

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri,
Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization
at 4th ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources
April 27, 2022, hosted virtually by Uzbekistan**

**Honourable Deputy Minister Mr. Sherzod Khodjaev,
Esteemed representatives of the Member States,
Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to address the 4th ECO Experts Group Meeting on Renewable Energy Sources, as well as privileged to extend my warm gratitude to the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for hosting this important event virtually. I would also like to warmly welcome all distinguished participants of this meeting.

I am confident that our today's interaction will enable us to review the ECO's energy agenda in renewables and energy efficiency issues, revitalizing the envisaged objectives based on the Member States' shared interests and covering current and future prospects of the regional cooperation in transition to sustainable energy.

Dear participants,

Transition to sustainable energy is one of the strategic objectives of our regional energy agenda for today and near future. It is clear that this transition in the ECO region has already begun. Region-wide investment in renewables, exploration of more advanced energy efficiency mechanisms and cross-border energy connectivity links are being installed and many others are under consideration.

With a growing energy demand and increasing emphasis on sustainable energy, enhanced regional cooperation is critical to boost energy security, affordability and overall climate-resilience in the ECO region.

Regional cooperation to mobilize capacities, knowledge, technology and investment, as well as to establish regional markets is an essential part of the sustainable energy transition for the ECO region. Particularly, cross-border cooperation and interconnected power grids can cut energy expenditures, improve reliability, and reduce carbon

emissions at lower-cost, while increasing the share of and synergies among clean energy resources, particularly hydro, wind and solar. This may take the form of joint projects, support schemes or statistical transfers.

While there is consensus among countries in the region on the need to transition to a sustainable energy system, the diversity of circumstances they face means there is no single pathway or timeframe to achieve this. ECO countries are at different levels of development and have uneven resource endowments, with differing geography and technological capacities. There are multiple policy options for accelerating progress towards a sustainable energy future, for which each country must calibrate its own response.

Adapting to this new reality and harnessing these trends to support the energy transition require innovative policies, systems thinking, new sources of finance and advanced business models. Concrete examples highlight several difficulties, such as the complexity of reaching agreements, concerns about conflicts with national measures, uncertainty on the sharing of costs and benefits, and public acceptance. Strong political will, mutual trust, good governance, flexibility in negotiations and national legislation, and a coordinated communication strategy emerge as some of the key enablers to overcome such complexities.

Economic Cooperation Organization can play bridging role in meeting the aspirations of its Member States to develop their own energy transition pathways through its newly adopted Energy Strategy 2030 and established ECO Clean Energy Center. Recalling my earlier call for active engagement, I encourage all esteemed Member States to take concrete steps towards putting into action subject Strategy and sign the Charter of the Centre for its timely operationalization.

Dear Participants,

We strongly hope that current expert group framework will provide a practical contribution to deliberations for our upcoming 5th Ministerial Meeting on Energy also expected to be hosted by the Republic of Uzbekistan in the 4th quarter of 2022.

In conclusion, let me assure you of Secretariat's strong commitment in taking all necessary measures required for implementation of your concrete proposed actions. This event's recommendations would be the outcomes of our discussions today, which will guide us to take result-oriented steps towards ECO's contribution for the region's sustainable energy growth in future.

I wish this event to be a great success, extending my best wishes to all participants.

Thank you all.