



30th Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)

Report

14-16 January 2020

ECO Secretariat, Tehran Report

Report

Inaugural Session

The 30th Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) was held on January 14-16, 2020 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. The relevant sectoral committees met on the sidelines of the meeting to discuss and consider their specific areas for making appropriate recommendations to the 30th Meeting of RPC.

2. The ECO Member States' delegations, including the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan attended the meeting. The Representative of the Turkic Council also attended the Meeting in the capacity of Observer. The concerned staff of the Secretariat headed by the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour, also participated in the event. The Representatives of ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies also took part in the Meeting. The list of participants is annexed as Annexure-I.

Agenda Item No.1

Opening remarks

3. While warmly welcoming the participants, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour deeply thanked the delegates for making it convenient to participate in the meeting. He underscored the RPC's important role entrusted by the ECO Council of Ministers (COM), inter-alia, reviewing ECO's activities and programmes to assess their progress and shortcomings, as well as proposing future plan of actions in line with the Treaty of Izmir and ECO Vision 2025. He underlined the steps taken for implementation of the ECO Vision 2025, fulfillment of the organization's objectives in the areas of trade, transit-transport, energy, tourism and organizational reform as well as the organization new approach to make it result and project-oriented. He also acknowledged and admired the efforts and contributions of the Member States made to secure the targets set forth in the Work Programme 2019.

4. The ECO Secretary General overviewed the directorate-wise notable achievements made in 2019, adding the measures for further functional improvement. He emphasized upon an agreed approach to implement ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) to accelerate trade activities and enhance trade volume of the Region. The Secretary General acknowledged the visible progress in the area of transport and communications in 2019, underlining the importance of TTFA, the main relevant ECO framework

for cooperation in the field of transport. He further highlighted ECO's collaboration with UNIDO in establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) and expressed satisfaction on completion of its Preparatory Phase this year. He further mentioned about different projects being pursued by ECO Secretariat in the fields of Tourism, Environment, Agriculture and Minerals. A copy of his detailed statement is placed at *Annexure-II*.

5. The Guest Speaker and the Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Gholomreza Ansari receptively welcomed the participants of the 30th RPC's Meeting, wishing them a pleasant and memorable stay in Tehran. The Guest Speaker also appreciated the ECO Secretary General and his team for successful arrangements of the event. He underlined the great utility of the ECO as an important platform for discussing the ways and means of improving sustainable economic development in the Member States. He expected the Member States to express interests in the ECO affairs and activities, considering that without their active and serious involvement, the realization of the organization's goals would remain elusive. A copy of his detailed statement is placed at *Annexure-II*.

First Plenary Session

Agenda Item No. 2

Election of the Chairman

6. As per ECO's rules and procedures His Excellency Mr. Hayri Maraşlıoğlu, Vice President of the Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey was elected as Chairman to lead the 30th Meeting of RPC.

7. Mr. Maraşlıoğlu expressed his pleasure to join the ECO delegates for participation in the 30th Meeting of RPC at Tehran. While extending gratitude to the Secretariat for the meticulous arrangements and generous hospitality provided to the participants of the event, the Chair acknowledged the excellent preparation made by the ECO Secretariat for the success of the RPC. He further conveyed that the Republic of Turkey, as ECO's Chair, attaches immense importance to expand and deepen the all-around relations with the member countries as well as strengthen ECO's activities, expressing confidence that experts participating in sectoral meetings would prepare a purposeful work programme aiming at expansion of regional cooperation and the interest of the people of ECO Region.

8. While underlining the difficult times that the ECO Region has been experiencing both in political and economic terms, the Chairman underlined that the region's huge potential might be exploited to meet any such difficulties that hinder our smooth progress and growth. He, however, noted that close and

expanded cooperation of the Member States was quite essential to secure the desired results in all areas of mutual benefits. A copy of his statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

Agenda Item No.4

Statements by the Heads of Delegation on the implementation of the decisions of the 30th RPC

9. The Heads of delegations of the ECO Member States delivered their statements in alphabetical order outlining their country's policies and views on the programmes and activities of the Organization. They also highlighted the progress made on the implementation of the decisions taken during the 29th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council. Copies of their statements are placed at **Annexure-II**.

10. The Head of delegation of the Turkic Council also made a Statement as an observer. Copy of his statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

11. The Heads of delegations of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECO-CI), ECO Educational Institute (ECO-EI), ECO Trade & Development Bank (ECOTDB), ECO Regional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of the Regional Programme for Food Security (ECO-RCC) and ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) also spoke during and highlighted their activities and progress made since last RPC's meeting. Copies of their statements are placed at **Annexure-II**.

Agenda Item No.5

Review of the progress of implementation of the ECO approved programmes/projects and consideration of proposals for new programmes and projects for the year 2020

12. The Council elected the following delegates to chair the meetings of the Sectoral Committees:

i.	Trade & Investment	Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mr. Nasar Iqbal, Chief, International Trade & Finance, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives
ii.	Transport & Communications	Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Ne'matzoda Farrukh Ne'mat, Head of Land Transport, Ministry of Transport
iii.	Energy & Environment	Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Seyed Rasool Shabibi, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
iv.	Agriculture, & Industry	Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Homan Fathi, Director General, Ministry of Agriculture Jihad
v.	Tourism	Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Javid Abdullayev, Senior Advisor,

		International Relations Division of the State Tourism Agency
vi.	Human Resources & Sustainable Development	Republic of Turkey Mr. Gokten Damar, Expert, Presidency of Strategy and Budget
vii.	Judicial and Parliamentary Coordination and EAPA	Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Hamidreza Rafeapour Tehrani, Director, International Law Department, Drug Control Headquarter
viii.	ECO Regional Institutions/ Specialized Agencies/ Affiliated/ Bodies International Relations	Republic of Turkey Mr. Fatih Unlu, Expert, Presidency of Strategy and Budget

13. The Council considered the list of project proposals developed by the relevant sectoral ministerial meetings and mulled over by the RPC's sectoral committees. A copy of the list is enclosed at **Annexure-III**.

Agenda Item No.6

Endorsement of the draft outcomes

14. The closing plenary session of the RPC was held on January 16, 2020 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Hayri Maraslioglu, Vice President of the Strategy and Budget of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.

(i) Annual Work Programme 2020

15. The Council after reviewing all Sectoral Work Programmes prepared during the Review Committee Meetings formally endorsed the Sectoral Work Programme 2020 for final approval by the COM. The Work Programme 2020 is placed at **Annexure-IV** of this Report.

(ii) Calendar of Events 2020

16. Annual ECO Calendar of Events for 2020, proposed by the Sectoral Committees Meetings, was reviewed and endorsed by the Council for final approval by the COM. The Annual Calendar of Events 2020 is placed at **Annexure-V** of this Report.

Agenda Item No 7

Any Other Business

17. No issue was raised under this agenda item.

Agenda Item No.8

Date and Venue of the next Meeting

18. The Council decided to organize the next meeting (31st) of RPC on January 12-14, 2021 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.

Agenda Item No.9

Adoption of the Report of 30th RPC Meeting

19. The Report of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council was unanimously adopted.

Agenda Item No. 10

Closing Remarks

20. The Council deeply appreciated and thanked the ECO Secretariat, Secretary General and his team for making excellent arrangements to successfully organize the 30th Meeting of the RPC, preparation of necessary documents, and logistical arrangements made for the participating delegates.

21. In his concluding remarks, the ECO Secretary General H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour summarized the decisions taken by the esteemed Council. He expressed gratitude to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for patronage and support as well as cooperation throughout the event. The Secretary General also extended deep gratitude to the representatives of the Member States for their kind participation and valuable contributions. He also appreciated the efforts of Secretariat's staff and the ECO institutions for their hard work, preparing relevant documents of the RPC and meticulous services, in this regard.

22. The Council concluded the meeting with a vote of thanks to the Chair for managing the meeting in proactive, smooth and efficient manners. The Council also acknowledged and thanked the Chairmen of various Sectoral Committees for successfully conducting their tasks.

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