for conducting the field study along this Corridor.	
ITI Road Corridor		
Para 65	The 4 th Meeting of HLWG on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor was held on 17-18 August 2016 in Islamabad and hosted by the Ministry of Communications of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.	
Para 66	The meeting was informed that drafting of Guarantee Agreement, the trilateral MoU between PNC-ICC, FBR and IRU and framing of TIR rules, the main pre-requisites for implementation of TIR, are at the final stage.	
Para 67	Subsequent to the approval of the ToR for the field study for ITI Corridor and the decision taken by the 7 th Road Committee of TTCC (Ankara, November 2015) to proceed with each of the ToRs of ITI and KTAI Corridors on its own, the meeting noted that the corridors will require additional funds for satisfactory completion of the projects and asked the ECO Secretariat to approach CPR for allocation of additional funds.	
Para 68	Accordingly, ECO Secretariat approached CPR for allocation of additional funds which was agreed to by the CPR.	
Para 69	The meeting was informed that ECO has posted a vacancy advertisement on its	

	website for hiring services of a lead consultant and asked IRU to post the same vacancy announcement on its website since the study is partially funded by IRU. The request has been met and an allocation of 30000 US dollars has been pledged by the IRU to the Studies.	
Para 70	The meeting agreed that after TIR is activated in Pakistan a Truck Caravan will be initiated and also proposed that national consultants may accompany the caravan to have firsthand knowledge of the problems at border crossing points.	
Para 71	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan updated the Council on the latest status of internal procedure to implement TIR in Pakistan.	
Para 72	The Council while appreciating the briefing by the ECO Secretariat regarding 4 th HLWG meeting of ITI road corridor, and also the kind contribution of the IRU, sought advice of the enroute Member States and the ECO Secretariat on commencement of the field study along ITI corridor. The Council requested the Member States to operationalize this corridor and organize the first test run along this corridor under the coverage of TIR Carnet.	
IV) ECO Unified Visa Sticker for Drivers		
Para 73	The representative of the ECO Secretariat while appreciating the concerned authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their readiness for hosting the said meeting which did not happen due to the lack of quorum further informed that the 1 st Senior Consular Officials meeting was held on 4 th October 2016 at the ECO Secretariat which was attended by senior consular officials from eight member states that are contracting parties and a signatory to TTFA. In the meeting the member states agreed on a text as basis for the “ECO Visa Sticker Scheme for drivers and related personnel” proposed by ECO. A revised version of the scheme after incorporating the views of the member states has been circulated for seeking inputs of the member states by 31 December, 2016.	
Para 74	The representative of Pakistan informed the Council that visa is one of the important elements of transport and trade facilitation. Pakistan highly appreciates ECO’s efforts in introducing ECO visa exemption sticker scheme. At present it is being reviewed by the relevant authorities in Pakistan and a response will be communicated to the ECO Secretariat before the stipulated date.	
Para 75	The Council appreciated the efforts of ECO Secretariat in holding the meeting and	

	requested the concerned authorities of the member states to provide their comments and views on the modified version of the “ECO Visa Exemption Sticker Scheme” at the earliest in order to proceed to technicalities on implementing “ECO Visa Sticker” and other related issues.	
V) ECOLPAF		
Para 76	Further to the recommendation of 26 th Meeting of RPC, the Secretariat has followed up the registration process of the ECO Logistics Providers Associations Federation (ECOLPAF). The package of relevant documents provided by Pakistan International Freight Forwards Association (PIFFA) has been sent to Turkey (UTIKAD) via diplomatic channels.	
Para 77	The representative of Turkey informed the Council that since the entity will be established in Istanbul, therefore, internal legal procedures of Turkey are to be followed. He further briefed about the list of documents to be provided by the member states. He also appreciated Pakistan for providing the relevant documents. The representative of the Secretariat asked Turkey to kindly establish a liaison mechanism with the Member States to accelerate coordination on required documents and/or do regular information sharing through the Secretariat to enable regular follow-up.	
Para 78	The representative of Pakistan informed the meeting that Pakistan’s International Freight Forwarder Association is ready to host the 1 st General Assembly meeting of ECOLPAF at Karachi. However, UTIKAD has advised to announce the date of meeting after the registration process is completed.	
Para 79	The representative of the ECO Secretariat asked the Turkish delegate whether, to start registration process in Turkey is conditioned upon the provision of requisite document by all member states, or whether the registration process may begin if the complete list of required documents are submitted by a number of ECO Member States, which in itself can accelerate the commencement of the activities of ECOLPAF.	
Para 80	The representative of Turkey informed the Council that ECOLPAF being a federation requires submission of all ECO Member States documents but emphasized that Turkish authorities are considering this issue very seriously and will try its utmost to make the process as convenient as possible.	

Para 81	The Council requested the National Associations of other Member States, who have not yet provided requisite documents, to expedite doing so.	
VI) Cooperation in the Field of Civil Aviation		
Para 82	Further to the recommendation of 25 th RPC, the Secretariat has communicated with the Member States that have not provided their comments and views on Turkey's proposal and the draft MoU for establishment of Working Group on Civil Aviation. Accordingly, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan provided their views.	
Para 83	The representative of Turkey proposed that if the proposal is unable to attract attention of the member states, Turkey is ready to withdraw.	
Para 84	The representative of Pakistan remarked that considering the population of ECO region, there is tremendous potential of trade and tourism, therefore, this proposal needs be retained.	
Para 85	The Council appreciated the member states that provided their comments on the Turkish proposal and requested Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan to provide their comments and views on the proposal and the draft MoU, at the earliest.	
VII) Latest Developments in Maritime Cooperation		
Para 86	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the Council that further to recommendations of the 26 th RPC, the concerned authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran generously accepted to host the 5 th Meeting of the ECO Heads of Reference Marine Organizations in 2016. However, the meeting could not be materialized due to lack of quorum. The representative of ECO once again requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the event.	
Para 87	The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that Iran has hosted this event twice in the past and requested the Secretariat to seek willingness of other member states to host the meeting.	
Para 88	The Council decided that the ECO Secretariat may seek willingness of member states through diplomatic channels to host the event.	.
VIII) Communications		
A. Postal Activities		
Para 89	further to the recommendation of 26 th Meeting of RPC, the concerned authorities of	

	<p>the Member States have been approached by the Secretariat to organize the 6th Meeting of the ECO Postal Authorities and subsequently a proposal from the concerned authorities of Pakistan was received for holding the event in August 2016. Due to prior engagements of the ECO's Directorate of Transport and Communications in the months of September and November, Pakistan was asked for considering holding the meeting in December 2016. Response is still awaited. The representative of the Secretariat thanked Azerbaijan for generous offer to host the 6th Meeting of the ECO Postal Authorities back to back with 2nd Meeting of Ministers of ICT of ECO region.</p>	
Para 90	<p>The representative of Republic of Azerbaijan indicated readiness of Azerbaijan to host the 6th Meeting of the ECO Postal Authorities back to back with the 2nd ECO ICT Ministerial meeting.</p>	
Para 91	<p>The ECO Secretariat informed that it was approached by the ECO Postal Staff College (ECO PSC) proposing to organize a two-week international postal course titled "Operations Management" for the dates between 25th July and 5th August 2016 in Islamabad. The course was attended by the officers from the postal authorities of Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan and Tajikistan supported from the funds available for this purpose.</p>	
Para 92	<p>The Council appreciated both Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for expressing willingness to host the 6th Meeting of the ECO Postal Authorities.</p>	
B. Telecommunications		
Para 93	<p>ECO Secretariat in collaboration and with financial support the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UN's specialized agency for information and communication technologies, conducted "The Feasibility Study to identify the needs for development of ICT and Telecommunication infrastructure connectivity and ICT services in the ECO Member States". The draft report was prepared by the International Consultant, recommended by ITU for this purpose based on the contributions/data provided by the focal persons from the relevant authorities of the member states and other reliable sources.</p>	
Para 94	<p>The Wrap up meeting on the Feasibility Study was organized at the ECO Secretariat in May 2016 with participation of the Member States and ITU where the</p>	

	International Consultant presented the outlines of the comprehensive findings depicted through the Study. Measures taken by ECO in co-sponsorship with ITU to address the ECO ICT Ministers' mandate towards developing a prospective roadmap of ECO region's future ICT development and cooperation has been highly estimated and appreciated by the meeting. Subsequently, the Meeting decided to recommend the Study to the next Ministerial Meeting of ICT for their decision on ways and means of its implementation where concrete recommendations and conclusions may serve a basis for further cooperation. Negotiations between ECO and ITU are ongoing regarding collaboration at phase 2 of the Study.	
Para 95	The representative of Azerbaijan while stressing the importance of improving connectivity infrastructure in Eurasia asked the ECO Secretariat and ECO member states to support the realization of Trans Eurasian Super Information Highway (TASIM) project supported by two UN General Assembly resolutions in 2009 and 2012 as well as by International Telecommunication Union.	
Para 96	The relevant authorities of Pakistan have been approached by ECO for specifying the dates for the 2 nd ECO ICT Ministers.	
Para 97	The representative of Pakistan informed the Council that Government of Pakistan is considering convening 2 nd meeting of ECO ICT Ministers. He further informed that modalities are being worked out in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and exact dates for the events will be communicated to the ECO Secretariat through diplomatic channels.	
Para 98	The representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan indicated readiness of Azerbaijan to host the 2 nd ECO ICT Ministerial meeting back to back with the 6 th Meeting of the ECO Postal Authorities.	
Para 99	The Council appreciated the efforts of ECO Secretariat and cooperation extended by ITU for organizing the wrap up meeting on the Feasibility Study of ICT, resulting in concrete recommendations for future course of study.	
3. Review of the Relations with Regional/International Organizations (Progress Since The 24th RPC)		
Para 100	The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the forum about ECO's cooperation with International Organizations i.e. IDB, IRU, UNECE, UNCTAD, UNESCAP, OTIF, UIC and ITU.	
Para 101	The Council appreciated ECO's ongoing cooperation with the International	

	Organizations and proposed to continue this cooperation.	
--	--	--

C. SECTOR: ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT

<p>Para 1</p>	<p>The Council highlighted ample opportunities for stimulation of regional energy and environment agendas, and unleashing ECO's huge potential in the relevant fields. This potential and the available frameworks/agreed initiatives should serve as a benchmark for development of coherence and synergy among key stakeholders, and elaboration of relevant platforms for expanding ECO cooperation in the subject areas.</p>	
<p>Para 2</p>	<p>The Council acknowledged the importance of addressing energy and environmental issues in conformity with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, as well as the new ECO Vision 2025 (expected to be adopted in 2017). ECO is willing to contribute to these trends via multilateral/regional policy debates and introduction of pertinent partnership frameworks tailored to the needs and aspirations of its Member States. The Council also called on the need for the ECO Member States to work towards development of environmentally sound mechanisms and innovative solutions for prevailing common challenges as a primary task.</p>	
<p>Para 3</p>	<p>The Council recognized and appreciated recent developments made since the 26th RPC Meeting in the fields of energy, minerals and environment, notably in establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market, ECO Energy Consortium, finalization of the ECO-SHARP project, stimulating high level policy debates on environment, adoption of the 5-year Biodiversity Work Plan in ECO Region (2016-2020), engagements with international organizations, conventions and processes, completion of the Feasibility Study on Development and Harmonization of Environmental Standards in ECO Region and launching the project development phase of the Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm.</p>	
<p>Para 4</p>	<p>The Council thus requested the ECO Secretariat and the Member States to jointly implement the work programme for 2017 as follows:</p>	

ENERGY

Para 5	Republic of Turkey will host the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy/Petroleum in 2017 after adoption of the ECO Vision 2025, as the new vision provides crucial guidelines for energy sector as well. The Member States are requested to participate in the Meeting at the highest possible level.	
Para 6	The ECO Plan of Action (PoA) for Energy/Petroleum Cooperation (2011-2015) will be extended until forthcoming 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy/Petroleum.	
Para 7	The Secretariat will follow up with a voluntary Member State organizing the 4th High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Energy and Petroleum in 2017/2018 with a view to following up the key outcome recommendations of the 3rd HLEG Meeting (25-26 May 2015, Tehran), including implementation of the PoA.	
Para 8	Republic of Turkey will host the 2nd Experts Meeting on "Establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market" (ECO REM) after achieving the outcome of the Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting (s) on ECO REM.	
Para 9	Republic of Turkey will host the 3rd Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting on ECO REM in the first quarter of 2017. The concerned Member States should expedite implementation of outcomes of the 2nd Iran-Turkey Bilateral Meeting on ECO REM (10-11 May 2016, Shiraz), as well as to continue regular dialogue within existing framework.	
Para 10	The ECO Secretariat in cooperation with Iran and Turkey will explore the possibilities of funding Terms of Reference (ToR) for hiring international and local consultants for preparation of a Feasibility Study on ECO REM for harmonizing and merging the electricity markets of Iran and Turkey with possibility of providing equal seed financing by mentioned Member States and ECO Secretariat from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF). The Secretariat may also approach relevant financial/development agencies for raising additional funding. The scope of the project will be extended to other interested Member States in future.	
Para 11	The Secretariat will follow up the outcome of the ECO- Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) Secretariat Roundtable on "Stimulating energy investments in an era of low	

	oil prices and de-carbonization” held on 12 October 2016 on the margins of the 23rd World Energy Congress in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey. ECO Secretariat should organize such sideline Meetings on the margins of big events for visibility of the organization and for garnering support from international organizations.	
Para 12	The collaborative institutional linkages between ECO and ECT Secretariats should be followed including through granting Observer Status to each as well as continued cooperation in the relevant fields, including ECO REM, and organizing awareness raising and capacity building programmes.	
Para 13	The Secretariat will follow up with a volunteer Member State to organize the 4th Meeting of the ECO Experts Group and 6th Workshop on Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in 2017 to ensure proper follow up of the decisions of 3rd Meeting of the ECO Experts Group and 5th Workshop on RES (15-17 September 2014, Kabul), and to discuss latest developments, implementation of the related activities, and future regional cooperation among ECO countries in the field of RES.	
Para 14	The Member States should consider the establishment of “Virtual University Network” (VUN) on Renewable Energy among the relevant academic circles and research institutions for awareness raising and knowledge sharing among the Member States, and provide (except Iran and Tajikistan) their feedback to the Secretariat as soon as possible.	
Para 15	The Member States (except Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey) will provide their relevant Country Report/Questionnaire on RES, as well as concrete project proposals on RES and Energy Efficiency along with relevant concept paper/feasibility studies for further integration into the "ECO Data Information Network on RES" (ECO DIN on RES) portal (http://eco.abemda.az) established by the State Agency on Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources (SAARES) of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The possibility of merging ECO DIN on RES with IRENA’s Renewable Readiness Assessment (RRA) portal in future should be explored.	
Para 16	The proposals of the Islamic Republic of Iran on potential RE projects among the Member States, defining R&D projects, capacity building and training courses for on RE for skilled personnel, preferential trade among the Member States, and projects on Resource Assessment will be examined for possible implementation.	

Para 17	Given the increasing role of renewable energy sources in the global agenda and in line with the objectives of the Global SDGs, the Secretariat will explore ways and means for enhancement ECO cooperation in this crucial area. In this vein, the Secretariat will continue ECO-IRENA dialogue to create synergies and benefit from complementarities, as well as to explore the possibility of organizing joint ECO-IRENA initiatives/activities on RES.	
Para 18	The Member States will provide the Secretariat with their views and comments on draft Roadmap for Establishment of the ECO Energy Consortium through official channels by the end of February 2017.	
Para 19	The Secretariat will prepare the modalities/concept paper for establishment of a Trust Fund for financing the high priority ECO regional energy projects and circulate it among the Member States well before the 4 th Ministerial Meeting on Energy/Petroleum for their consideration.	
Para 20	The Islamic Republic of Iran will host the 1st Meeting on Establishment of Refinery Association in the ECO Region on 22-23 May 2017 with participation of the ECO Member States. The Meeting will review/discuss the Draft Project Profile on Establishment of Refinery Association in ECO Region, prepared by the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) and circulated to the Member States via the Secretariat's Note Verbale No. EME/PPF/ERA/2015/831 dated 28 May 2015.	
Para 21	The installation of On-Grid Solar Power Plant in the premises of ECO Secretariat, generously funded by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and implemented by Iran Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Management Company (TAVANIR), Renewable Energy Organization of Iran (SUNA), Power Distribution Company of Tehran, as well as Solar Baad Energy Company, symbolizes the very objective of ECO in promoting renewable/energy efficiency. Secretariat will arrange for formal inauguration of the project at the earliest, with the participation of the Member States and local authorities.	
Para 22	The Member States will regularly update/nominate their National Focal Points (NFPs) in relevant energy fields in order to enhance coordination between relevant national focal points and the Secretariat and among themselves, as well as the	

	reporting and feedback mechanism.	
Para 23	The Islamic Republic of Iran will organize four oil and gas training courses for the ECO countries in the course of 2017 as reflected in the Calendar of Events, to be conducted by the Oil and Gas Training Center. The Member States will communicate their interest along with the nominations through the ECO Secretariat as per information in Calendar shared during RPC meeting.	
Para 24	The ECO Secretariat should continue its interactions with relevant regional and international organizations with a view to seeking technical and financial support, including, but not limited to, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO-TDB), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) Secretariat, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).	
MINERALS		
Para 25	The Secretariat and Member States will follow up implementation of the key outcome recommendations of the 6th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting on 17-18 October 2016 in Sungun Mine Complex in Tabriz, Iran. The concerned Iranian authorities will provide the Secretariat with comprehensive concept paper of their proposals by the end of February 2017. The Secretariat will follow up with voluntary Member State the possibility of hosting the 7th ECO Minerals Experts Group Meeting in 2017.	
Para 26	The Secretariat will follow up with a voluntary Member State hosting the 3rd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations in 2017 with a view to actively following up the outcomes of the 2nd Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations (8-9 May 2014, Ankara).	
Para 27	The Secretariat and Member States will follow up implementation of the recommendations of the 1st Meeting of ECO Geomatics Committee (20-21 October	

	2015, Tehran), including its Terms of Reference (TOR), ECO Economic Atlas, and appointment of Editorial Board for the ECO Geomatics Journal. The Secretariat will follow up with a voluntary Member State for hosting the 2nd ECO Geomatics Committee in 2017. The next Secretary of the Geomatics Committee will be nominated by the host country of the 2nd ECO Geomatics Committee Meeting.	
Para 28	The Member States and the ECO Secretariat will follow-up implementation of the recommendations of the 2nd Workshop on ECO Seismic Hazard Reduction Programme (ECO-SHARP), generously hosted by the Geological Survey of Iran on 15-16 in Sungun Mine Complex in Varzeghan Area in Tabriz, Iran as completion stage of the ECO-SHARP Project.	
Para 29	ECO Secretariat and the Geological Survey of Iran (GSI), the Project Manager who successfully completed the ECO-SHARP project, will continue their regular contacts for necessary coordination and supervision on the implementation of the Project. The Member States will provide their overall necessary feedbacks, if any, in digital SHP format by the end of January 2017 and the Project Manager (GSI) will submit the final Report of the Project by end of February 2017. ECO Secretariat and Project Manager will arrange operational portal linkages in ECO Secretariat's and GSI's websites simultaneously reflecting Reports/Maps of the ECO-SHARP.	
Para 30	The Secretariat will follow up with a voluntary Member State for hosting the next similar Workshop on "Ferrous and Base Metal Mineral Processing" in 2017 with a view to maintaining the momentum generated in the previous events.	
Para 31	The National Cartographic of Center (NCC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran will host the 2nd ECO Geomatics Committee Training Course on Unification of Height Datums in July 2017 in Tehran as the continuation of previous training course.	
Para 32	The Member States will regularly update/nominate their National Focal Points (NFPs) in relevant Minerals fields in order to enhance coordination between relevant national focal points and the Secretariat and among themselves, as well as the reporting and feedback mechanism.	
Para 33	The NCC of the Islamic Republic of Iran will officially invite the Member States to the annual National Geomatics Conference and Exhibition to be organized in May	

	2017 in Tehran. Interested Member States will inform through ECO Secretariat their willingness to attend in the conference. Those countries who may wish to attend the exhibition will inform the host country by end of February 2017 enabling the host organization, to ensure availability of the space for the exhibition. Exact date, venue and hospitality details will be shared by the NCC with Secretariat in due course.	
ENVIRONMENT		
Para 34	Republic of Azerbaijan will consider the possibility of hosting the 6 th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment, preceded by Senior Officials in the course of 2017 and appreciate the Secretariat to resend the Note Verbale on the matter. The exact date, venue and hospitality will be communicated by the host through official channels to the Secretariat. Member States are invited to actively participate in this important Meeting.	
Para 35	The Secretariat and Member States will follow up the recommendations of the 2 nd ECO Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Environment (27 May 2016, Nairobi) on the sidelines of the Second United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2) (23-26 May 2016).	
Para 36	The Secretariat and Member States will pursue the active implementation of the recommendations of 6 th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment (1-2 June 2016, Islamabad). The Secretariat will follow up with a voluntary Member State for hosting the 7 th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment in 2017.	
Para 37	The ECO Secretariat and Member States will follow up the recommendations of the Workshop for Capacity Building and Sharing Best Practices on Biodiversity (1-2 March), 2 nd ECO Pre-COP Meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (4 March) and 3 rd ECO Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity (6-7 March) held within the context of ECO Biodiversity Week in Antalya. Turkey will organize the 3 rd ECO Pre-COP Meeting on CBD in 2018 and will communicate the date and	

	venue of the event to ECO Secretariat.	
Para 38	The Secretariat will coordinate with Kyrgyz Republic for hosting the 4th Experts Group Meeting on Biodiversity in 2017 in line with the decisions of the 3rd EGM and the approved “Work Plan on Biodiversity in the ECO Region (2016-2020)”.	
Para 39	<p>As per the Work Plan on Bio diversity in the ECO Region, endorsed by 2nd ECO Consultative Ministerial Meeting on Environment (27 May 2016, Nairobi) :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Member States will share details of their National Focal Points on Biodiversity with ECO Secretariat at their earliest for enhanced communication, as well as for proper implementation of the activities envisaged within the Work Plan. ii. Concerned authorities of the Republic of Turkey, as a new Coordinating Country for follow-up and implementation of the Work Plan will inform the Secretariat and Member States on developments in implementation of the Work Plan. iii. The Member States which indicated their willingness to host the events envisaged in the Calendar of Events of the Work Plan will update ECO Secretariat about exact date, venue and the format of their hospitality. iv. ECO Secretariat in consultation with Member States will explore fund-raising opportunities for implementation of priority plans/programs envisaged in this Work Plan. v. ECO-IEST will provide technical support for implementation of the Work Plan. vi. The Secretariat will seek UNCBD's technical support and assistance in organizing capacity building workshops for the ECO Member States and fund raising for ECO projects, including implementation of the ECO Work Plan on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2016-2020). 	

Para 40	Given the successful ECO-UNFF Expert Meeting on Enhancing Regional and Sub-Regional Involvement in the Work of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) in September 2016 in ECO Secretariat, Tehran, the Secretariat will continue its efforts to further bolster cooperation with UNFF and other relevant regional, sub-regional organizations and processes for soliciting more technical and financial support and enhancing its visibility in forest-related issues. ECO Secretariat will continue cooperation with UNFF for the benefit of the Member States, including through organizing capacity building/knowledge sharing activities on developing actions/strategic plans, preparation of an ECO regional strategy on sustainable forest management, organization of capacity building workshops for the ECO Region, seeking UNFF technical assistance in utilizing the financial resources available through Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund (AF) and Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN).	
Para 41	The proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran and ECO-IEST on an initiative to launch the programme on environmental technologies deployment, clean water and energy solutions, restoration, monitoring and management tools will be examined by the ECO Secretariat for possible implementation.	
Para 42	The Secretariat will continue its efforts in promoting relevant ECO environmental projects through joint activities and events with the ECO Member States and partners in the COP-23 in 2017. This should be built on the momentum generated by ECO-UNEP Consultations on environmental projects and showcasing ECO's visibility and activities during the high level segment of the 22 nd UNFCCC in 2016.	
Para 43	The Secretariat will coordinate with a voluntary Member State in organizing the workshop on “Optimal ECO Regional Approach to Green Economy in the context of Outcome Document of Rio+20” in collaboration and support of ECO-IEST and interested international organizations in 2017.	
Para 44	The ECO Secretariat will prepare necessary requirements for regional approach to the environmental impacts in the post disaster situations and adaptations for addressing the man-made disasters, including through experience sharing, capacity	

	building and training activities.	
Para 45	Given the recent progress in promoting the State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO Region, the Secretariat will organize with UNEP a joint Inception Workshop on Modalities of First State of Environment (SoE) Report for ECO Region in cooperation with ECO-IEST and participation of the Member States in the course of 2017.	
Para 46	The Member States will regularly update/nominate their National Focal Points (NFPs) in relevant fields of environment, including climate change, biodiversity, forests, desertification, etc in order to enhance coordination between relevant national focal points and the Secretariat and among themselves, as well as the reporting and feedback mechanism.	
Para 47	The Member States, who have not done so, will provide their National Progress Reports (NPRs) on Environment for 2014 (except Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyz Republic, Iran, Tajikistan and Turkey) and 2015 (excluding Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Iran, Tajikistan and Turkey). Member States will also provide their NPRs for 2016 in the first quarter of 2017.	
Para 48	As per recommendation of the 6 th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment with respect to establishment of Ad Hoc Group/Task Force to formulate and develop ECO Regional Adaptation Programme (ERAP), the Member States will provide the Secretariat with their National Adaptation Programmes. The ECO Secretariat and ECO-IEST will consequently prepare the draft proposal for developing ERAP.	
Para 49	The Secretariat will follow up the recommendation of the 6 th ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment concerning establishment of partnership frameworks with regional organizations working on environment and climate change issues, including, but not limited to the South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and Association for South East Asian Nations	

	(ASEAN).	
Para 50	The Republic of Azerbaijan will submit its views/comments by 1 January 2017, on the Feasibility Study on “Development and Harmonization of Environmental Standards in ECO Region” Project, which has been commendably completed by Iran in September 2016.	
Para 51	The Secretariat will draft a trilateral (ECO Secretariat, ECO-IEST and Department of Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran) contract for preparation of a regional program for implementation of the Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming for ECO Member States (2015-2020). The Secretariat has already allocated 50,000 USD by the CPR. The Member States (except Islamic Republic of Iran who has pledged 100,000 USD) will consider allocation of remaining 100,000 USD for early implementation of the project profile. The Islamic Republic of Iran will release the pledged money upon signing the contract.	
Para 52	Following the decision of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) on its 209 th Meeting for implementation of the project development phase of the "Regional Project to Combat Desertification with a Special Emphasis on Dust Haze and Sand Storm in the ECO Region". The ECO Secretariat will continue its engagement and cooperation with the Project Manager (ECO-IEST) for necessary coordination and supervision on the implementation of the Project within the agreed timeframes in line with signed Contract. The interested Member States will cooperate closely with the Secretariat and ECO-IEST for proper implementation of this project, to share their national desertification status reports, and will participate in two workshops proposed by Project Contractor for consideration of the draft Project Proposal and finalization of the Project Proposal for submission to donor agencies.	
Para 53	The ECO Secretariat and Member States will attend the Calibration Basis' Training Program, to be hosted by Turkish Meteorological Service in 2018.	
Para 54	The Secretariat's efforts for expansion of its cooperation and outreach through	

	active engagement in important environmental fora in line with the mandates of the 5 th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment should continue in 2017.	
--	--	--

D. SECTOR: AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY & TOURISM

Agriculture

REFERENCE	EVENTS/ACTIVITIES	
Para 1	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to consider hosting the 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, preceded by the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in i 2017.	
Para 2	The Council welcomed the offer of the Republic of Turkey to host the 2nd Meeting of the Programme Steering Committee of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre (ECO-RCC) for Implementation of the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security (ECO-RPFS) on February 16-17, 2017 in Ankara, Turkey. The Council requested the Steering Committee to consider the revision of the ECO-RPFS, if necessary, during its second meeting. The Council also thanked the offer of the Republic of Turkey to host the 2nd Workshop on Enhancing Food Security in the ECO Region in Turkey and the dates and venue will be communicated through diplomatic channel.	
Para 3	The Council thanked the ECO-RCC for preparing the “Working Principles of the ECO-RCC for Implementation of the ECO-RPFS” and requested its finalization during the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting of the ECO-RCC in the Republic of Turkey. The said Working Principles were already circulated to the Member States. The Council calls upon the Member States to convey their views on the Working Principles before the next Steering Committee meeting.	
Para 4	The Council requested the Member States (except Iran, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey) to nominate their ECO-RCC Programme Steering Committee Members. The Council also requested the Member States to participate and extend their support to the ECO-RCC’s forthcoming activities. In this context, the Member States are requested to prepare Project Proposals on Food Security within the framework of RPFS and convey the same for coordination to the said Centre.	
Para 5	The Council requested the Member States to consider providing funds for implementation of the ECO-RPFS, so as to facilitate securing financial assistance from the donor institutions/organizations, as decided during the 4 th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Economy held on May 22-23, 2014 in Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan.	
Para 6	The Council requested the ECO-RCC to cooperate with the ECO Secretariat for preparing	

	bankable project documents for the components of the ECO-RPFS.	
Para 7	<p>The Council thanked the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for offering to host the 7th ECOSA International Seed Trade Conference and Seed Trade Fairs in 2017. The Council also welcomed Pakistan to apply IDB its channels in collaboration with ECO Secretariat for allocation of 17,000 USD for organizing the said events.</p> <p>On the request of Council, Pakistan will consider to organize the Workshop on Seed Testing. The Council appreciate the membership of the ECO Seed Association (ECOSA) to the World Seed Federation (WSF) and getting status to be represented in International Seed Federation (ISF) central management committees and requested ECOSA coordinate with ECO and Member States before action in such case.</p>	
Para 8	<p>The Council requested the Republic of Azerbaijan to officially respond for willingness to host the Workshop in the Field Control in 2017 till the end of December 2016.</p> <p>The Council also welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to organize the Workshop on Plant Variety Protection (PVP) in 2017, Iran through applying IDB by their channels in collaboration with ECO Secretariat for necessary fund.</p>	
Para 9	<p>The Council thanked the FAO, Member States and the ECO Secretariat for the successful implementation of the ECO/FAO-SEC Project on Seed Sector Development in the Region, which was completed by organizing the Final Regional Seed Workshop on November 4-6, 2015 in Antalya, Turkey. The Council also welcomed the formulation of the ECO Regional Seed Agreement as an outcome of the said project, which was sent to the Member States for their views and comments.</p> <p>The Council requested ECO Secretariat to proceed for approving the ECO Seed Agreement by the decision making bodies of ECO.</p>	
Para 10	<p>The Council thanked the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for organizing the 2nd Working Group Meeting on the Establishment of the ECO Center of Excellence for Efficient Utilization of Water for Agriculture (ECO-CEEWUA) on July 25-26, 2016 in Islamabad, Pakistan, in which the Draft Plan of Action and Draft Status for establishment of the ECO-CEEWUA were finalized and circulated for views/comments of the Member States. The Council also requested the Secretariat to expedite approval process of Draft Plan of Action and Draft Statute and submit to the COM through CPR for its final approval.</p> <p>The Council also thanked for amendment/finalization of the Project Proposal for</p>	

	<p>Establishment of the ECO-CEEWUA and the decision on sending the project to IDB and FAO for converting it into bankable project. The bankable project will be submitted to IDB for financial process. The Council also approved the said project with appreciation for necessary process.</p> <p>The Council welcomed the offer of the Republic of Turkey to consider hosting the 3rd Working Group Meeting/Workshop on the Status for establishment of the ECO-CEEWUA in 2017, Turkey.</p>	
Para 11	<p>The Council appreciated the finalization of the Draft Statute of the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM), which includes the views of some Member States, and to be submitted to one of the CPR Meetings for endorsement/finalization. The said Statute will be submitted to the next COM Meeting for final approval. All the Member States (except Iran and Turkey) are also requested to contribute and designate their focal points for the Working Group to draw up Project Proposals for cooperation as per decisions made by the 2nd Heads of Meteorological Organizations.</p>	
Para 12	<p>The Council requested all Member States voluntarily host the 3rd Meeting of the ECO Heads of Meteorological Organizations scheduled to be held in 2017.</p> <p>The Council while thanking again the Republic of Turkey for preparing the Draft Statute for the establishment of the ECO Meteorological Calibration Center (ECO-MCC), requested the Member States to send their views/comments on the said document.</p>	
Para 13	<p>The Council thanked the offer of the Republic of Turkey to organize the 2nd International Training Course on Basic of Calibration in September 2018 in Ankara, Turkey.</p>	
Para 14	<p>The Council requested the Member States (except Iran) to expedite signing/ratifying the Statute of the ECO Veterinary Commission (ECO-VECO).</p> <p>The Council while appreciating the Islamic Republic of Iran for organizing the 3rd ECO Heads of Veterinary Organizations Meeting on January 30 - February 01, 2017 in Tehran, requested member States to confirm their participation in the said event.</p> <p>The Council also thanked the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold the first Technical Steering Committee on the sideline of the 3rd ECO Heads of Veterinary Organizations Meeting.</p>	
Para 15	<p>The Council while thanking the Islamic Republic of Iran, requested to send the exact date and venue for organizing the 2nd Expert Group Meeting of the ECO-ABN, scheduled to be held in September 2017, in Iran.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States while updating the information about their national focal points, kindly provide the country reports on biotechnology and related</p>	

	<p>information to be uploaded to the new under construction website.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States to send their project proposals, recommendations, ideas, and expectations for an efficient network and to achieve its goals in accelerating Agricultural Biotechnology in the region.</p>	
Para 16	<p>The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to actively participate in the related international conferences to be organized in 2017 and prepare the project proposals on the events/activities for provision of financial assistance in this regard.</p> <p>The Council requested Member States to voluntarily organize regional/international buyers/sellers meetings/trade fairs on agricultural products in 2017 in their respective countries with a view to improve intra-regional trade.</p>	

Industry		
Para 1	<p>The Council welcomed the renewed offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Industry in 2017 and requested the latter to inform the exact date and details of hospitality to the Secretariat by the end of December 2016. The Council also requested the Member States to actively participate in the Meetings.</p>	
Para 2	<p>The Council requested the interested Member States to sign (except Afghanistan and Turkey) and ratify (except Iran) the Statute of the Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (ECO- RISCAM) to pave the way for early operationalization of the Institute and in this connection welcomed the interest of Pakistan to do so. The Republic of Turkey informed the Meeting that it has already started the ratification process of the Statute.</p>	
Para 3	<p>The Council appreciated Iran for allocation of office spaces for the “Central Secretariat of ECO - RISCAM” and the “Technical Management Board of Conformity Assessment” and requested all the Member states to attend the opening ceremony of the offices on 14 December 2016. The Council also requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to report the activities of the Institute to the Secretariat on six months basis.</p>	
Para 4	<p>The Council appreciated the Interim Coordination Unit of ECO-RISCAM for preparation of the basic documents of the Institute documents (i.e. Rules of Procedure, Financial Regulations and Staff Regulations) and requested the Member States to reflect their views on the documents as early as possible to its Secretariat.</p>	

Para 5	The Council was informed of the interest of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the Technical Management Board of Metrology of ECO- RISCAM and its request for amendment of the relevant article of the Statute of ECO - RISCAM concerning hosting of the Technical Management Boards and requested the signatory states (except Turkey) to consider it and provide the Secretariat with their views for further action.	
Para 6	The Member States were requested to volunteer for hosting the 7 th HLWG on Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology and inform the Secretariat by end of February 2017. The Council requested the Secretariat to host the Meeting in the absence of interest by the Member States to host the Meeting in 2017.	
Para 7	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to organize a Training Workshop on Industrial Property Rights on 21-22 February 2017 and will provide local hospitality (accommodation, meals and local transportation) for 3 participants from each Member States. The Secretariat was requested to approach WIPO for their technical and financial support.	
Para 8	The Council was informed by the Secretariat that the MoU for cooperation with WIPO is finalized and is in the process of negotiation with the latter and will be circulated to the Member States once the views of the WIPO is incorporated in the text.	
Para 9	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to consider hosting the 4th Coordination Committee Meeting on Industrial Property Rights in 2017 and requested the latter to confirm its position and inform the exact date and details of hospitality to the Secretariat.	
Para 10	The Council welcomed the renewed offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 5th Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) on Entrepreneurship and SME Development Meeting on 13-14 March 2017 and SME Conference on 15- 16 March 2017 in Lahore and requested all the interested Member States to participate in the said events. Pakistan will provide local hospitality (accommodation, meals and local transportation) to one participant from each Member State. The council also renamed the SCM to High Level Working Group (HLWG) which will include all the Member States in the area of cooperation.	
Para 11	The Council requested Republic of Turkey to inform exact date and details of hospitality for a workshop on projects of energy efficiency and environmental protection in SMEs as decided by the 4th Steering Committee Meeting on Entrepreneurship and SME Development.	
Para 12	The Council thanked the Islamic republic of Iran for renewing its offer to host the 2 nd Steering Committee Meeting on Establishment of the ECO Nanotechnology Network (ECONAN), and Workshop on NANO-technology in 2017 and requested for active	

	participation of all the Member States in the Meeting and the Workshop.	
Para 13	The Islamic Republic of Iran also informed the Meeting that it will host a kickoff event for the "Study on Nanotechnology in the ECO Countries" and the ECONAN website, which is prepared in line with the Work Plan for the Establishment of ECONAN, on 22nd January 2017 .	
Para 14	The Council requested Iran to commence the project titled <i>Pre-Feasibility Study of Removal of Arsenic Water Pollution in ECO Region using Nanotechnology Methods</i> in collaboration with the interested Member States. The remaining Member States were also encouraged to join the project as soon as possible.	
Para 15	The Council reiterated its request to the interested Member States to offer their project proposals to develop and enhance the nanotechnology in the Region	
Para 16	The Council requested the Member States, in particular ECONAN to organize capacity building and training courses for the interested Member States to publicize and build awareness on this technology.	
Para 17	The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to submit the Project Proposals on (1) identifying potential transferors and transferees in the ECO Region and (2) identifying supporters of Technology Transfer process in the Region within 3 months.	
Para 18	The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to organize ECO-Silk Road Agro-Food Industries Expo (ESRAFI Expo) in 2017 and requested all the all the ECO Member States as well as countries on-route the Silk Road to actively participate in the Expo. The Exact date and venue will be communicated by 30 March, 2017.	
Para 19	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for initiating cooperation with relevant international organizations, development agencies and financial institutions including (but not limited to) UNCTAD, UNIDO, JICA, KOIKA, WIPO, TIKa, ISO, DEVCO for the purpose of regional development and encouraged it to do so with other international and regional organizations, institutions and agencies.	
Para 20	The Islamic Republic of Pakistan requested the Secretariat to approach the UNIDO for implementation of the two Projects on Sector Value Chain Development and Digital Information Exchange Network (IDENE).	
Tourism		

Para 21	The Council appreciated the renewed offer of the Republic of Turkey to host the 3rd Meeting of the ECO Tourism Ministers and the 5 th HLEG Meeting on Tourism in 2017 and requested the latter to specify exact date and details of hospitality for the said Meetings as soon as possible and called upon the ECO Members to actively participate in these events.	
Para 22	The Council acknowledged the importance of early preparation of the ECO Tourism Strategy and requested the Secretariat to host the First Working Group Meeting on ECO Tourism Strategy in the first half of 2017. The Council also encouraged the Secretariat to consider seeking technical assistance from relevant international organizations i.e. UNWTO, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNEP in this connection.	
Para 23	The Council encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Turkey to transfer their pledged contributions to the ECO Tourism Promotion Fund and called upon other interested Member States to consider contributing to the said Fund. The Council also requested the Secretariat to consult the ECO Trade and Development Bank for mobilization of funds for tourism activities and projects.	
Para 24	The Council reiterated its request to the Member States, except Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran and Islamic Republic of Pakistan, to provide all the necessary information for the “Ecotourism Catalogue for the ECO Region” to be prepared by the Republic of Turkey. Pakistan informed that it will provide updated information for the Catalogue very soon.	
Para 25	The Council requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts concerning the 4th EGM on Ecotourism and specify the date and venue of the Meeting. The Turkish delegation stated that the latter is still willing to co-host this event along with Turkish Cypriot States. However, as agreed this issue will be further discussed in the CPR Meeting.	
Para 26	Taking into consideration the high capacity for job creation and income generation, the Council requested the Member States to consider organizing workshops on rural tourism and also requested the Secretariat to consider seeking technical assistance from relevant international organizations i.e. UNWTO, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNEP.	
Para 27	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the First Asian Cooperation Dialogue Ministerial Meeting on Tourism on 29 - 30 August 2016 in Tabriz in which a delegation from ECO Secretariat and ECO Member States also participated. The Council also requested the Member States and the Secretariat to participate in the Second ACD Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in Cambodia.	
Para 28	The Council welcomed the offer of the Chamber of Commerce of the Islamic Republic of	

	Iran to host the 2 nd Confobition (conference+ exhibition) on Health Tourism in 2017 and requested the latter to inform exact date and details of hospitality by 30 December 2016.	
Para 29	The Council requested the ECO-CCI to provide the Member States with an implementation report of the 1 st and 2 nd Coordination Committee Meetings as well as the 1 st Confobition on Health Tourism held in Ramsar, in August 2014.	
Para 30	The Council requested the Member States to organize meetings of the airliners, tour operators and travel industry sector of the region to discuss establishment of new destinations and routes of tourism in the region and requested the relevant private sector to host such meetings.	
Para 31	The Council reiterated its request to the Member States to encourage the private sector involvement in the regional tourism activities through participation in the relevant meetings/events/initiatives. And in this connection, the ECO CCI was requested to explore the possibility of setting up regional cooperation modality on tourism to strengthen cooperation among the national private sector associations/forums/federations with the purpose of sustainable tourism promotion and propose its study to the 3 rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism.	
Para 32	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the Second International ECO - Silk Road Food Festival and welcomed the offer of latter to host the Third ECO - Silk Road Food Festival in May 2017 in Zanzan. The Council also requested the local host authorities to set up a coordination mechanism and website for better promotion and organization of the annual event in coordination with the Secretariat. The Council also requested the Member States to actively participate in the Event.	
Para 33	The Council request the Secretariat to organize workshops on culinary tourism and tourism business development on the sidelines of the ECO - SILK Road Food Festival and approach the relevant international organizations and institutes for this purpose.	
Para 34	The Council welcomed the convening of the 10th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition on 6-9 February 2017 and requested all the Member States to actively participate in the Event. Detailed information of the Event was also circulated to the delegates in the Meeting.	
Para 35	The Member States are requested to consider hosting tourism and handicrafts related exhibitions for the purpose of enhancing tourism cooperation in the Region.	
Para 36	The Council requested the Member states to organize events to celebrate the Nowruz Festival and utilize this opportunity to promote their tourism and cultural attractions.	
Para 37	The Council requested the Member States and the Secretariat to actively participate in the international conferences and meetings with the aim of introducing the tourism potentials	

	of the ECO Region and also to increase the role of ECO in the international policy making trends.	
Para 38	The Council appreciate the Secretariat for institutionalizing relations with UNWTO through an MOU.	
Para 39	The Council also appreciated the Secretariat for establishing working cooperation with UNIDO and UNESCO for promotion of tourism in the Region and requested the latter to expand its relations with the international organizations and agencies.	
<u>E. SECTOR : PROJECTS, ECONOMIC RESEARCH & STATISTICS</u>		
<u>PROJECT</u>		
<i>Project Monitoring Group (PMG)</i>		
Para 1	The Secretariat briefed the Council about the overall coordination and monitoring implementation status of the ECO projects. The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat and noted with satisfaction the functioning of the ECO Project Monitoring Group (PMG) for effective implementation of ECO Projects through holding its regular meetings. The Council also took note with satisfaction of the holding of 10 th PMG Meeting which was held at the ECO Secretariat on 30 th October, 2016.	
Para 2	The Council highlighted the importance of regular holding of the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) Meetings by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Member States for achieving its responsibilities on effective supervision on implementation of projects which is essential for development of economic cooperation across the region. The Council further emphasized active participation and involvement of the Member States in the PMG Meetings, as and when organized by the ECO Secretariat, in order to ensure ownership of the Member States to the ECO projects.	
<u>Capacity Building on Project Management</u>		
Para 3	The ECO Secretariat briefed the Council by stating that it has so far organized four training workshops with the support by UNDP, IRTI and SESRIC in order to enhance knowledge on project management and implementation for ECO Member States and ECO Secretariat's staff.	

	<p>The Council noted that based on the outcomes of the last project training in 2014 and proposal of Kazakhstan for hosting the next project training, the Secretariat included the regional project training workshop on “Project Management Information Systems (PMIS)” to be organized in collaboration with regional/international organizations for the ECO Member States.</p> <p>However, the Council decided that due to non-receipt of response from Kazakhstan, the Secretariat may hold the event in the ECO Secretariat in the second half of 2017.</p>	
<u>ECO Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan (SFRA)</u>		
Para 4	<p>The Secretariat briefed the Council by stating about the establishment of ECO Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan (SFRA) by 12th COM and approval of Modalities by 14th COM. The Secretariat further proposed that the Council may consider handing over of this very subject under the jurisdiction of the ECO Secretary General who may further ask the other Directorate of the Secretariat to deal with this subject “Reconstruction of Afghanistan”.</p> <p>The Council took note that Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) is in consultation with the relevant Afghan Authorities to conduct projects under the terms and conditions of the Protocol between ECO & TIKA on reconstruction of Afghanistan.</p> <p>The Representative of Pakistan informed the meeting that Pakistan had pledged an amount of \$ 5 million and \$ 2 million has been released for construction of “Deh Mazan Park” and “Rehabilitation of Kabul Zoo”. Both projects have been completed and the Government of Pakistan did not receive any further request from ECO Secretariat for provision of further fund. However, Government of Pakistan will consider the request of ECO for release of remaining pledge amount for Afghanistan.</p>	
Para 5	<p>The Council noted with satisfaction on the completion of two projects i.e. <i>“Construction of Deh Mazang Public Part and Rehabilitation of Kabul Zoo”</i> and <i>“Construction of Block ‘A’ of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development Training and Research Center in Kabul”</i>. The Council hoped that the pledged amount for the projects would be ensured by the Member States and the</p>	

	remaining two projects would be completed soon. On the proposal of the ECO Secretariat to shift the matter/subject to other Directorate of ECO, the Council decided to convey its response to the Secretariat, through diplomatic channel, once it is formally communicated to the Member States by the ECO Secretariat.	
Para 6	<p>The Council acknowledged the strong need for continued ECO support for projects/programmes and efforts aimed at reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan. It also acknowledged the joint efforts by Secretariat and the Government of Afghanistan to organize in October 2016 a special conference on Afghanistan which was postponed to early 2017. The Council reiterated its support to this important initiative which aims to review the performance of the ECO Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan and to develop a new ECO advocacy approach/policy for Afghanistan including new possible missions for Fund.</p> <p>The Council further requested the Secretary General to make necessary arrangements for effective implementation of the outcomes of the Conference.</p>	
Para 7	<p>The Council, while appreciating the generous contribution to SFRA, requested the relevant Member States and international community to fulfill their pledges and contribute more effectively to the development-related activities in Afghanistan and express solidarity with the people of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.</p> <p>The Council acknowledged the need for revisiting the ECO advocacy policy for Afghanistan including the terms of reference of the “ECO Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan with a view to contributing more effectively to the development related activities in Afghanistan. The Council requested the Member States and the international community to actively participate in the <i>“Special Conference on Afghanistan”</i> to be held in April 2017 in Kabul.</p>	
<p>• <u>Economic Research</u></p> <p><u>ECO Plan of Action on Economic Research</u></p>		
Para 8	<p>The Council took note of the ECO Plan of Action on Economic Research as the framework for cooperation in the area of economic research in the ECO region. The 4th Meeting of ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (PSCER) which was organized on 4th December 2015 in Ankara considered the</p>	

	<p>theme topic on “Enhancing Infrastructure in the ECO Region” as well as suggested policies for enhancing the economic research activities in the region. However, the next meeting (5th PSCER Meeting), which was included in the Calendar of Events for 2016, could not be held as none of the Member States volunteer to hold this 5th PSCER Meeting.</p>	
Para 9	<p>The Council requested the Member States, who have not yet hosted the subject event, to volunteer hosting of the 5th PSCER Meeting in 2017 <i>or else</i> ECO Secretariat may convene the said meeting which will be funded from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF).</p>	
<p><u>ECO Joint Economic Research Programme (JERP)</u></p>		
Para 10	<p>The ECO Secretariat briefed the Council stating that the two projects i.e. (i) <i>“Comparative Study on the Relationship between Energy Consumption and Main Demographic and Economic Indicators among ECO Member States”</i> by Iran and (ii) <i>“Perspectives of Intra-regional Trade in ECO countries”</i> by Kazakhstan have been completed. The Secretariat further informed the Council about the four (4) ongoing projects being followed by PERS Directorate. Moreover, it was also informed that the Secretariat has received two new Project Proposals: (i) <i>Setting Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) and Capacity Building for Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan”</i> from Azerbaijan and (ii) <i>Decomposition on Input-output Table at the Regional Level”</i> from Kazakhstan. The Secretariat also proposed that the Member States may propose projects encompassing benefits for all the Member States.</p>	
Para 11	<p>The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council about the status of Ongoing Projects by PIDE of Pakistan which is working on both the Projects i.e. (i) <i>“Economic Management Modeling in the ECO member countries”</i> and (ii) <i>“Analyzing Food Security Issues in the ECO Region”</i>. He also requested the ECO Secretariat for provision of some macroeconomic data of ECO member states. Moreover, he said that the first project report will be submitted soon as per the agreed timeline.</p> <p>The Representative said that Pakistan support proposals on social accounting matrix by Azerbaijan as well as decomposition of Input Output Tables by Kazakhstan. He said that Social Accounting Matrix and Input Output Tables are</p>	

	important tools to evaluate the impact of different development and redistributive policies. There has been a dearth of such tools in the ECO region. In this context, the two proposals promise to provide these analytical tools at the regional level which will prove to be immensely useful for academic as well as applied researchers. He said that availability of these tools is expected to generate new research on evidence-based policy in a variety of fields including industry and international trade, income distribution, and impact of macroeconomic policies on productive sectors of the economy.	
Para 12	The Representative of the Republic of Turkey mentioned that to proper utilize the resources, it would be better to complete the existing projects instead of proposing/starting other new projects. However, Turkey supported the two projects from Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.	
Para 13	After deliberation, the Council requested the Project Coordinating Countries to provide the Secretariat with regular updates on the implementation progress of the ongoing ECO economic research projects. The Council also requested the ECO Member States (except Turkey and Azerbaijan) for providing views/comments/feedback on both the new project proposals, already circulated by the ECO Secretariat, for early implementation. The Council further urged the Member States to propose new project proposals related to the economic research and development in the ECO region under the framework of ECO Joint Economic Research Programme.	
<u>ECO Research Centre (ERC)</u>		
Para 14	The ECO Secretariat briefed the Council that the ECO Research Centre in Baku was established on approval of its Charter by the 21st COM in 2013. He said that the Research Centre would serve as the ECO economic think tank to work out projects, economic development strategies and policies for the region.	
Para 15	The Representative of the Republic of Turkey supported the establishment of ECO Research Centre (ERC) in Baku. However, he said that Turkey is ready to ratify the Charter but it is awaiting Azerbaijan's ratification to the Charter.	
Para 16	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan said that establishment of Economic Research Center (ERC) in the Central Asian region has been a long felt	

	<p>need and hence this is a very timely and important initiative by the ECO secretariat. The Center is expected to play a vital role in producing critical knowledge that can be utilized for the development of the ECO region. He said that the Charter of the ERC may explicitly recognize that the Center will play an active role in establishing networking with Universities in the ECO Region so as to benefit from their collective knowledge and promote new research ideas. He said that similarly, the Member States may be encouraged to nominate eminent Researchers and Professors as members of the executive bodies of the ERC.</p>	
Para 17	<p>The Council appreciated the views of the Member States about the Research Centre and also the willingness of the Republic of Azerbaijan to complete all procedures requested for early ratification of its Charter and provision of basic documents needed for operationalization of the ECO Research Centre (ERC) for further necessary action by other Member States' end. The Council requested the Member States to ratify the Charter once circulation by the Republic of Azerbaijan for early functioning of the Centre.</p>	
<p><u>ECO Economic Publications:</u> <u>(i) ECO Economic Journal</u></p>		
Para 18	<p>The ECO Secretariat on the ECO Economic Journal. It was informed that the Republic of Azerbaijan was requested to update the ECO Secretariat about the 7th issue of Economic Journal which is expected to be issued in 2016. It was informed that the ECO Economic Journal (2016-2020) has already been circulated to the Member States for views/comments on which feedback is still awaited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ECO Secretariat suggested that ECO may reproduce the valuable economic articles published in Member States. • The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran suggested that services of an expert may be hired to improve the quality of such articles • The Representative of the Republic of Turkey informed the Council that meetings held in the past on ECO Economic Journal did not support idea of re-printing the articles. • The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposals should be conveyed in advance for seeking inputs of the relevant 	

	<p>authorities of the Member States.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peer-reviewing is a policy of the journal, contributors will also work hard to improve the standard of their paper. • there should be some standard in terms of length of paper published in the journal. Some papers are too short and some are long. Although some international journals do publish short policy papers but they are separated from the regular articles, just like book reviews. • the articles published should be edited thoroughly in terms of language. • format of the paper is also very important. Some of the papers are more like a term paper rather than any good quality journal article. • improve the quality of any journal besides the above points another fix that comes to mind is to limit the number of papers to the best three or four regular length articles in the beginning; one or two short papers at the end or in the beginning but in separate category; and editors should make a point to publish one or two book reviews as well which would encourage more comprehensive and focused publishing. 	
Para 19	<p>The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECO Secretariat in compilation and dissemination of analytical papers, abstracts, academic articles, reviews on economic and social development trends in regional and global levels. However, the Council requested the Secretariat that any new proposal should be shared with the Member States in advance thus providing them sufficient time at their disposal to review the proposal. The Council further recommended the Secretariat that new proposals should be limited and specific in nature.</p> <p>The Council also requested the Member States to volunteer holding of 4th Meeting of the ECO Economic Journal and communicate the dates and venue to the ECO Secretariat <i>or else</i> the ECO Secretariat may hold the meeting. The Member States were also requested to expedite their views and comments on a comprehensive medium and long-term strategic plan for improvement of the ECO Economic Journal, draft of which has already been circulated to the Member States.</p>	
<u>(ii) ECO Annual Economic Report</u>		
Para 20	The ECO Secretariat informed the Council that Annual Economic Report 2014 has been circulated among the Member States and will be published after the RPC	

	Meeting. However, as regards Annual Economic Report for 2015, the ECO Secretariat has started collecting data and intends to publish it before ECO Summit/COM Meeting scheduled to be held in Pakistan in 2017.	
Para 21	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council that the fiscal year starts in Pakistan from 1 st July and end on 30 th June. He further informed that the report for the year 2015 has been shared with the Pakistan's Embassy in Tehran and will be communicated to the Secretariat in near future.	
Para 22	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that while preparing economic report the Member States should also include in economic policy related issue in the report in addition to the statistical data.	
Para 23	After deliberation, the Council requested the Member States for early provision of their data in ACCORDANCE WITH ESTABLISHED FORMAT FOR PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC REPORT 2015. The Member States were also requested to provide their economic reports BY END OF JANUARY 2017 IN ORDER FOR THE PUBLICATION TO BE DISTRIBUTED DURING 13 TH ECO Summit/COM Meeting.	
<u>ECO Economic Think-Tanks Forum</u>		
Para 24	The ECO Secretariat briefed the Council about the progress regarding the ECO Economic Think Tanks Forum and considered that based on the outcome of the meeting of 2 nd Forum and the proposal of Kazakhstan, the 3 rd Forum of ECO Economic Think Tanks was included in the ECO Calendar of Events 2015 and 2016 to be held in Kazakhstan. However, in spite of pursuance by the ECO Secretariat, the Meeting of the 3 rd Forum of the ECO Economic Think Tanks has not yet been held.	
Para 25	The Council decided that the ECO Secretariat may consult the Member States that if any one of them is willing to host the meeting.	
<u>Training of Economic Modeling</u>		
Para 26	It was informed by the ECO Secretariat that the " <i>First Regional Training Course on Practical Modeling with GAMS for ECO Member States</i> " was organized by Azerbaijan in joint cooperation with EcoMod and ECO in April 2014 in Baku with the objective to provide participants with an in-depth understanding of	

	formulation of modern economic models, compliant with world's prevailing trends to structure their economic system into sustainable economic models to better forecast near future and long-term challenges in any given economy.	
Para 27	The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECO Secretariat in seeking technical and financial support from the regional and international partners/institutions for continuation and sustainability of the training and capacity building of the participants of the Member States.	
<i>Three-Year Capacity Building Program on Economic Research</i>		
Para 28	On the recommendation of the 26 th RPC (Para 300 of the Report) that the ECO Secretariat may initiate a three year capacity building and technical training programme for the Member States in the areas of project management, Economic Research and Strategy and statistics, the Secretariat requested the Member States to provide the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Topics of Project Management, Economic Research and Strategy and statistics, where trainings are required/ needed for your country b. Topics/themes on which your institution and country have expertise to impart trainings to the fellow scholars/researchers c. List of topics on which your institution imparted training in last two years. 	
Para 29	The Council appreciated the efforts made by the ECO Secretariat for the said project and requested the Member States to provide inputs to the Secretariat as early as possible so that the Secretariat is able to finalize the three-year capacity building programme to the benefit of the region. The Council further requested the Member States to consider hosting the next session of the training course in 2017 as well as proposing the title of the course.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>STATISTICS</u> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Development of ECO Statistical Network (ECOSTAT)</u></p>		
Para 30	The Secretariat informed the Council that the ECO Statistical Network (ECOSTAT) has been established to function as the mechanism for implementation and development of the ECO Plan of Action on Statistics. He said that since its launch	

	<p>in February 2011 by the Statistical Centre of Iran, the ECOSTAT is functioning to serve as the main source of statistics for all users inside and outside the region. It was requested that the National Statistical Offices of the Member States may forward their filled-in Compendium for 2014 and 2015 to the Secretariat for publication on the ESOSTAT as well as preparing the regional statistical and economic reports.</p>	
Para 31	<p>The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that according to the decision made in the first meeting of Heads of the ECO NSO in 2008, the ECO Statistical Network Centre was established in February 2011. The Representative also mentioned that indeed the Statistical Centre of Iran accepted to establish and launch ECO Statistical Network in collaboration with the ECO Secretariat but due to transfer of the individual performing the job, the data of the Network has not been updated since that time. As per the agreement, the ECO Secretariat was supposed to collect data from the Member States and provide the same to SCI in order to upload the data on the ECOSTAT. The Council's attention was also drawn that existence and continuity of the Network depends on updating the contents of the Network. The Representative requested for taking necessary measures in this regard.</p> <p>The Representative requested for provision of Compendium/questionnaire for the year 2015 as soon as possible.</p>	
Para 32	<p>The Council was informed that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey have already provided the required data to the Secretariat and the remaining data, if any, will also be provided.</p>	
Para 33	<p>The Council appreciated the views expressed by the Member States on the Statistical Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its continuous technical support for the ECO Statistical Network (ECOSTAT). While appreciating ECO Secretariat efforts in regular updating and disseminating new data and statistics and new statistical publications, publishing documents and reports related to the ECO Statistical events alongwith news for major regional statistical events through the ECOSTAT website, the Council requested the Secretariat to continue managing and updating the contents of the website regularly in collaboration with the ECO Member States</p>	

	<p>The Council:</p> <p>(a) requested SCI to provide access to ECOSTAT Website and in the meanwhile asked the ECO Secretariat to ensure that latest data is received from Member States.</p> <p>(b) asked the Secretariat to enhance the strength of the PERS Directorate of the Secretariat for its smooth functioning.</p>	
ECO Statistical Publications		
Para 34	The Secretariat informed the Council that with the aim of development of statistical information and providing the last updated statistical data, the ECO Statistical Report has been compiled and published. Fourth volume was published in 2015. The PERS Directorate will continue its efforts for compilation and publishing the statistical reports for major areas of interest of the Organization in 2017.	
Para 35	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that rather than publishing such data in hard copy edition it should be placed on the website of ECO Secretariat minimizing the financial costs. The Council accepted proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran.	
Para 36	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat and requested the Member-States for provision of updated statistical Compendiums for 2013 and 2014 to the Secretariat for further dissemination on the ECOSTAT. The Secretariat was also requested to keep the Iran proposal of putting the data on the website of ECO while taking action.	
ECO Statistical Capacity Building Programme		
Para 37	The Secretariat while briefing the Council regarding the ECO Statistical Capacity Building Programme requested the Member States to propose a Capacity Building Programme.	
Para 38	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that the Statistical Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to host a Workshop in collaboration with ECO Secretariat in October 2017. It was further suggested that the topic of the Workshop should concentrate on Sustainable Development Goals or any Emerging Issues. The Secretariat was also requested to seek technical	

	support from regional and international partners/institutions such as UNSD, UNESCAP and UNSIAP.	
Para 39	The Council welcomed the proposal of the Statistical Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran and requested to communicate the same to the ECO Secretariat through official channel so that the same is circulated among the Member States. The Council also requested the ECO Secretariat to take actions after receipt of formal communication in this regard.	
<u>ECO Statistical Events</u>		
Para 40	The Representative of the ECO requested the Member States to consider hosting the 4 th Meeting of the Heads of ECO National Statistical Offices (HNSO) and 6 th ECO HLEG Meeting on Statistics in 2017.	
Para 41	The Representative of the Republic of Turkey informed the Council that TurkStat proposes that the Council requests the other Member States to volunteer hosting of the next Meeting of Heads of ECO National Statistical Offices (NHSO) and 6 th ECO HLEG meeting on Statistical in 2017 and if there will be no candidate, the Secretariat organizes the meeting. He further said that since 5 th ECO High Level Expert Group Meeting (HLEG) on Statistics was hosted by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) in 4-5 December 2012, in Ankara, the Council may request the other Member States to volunteer hosting of the next Meeting of Heads of ECO National Statistical offices (NHSO) and 6 th ECO HLEG Meeting on Statistics in 2017.	
Para 42	The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council that Pakistan is considering hosting of: (i) <i>4th Meeting of the Heads of ECO National Statistical Offices (HNSO)</i> and (ii) <i>6th ECO HLEG Meeting on Statistics</i> in 2017. He said that once the matter is finalized by the concerned authorities, the ECO Secretariat will be informed accordingly.	
Para 43	The Council appreciated Pakistan's offer to host both the events. However, in case Pakistan does not host these meetings then the ECO Secretariat will organize these meetings.	
<u>Cooperation with Regional/International Organizations</u>		
Para 44	The ECO Secretariat, like preceding years, is continuously making efforts to interact	

with the following regional and international organizations to achieve PERS Work Programme for 2017 which would particularly be facilitated implementation of the ECO Statistical Capacity Building programme, technically assisted and funded by FAO in the field of agriculture, statistics and also a Joint Training Workshop on Economic Modeling financed by IDB:

i.	Islamic Development Bank (IDB)	One of the main partners of ECO in achievement of its objectives and programme in different areas.
ii.	ECO-Islamic Research and Training Institute (ECI-IRTI)	An Institute under the IDB Group and ECO has been greatly benefited on project trainings for ECO countries.
iii.	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (ECO-SESRIC)	The Centre has always supported ECO with its generous contribution in implementing regional capacity building programme of the ECO.
iv.	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	FAO is collaborating with ECO in different projects.
v.	United Nations Statistics Division (ECO-UNSD)	One of the main partners of the ECO for implementation of statistical capacity building programme in the region.
vi.	United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (UNSIAP)	Main coordinator for providing training materials and documents for the workshop on “Measurement of the Informal Sector and the Non-observed Economy for ECO Member States”. ECO is also making efforts to seek technical and financial support for training and capacity building of the Member States.

	vii.	ECO-ILO	ECO is making efforts to seek technical and financial support for training and capacity building of the Member States.	
	vii i.	ECO-JICA	ECO is also making efforts to seek technical and financial support from JICA for continuation and sustainability of capacity building trainings of ECO Member States.	
	ix.	UNESCAP	The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region.	
Para 45	<p>The Representative of ECO Secretariat informed briefed the Council regarding holding of recent meetings with two Economic Research Institutes:</p> <p>(i) <u>SESRIC:</u> (Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre) of Islamic countries affiliated with the OIC; and</p> <p>(ii) <u>TEPAV:</u> an Organization established for the purposes of conducting data-based policy analysis and policy making contributions.</p> <p>The Council was informed that in the background of Vision Document, being prepared by Secretariat, it is felt that Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) needs to have an updated research on different areas especially in transport, trade and energy markets. He informed that both the Organizations have shown their interest in order to have some understanding and collaborative research programmes with ECO. It was mentioned that, as per the regulations, the Secretariat is going to share details of both the organizations with the Member States and later request through CPR for its formal approval for entering into negotiations and signing of a Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) by ECO with both the Organizations</p>			
Para 46	The Council appreciated the efforts of ECO Secretariat for its continued pursuance			

	<p>and interaction with regional and international organizations for their contribution in implementation of Work Programme for 2017, particularly the ECO statistical capacity building programme and progress in development of regional statistical projects. The Council also appreciated Secretariat's effort to enter into negotiations and signing of a MoU with SESRIC and TEPAV.</p> <p>The Council further impressed upon with the request to the regional and international bodies/agencies to continue their support to the ECO Member States as well as to the ECO Secretariat.</p>	
Para 47	The Council thorough reviewed and discussed the Draft Calendar of Events of PERS Directorate for 2017 and approved for its implementation.	
F. <u>SECTOR: HUMAN RESOURCES & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</u>		
Para 1	The Council acknowledged the continued relevance and value of regional cooperation on health and related areas, civil registration and disaster risk reduction in the ECO Region in the light of continued needs and requirements of the Member States, as well as global and regional developments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (SFDRR) and ECO Vision 2025. It further emphasized that in implementation of the work programme, support and partnership should be sought from the relevant regional and international organizations. Accordingly, the Council requested the ECO Secretariat and the Member States to jointly implement the work programme for 2017 as follows:	
<u>Human Development and Health</u>		
Para 2	<p>The Secretariat should approach WHO for assistance in streamlining the draft Plan of Action on Health Cooperation in ECO Region, as mandated by the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on 24 May 2016 in Geneva. Member States should also present their views on the priority areas for cooperation from among the areas identified by the draft Plan of Action by end of February 2017. Based on the measures above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat will present to the Member States the revised draft Plan of Action by end of March 2017. • The Secretariat will organize a High Level Expert Group Meeting by end of April 2017 to finalize the draft Plan of Action. In case of no 	

	<p>volunteer country, Secretariat should host the Meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fourth ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health/the Ministerial sideline Meeting in Geneva will endorse the Plan of Action. 	
Para 3	<p>The Secretariat and Republic of Turkey will co-organize the 2nd Meeting of the ECO Heads of National Organizations/Centers for Civil Registration on 16-18 October 2017 in Turkey. Accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretariat in coordination with the host country, should prepare a list of limited areas for regional cooperation, taking into account the outcome of the first ECO Heads of National Organizations/Centers for Civil Registration and the inputs to be received from the Member States by the end of June 2017. • ECO Secretariat should seek assistance from relevant regional and international organizations, including UNFPA, for better preparation for the above Meeting. 	
Para 4	<p>The ECO Secretariat will continue its efforts to cooperate with relevant international and regional organizations, among others through established relationship, including with UNDP, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNESCAP, UNICEF and WHO for their support to implementation of the Plan of Action as well as health related SDGs.</p>	
Para 5	<p>The Secretariat should help the Islamic Republic of Iran to organize the High Level Experts Group Meeting on International Health Regulations (IHR) on 2-3 May 2017 in Tehran. Accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Islamic Republic of Iran should provide to the Secretariat by end of December information on the proposed topics to be discussed in the Meeting as well as the details of hospitality. • The Secretariat should seek possibility of engagement of the relevant international organizations in the above meeting. 	
Para 6	<p>The Member States, who are in the position to do so, will inform the Secretariat on the availability of the academic scholarships in health related areas by the end of January and end of August to enable timely application by the interested nationals of the Member states. The interested Member States will nominate their candidates for the</p>	

	scholarships generously offered by the Turkish Cypriot State (observer).	
Para 7	Given the importance of education cooperation in the ECO Region, the Member States will enhance cooperation in the field of education: especially higher education and offer educational programmes/conferences/seminars/trainings and workshops.	
Para 8	The Secretariat and the Islamic Republic of Iran should jointly prepare a report for the Member States on the project proposal on HIV in the ECO Region by end of February 2017.	
Para 9	The Islamic Republic of Iran will provide the Secretariat with the information on proposed Workshop on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), to be held on 15-16 February 2017 in Tehran, and the proposed Workshop on Civil Registration, by end of December 2017.	
Para 10	The Islamic Republic of Pakistan should convey the exact dates for holding the 4th Meeting of the ECO Heads/Authorities of Blood Transfusion Organizations, by end of January 2017. The Secretariat will coordinate with the host country and Member States some tangible outcomes for the Meeting well prior to the set date of the Meeting, including technical cooperation and capacity building/training programmes to be adopted by the Meeting.	
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)		
Para 11	The Task Group (Iran, Pakistan and Turkey) established by the Expert Group Meeting for ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) (held in cooperation with IDB and UNESCAP on 26-28 October 2016) should present its proposed revised Regional Framework by end of February 2017.	
Para 12	The Republic of Turkey will host the Second Expert Group Meeting for ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2017 and will communicate the exact dates in due course. Accordingly, the Secretariat will make necessary preparations for the Meeting in coordination with the host country, UNESCAP, UNISDR, etc.	
Para 13	The Republic of Turkey will host the "8th ECO International Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction" in 2017 and will inform the	

	Secretariat on the exact dates in due course. The Secretariat and the host country will jointly prepare for the event.	
Para 14	Two months after finalization of the ECO Regional Framework by 8th ECO International Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Secretariat in cooperation with UNESCAP will present an implementation outline for the Regional Framework. This will be shared with the relevant authorities of the Member States and later on to be submitted to the 28th RPC meeting. This should include a calendar of training events for 2017-2018.	
Para 15	The interested Member States, who have not done so, will submit to the Secretariat the list of their disaster-related national stakeholders and players, including state organizations and institutes, local communities, non-governmental organizations and private enterprises active in the disaster reduction areas, by end of January 2017. Accordingly, the Secretariat should prepare a roster of the national institutions within the Region by end of February 2017. The Roster will be utilized in organization of the technical assistance programme/training activities for the Member States.	
Para 16	The Member States will regularly submit information on their activities on disaster risk reduction and related regulations to the ECO Secretariat for further circulation among the Member States in order to increase public awareness on the importance of the disaster risk reduction.	
Para 17	The ECO Secretariat should continue its interactions with relevant regional and international organizations and with a view seeking technical and financial support, including UNISDR, IDB, UNESCO, UNHABITAT, UNDP, UNOCHA and UNESCAP, including its newly Asian and Pacific Center for Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM).	
Para 18	The Secretariat should inform Member States by end of February on the modalities and format of the proposed Workshop on School Safety in ECO Region, to be jointly organized with UNESCO in June 2017.	

G. SECTOR: DRUGS AND ORGANIZED CRIME COORDINATION UNIT (DOCCU)

<p>Para 1</p>	<p>The Council acknowledged the continued importance of the regional cooperation in the area of fight against drugs and organized crime in the ECO Region as critical contribution into the economic growth and sustainable development of the Member States and the Region as a whole. Accordingly, it requested the DOCCU and the Member States to continue efforts to enhance cooperation in this regard. The Council further emphasized that regional institutional arrangements in the areas of police and law enforcement, judicial and anti-corruption cooperation in the ECO Region, as well as capacity building and training programmes will be of great impacts for the success of collective efforts in fight against drugs and organized crime in the ECO Region. Technical and financial assistance and support from relevant regional and international partners should be sought for success of ECO agenda in this regard.</p> <p>The Council requested the ECO DOCCU and Member States to jointly implement the following work programme in 2017:</p>	
<p>Para 2</p>	<p>The Republic of Turkey will host the 2nd Meeting of the ECO Chiefs of Police in 2017 in Turkey. Accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The host country should convey to the Secretariat by the end of January 2017 information on the date and venue as well as hospitality details for the Meeting. • The DOCCU will make necessary preparations for the Meeting in cooperation with the host country and other Member States, including drafting the agenda for the Meeting which should be focused on the immediate needs for regional cooperation. • The adoption of the Statute of the ECOPOL should be on the Agenda of the Meeting. DOCCU will present to the Member States the latest version of the Statute, taking into account proposed amendments by Turkey, by the end of February 2017. • The relevant regional and international organizations, including Interpol and UNODC will be invited to attend the Meeting. 	

<p>Para 3</p>	<p>As regards the ECO- Regional Centre for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen” (RCCACO):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The signatories, namely, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Tajikistan will inform the DOCCU by the end of February 2017 about the latest status of ratification of the Statute. • The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, who has expressed its interest to join the Center, will inform the DOCCU on the time and procedure for signing and ratifying the Statute of the Center. • The other interested ECO Member States will inform the DOCCU of their willingness to join the Center. • DOCCU will present to the Member States a report on the latest status of the operationalization of the Center at the end of April 2017. 	
<p>Para 4</p>	<p>The decision of the 2nd Meeting of Attorney/Prosecutors General of ECO Member States on the establishment of an effective mechanism for judicial cooperation/legal assistance among Member States should be followed up through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Islamic Republic of Pakistan will inform the DOCCU in due course the date, venue and hospitality arrangement for hosting the 3rd Meeting of Attorney/Prosecutors General of ECO Member States. • DOCCU will continue its coordination with Republic of Kazakhstan, who has expressed interest to host an Expert Group Meeting to discuss the modalities for the envisaged mechanism for judicial cooperation/legal assistance among Member States, whose outcome will be submitted to the 3rd Meeting of Attorney/Prosecutors General of ECO Member States in Pakistan. In case organizing the Meeting in Kazakhstan or any other Member State is not possible, the Expert Group Meeting should be organized in the ECO Secretariat in May/June 2017. • The DOCCU will circulate a background paper for Expert Group 	

	Meeting by the end of February 2017.	
Para 5	<p>The DOCCU and Member States will cooperate to implement training/capacity building programmes in 2017 in different areas of the drugs and organized crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Member States (except Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey) will submit the list of their institutions and trainers available for ECO training/capacity building programmes by the end of January 2017. The DOCCU will finalize the Roster of ECO institutions/trainers accordingly. • The Member States, who are ready to organize training courses and workshops for the experts/officials of the Member States, should inform the DOCCU by mid February 2017, indicating the necessary information as regards time, venue, format, syllabus/hospitality details, etc. • The Police of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who has already offered a list of 14 courses, will inform the DOCCU by the end of January 2017, about 4 courses available for the year 2017, including the syllabus and trainers as well as hospitality arrangements. • DOCCU should ensure, in coordination with the organizing countries, utilization of the available financial resources and expertise from within and outside ECO Region. 	
Para 6	<p>The pending meetings will be organized in 2017 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Islamic Republic of Pakistan will inform the DOCCU about the date, venue and hospitality arrangements for hosting the “4th ECO Interior Ministers Meeting” and the “2nd Meeting of the Heads of Interpol of the ECO Member States” in due course. • The Islamic Republic of Iran will inform the DOCCU by the end of January 2017 about the exact syllabus, trainers and hospitality arrangements for the workshop on “Best Practices on Drug Demand Reduction” to be organized in June/July 2017. 	
Para 7	The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan will inform the DOCCU by the end of April 2017 on the dates and arrangements for the proposed Experts	

	Meeting to discuss and identify areas of regional cooperation as regard fight against organized crime. Afghanistan and DOCCU will jointly prepare the agenda for the Meeting taking into account the experiences achieved/work done so far in the ECO Region	
Para 8	<p>Given the importance of the timely exchange of information/statistics among the Member States on activities in the areas of drugs supply, demand and trafficking, the ECO publication on “Drug Situation in the ECO Region” should continue to be supported by resources from within and outside Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States should submit the latest information/statistics for the year 2016 by the end of April 2017 enabling timely publication of the Report. • DOCCU should strengthen the analytical nature of the Report, utilizing expertise from the Member States and the relevant regional and international organizations. 	
Para 9	Building on the previous efforts and in cooperation with the potential regional and international partners, the DOCCU should prepare a report by the end of April 2017, on a possible ECO programme for alternative livelihood/development in Afghanistan. The Report should be then shared by the relevant authorities of Afghanistan and the Member States for implementation purpose.	
Para 10	The DOCCU should continue its interactions with the relevant regional and international organizations and United Nations agencies to seek technical assistance, consultancy and equipments for the implementation of its agenda. This includes, among other, UNODC, Interpol, ICMPD, relevant Istanbul Process CBM, etc.	
<p>H. <u>ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies and External Relations</u></p>		
<p>(a) <u>Inter-Regional ECO Activities</u></p>		
<p>(i) <u>ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies</u></p>		

Para 1	In order to support and promote the broad objectives of the ECO, particularly in the fields of science, technology, culture, and education, the Council encouraged the ECO Specialized Agencies to synergize their activities to promote cooperation in the relevant areas.	
Para 2	The Council encouraged the Member States to join, where applicable, the ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies and Centres and support their activities in different areas for the shared goals.	
Para 3	The Council requested the Secretariat to facilitate and assist the Specialized Agencies in developing cooperation with the relevant regional and international organizations in the educational, scientific and cultural fields, specifically UNESCO, within the framework of the MoU signed between the ECO and UNESCO.	
<u>ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)</u>		
Para 4	The Council appreciated the ECO Cultural Institute for organizing a broad range of events and activities in the fields of culture, literature, and arts aimed at promoting greater cooperation among the Member States. The Council encouraged the Institute to further expand the cooperation in the relevant fields for realizing the core objectives of ECI.	
Para 5	The Council welcomed and expressed commitment to help in every way possible the new President ECI Dr. Mazahiri. The Council also appreciated the former President of ECI, Mr. Iftikhar Hussain Arif, for his valuable contribution.	
Para 6	Taking note of the successful holding of the first ECO Poetry Night in 2015, the Council encouraged the Member States to organize the second ECO Poetry Night in the Region in collaboration with ECI. The Council appreciated promotion of common literary heritage of the great poets like Maulana Rumi, Hafiz Shirazi, Firdausi, Allama Iqbal, Mir Seyed Ali	

	Hamedani , Makhdoom Quli, and Babajan Ghaforuv, etc.	
Para 7	The Council asked the ECO Member States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), which have not ratified the Charter yet, to ratify the ECI’s Charter and support its initiatives for promoting the commonly cherished rich cultural heritage of the Region.	
Para 8	The Council appreciated the nomination of national focal points to the Institute by Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Tajikistan and requested the other ECO Member States to nominate their Focal Points, as this would help in ensuring effective coordination between the ECI and ECO Member States in relevant matters.	
Para 9	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for providing extra-budgetary contribution for different ECI efforts. The Council encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue its support for ECI and to favourably consider the issue of ECI Premises.	
Para 10	Keeping in view the financial problems being faced by the ECI, the Council requested the Member States, except the Islamic Republic of Iran, to pay their annual budgetary contributions to the Institute as per the agreed scale of assessments and in a timely fashion as delays also hinder ECI’s activities.	
Para 11	The Council requested Pakistan to convey the proposed date and venue of the 2nd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Youth Affairs. It was also noted that Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Kazakhstan expressed their interest to host the 4 th Meeting of ECO Heads of National Libraries.	
<u>ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)</u>		
Para 12	The Council Congratulated Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro on his appointment as the President ECOSF for a term of 3 years recommended	

	by the Board of Trustees in its 3 rd Meeting and subsequent approval of the Extraordinary COM.	
Para 13	The Council appreciated the activities and initiatives of the Foundation for developing and promoting cooperation among the Member States as well as with international organizations in the field of science, technology and Innovation (STI) and for the promotion of scientific research in the Region. The Council also appreciated the Annual Report published by the ECOSF for 2015.	
Para 14	The Council requested the Member States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan) that have not yet ratified the ECOSF Charter to do so as soon as possible, so as to make the Foundation stronger to achieve its objectives.	
Para 15	The Council appreciated the partial payment of annual mandatory contributions by the Islamic Republic of Iran for up to 2013 and full payment of mandatory contribution by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the ECOSF for 2012-2015, and requested the I.R. of Iran and other concerned Member States to contribute with their share.	
Para 16	The Council appreciated ECOSF for initiating program for inviting “Concept Proposals for Research Grant” under S&T Fund.	
Para 17	The Council also noted the need for the Member States to fulfil their pledges towards the ‘Science and Technology Fund’ and requested all Member States to generously contribute towards the Fund so that research projects between Member States can be initiated.	
Para 18	The Council also took note of the Foundation’s request that the ECO Secretariat should be represented appropriately in all relevant forums of the ECOSF, its meetings and events, to the possible extent.	
Para 19	The Council requested the Member States, who have not done so, to nominate their focal points in order to facilitate coordination between the Foundation and the Member States on relevant issues. The Council also asked the concerned Member States to nominate their eminent scientists for the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees of ECOSF who have not yet done so.	

Para 20	As informed by the ECOSF, the draft Host Country Agreement, to be concluded between the ECOSF and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, has been sent to the relevant authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Science and Technology) in Pakistan. The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to expedite the finalization and conclusion of the Agreement.	
Para 21	The Council appreciated Pakistan for hosting the 3 rd Meeting of Board of Trustees of the Foundation in Islamabad on 18 th of August, 2016.	
Para 22	The Council appreciated Iran for its offer for hosting 4 th Meeting of ECOSF Board of Trustees.	
Para 23	The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECOSF to hold regular consultations with the Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives of the Member States based in Islamabad to discuss issues of importance.	
Para 24	The Council appreciated the allotment of dedicated office premises to the ECOSF by Pakistan, the host country, in the Ministry of Science and Technology's building, Islamabad.	
<u>ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI)</u>		
Para 25	The Council requested the relevant members (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan) to ratify ECOEI's Charter to further promote cooperation in the field of education.	
Para 26	The Council requested the concerned Member States to pay their mandatory contributions.	
Para 27	The Council welcomed the offer of Republic of Turkey to host the 2 nd BoT Meeting in April 2017, and called upon all Member States to actively participate in the event to deliberate upon the pending issues at the earliest.	
Para 28	The Council also appreciated the signing of the Host Country Agreement between the Educational Institute and Government of the Republic of	

	Turkey. The Council also requested the relevant authorities of the Republic of Turkey to expedite the ratification process.	
Para 29	The Council called upon the Member States to actively support ECO-EI in its efforts to enhance cooperation in the field of Education.	

ECO Consultancy & Engineering Company (ECO-CEC)		
Para 30	The Council requested the Member States to support ECO-CEC in becoming an active regional institution of ECO. The Council also asked the Member States and the Secretariat to utilize the expertise of the ECO-CEC in providing consultancy services for projects having regional character.	
Para 31	The Council encouraged the Member States to facilitate effective participation of ECO-CEC in the bidding process for the projects financed from ECO resources and for other national projects, specifically, by timely exchange of information related to the bidding process.	
Para 32	The Council stressed on the need for effective communication and coordination between ECO-CEC and the ECO Secretariat for exploiting the emerging opportunities in the Region. The Council asked the Secretariat to share its relevant reports and publications, especially in the transport and energy sectors, with the ECO-CEC on a regular basis.	
Para 33	The Council took note of the request made by some Member States indicating that the ECO-CEC should prepare a report highlighting its core competencies in the field of engineering, which would be shared with the relevant agencies and authorities in the Member States for creating awareness about the Company.	
ECO College of Insurance		
Para 34	The Council appreciated the College for annual allocation, starting from 2014, of 40 Student Scholarships to the ECO Member Countries other than Iran. The Scholarship includes waiver of tuition fees and dormitory expenses. The ECO Member States may benefit from this opportunity,	

	which will be announced regularly on the website of the College, as so far only Afghanistan and Pakistan have introduced their candidates for the program.	
Para 35	The Council welcomed the proposal of ECO College of Insurance to host the International Conference on Silk Road and Transport Diplomacy in January, 2017 in Chahbahar, Iran.	
Para 36	The Council requested the Member States to convey their focal points from the relevant authorities, and share proposals/recommendations for enhancing cooperation and improving the educational standards and performance of the College. The Council also asked the Member States to encourage their talented students to avail scholarship opportunities offered by the College.	
Para 37	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for initiating preparations on hosting the 2 nd BoT Meeting in the first half of 2017 in Iran.	
Para 38	The Council appreciated the College of Insurance on its various activities aimed at promotion of Education and Research in the fields of Insurance, Actuarial Science, and Area Studies in its field of competence.	
Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Countries (PAECO)		
Para 39	As decided in the First Meeting of the Executive Council of PAECO held on 12 February 2013 at Islamabad, the Council requested the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to propose the dates for hosting the 2 nd Meeting of the Executive Council of the PAECO in Kabul in 2017.	
Para 40	The Council also took note of the proposal made by the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold the 2 nd Meeting of the Executive Council of the PAECO on	

	the sidelines of the upcoming meetings being attended by the Parliamentarians/Speakers of the Member States, in case the event cannot be held in Kabul.	
Para 41	The Council also requested the six Member States that have signed the PAECO Charter (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey) to expedite the ratification process and update the Secretariat.	
(ii) <u>ECO's External Relations</u>		
Para 42	The Council encouraged the Secretariat to take further steps in accordance with the Treaty of Izmir and the relevant decisions reached at different fora to strengthen the existing cooperation with the regional and international partners, including those within the UN system. The Council also requested the Member States to support the Secretariat in its efforts in this regard.	
Para 43	The Council pointed out that the MoUs signed between ECO and international organizations should be effectively operationalized and implemented in order to generate maximum benefit. The Council also requested the Secretariat that in signing the new MoUs with the potential partners, consideration should be given to the need for an agreed work programme to implement the MoU.	
Para 44	The Council requested the Member States to send instructions to their Permanent Missions based in New York, Paris, Vienna, Geneva, Rome, Bangkok, Nairobi and Jeddah to actively participate in the consultations/meetings of the ECO Contact Groups at these places. The Permanent Missions may be encouraged to play active roles within the framework of the ECO Contact Groups for enlisting support of the UN specialized agencies and other organizations for ECO's activities and programmes in various key sectors.	

Para 45	The Council requested the Member States to share substantive proposals for promoting ECO's cooperative relationship with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, funds and programmes.	
Para 46	The Council encouraged the Secretariat to develop and promote project-based cooperation with its regional and international partners and also asked the Member States to consider giving strategic direction to the Secretariat for undertaking such collaboration.	
Para 47	With the objective to develop and enhance interaction with ASEAN, the Council encouraged the Secretariat to take necessary measures for the enhanced cooperation between ECO and ASEAN.	