

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri, ECO Secretary General
at the Second International High-level Conference on International
Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development"
Dushanbe, 6-9 June 2022**

**Excellency Emomali Rahmon,
Honourable President of the Republic of Tajikistan,
Distinguished Delegates and Representatives of the United Nations
and other Regional and International Organizations,
Dear Participants, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I feel immensely privileged to represent the Economic Cooperation Organization in this very important international conference which is rightly aimed to address and consider one of the most challenging issues of the era.

It's my further privilege and honour to convey my sincere thanks and deep felicitations to His Excellency President Emomali Rahmon for his kind patronage and staunch support to Tajikistan's several important initiatives on water which have been successfully adopted by the United Nations General Assembly since the Year 2000. Among them the most recent and prominent are "International Year of Freshwater 2003", "International Decade for Action "Water for Life", 2005-2015, "International Year of Water Cooperation 2013" and "International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028".

I also avail this opportunity to extend my profound gratitude to the Government of Tajikistan for the warm hospitality and impressive arrangements. The organization of this interactive global gathering as well as convocation of such other significant events by Tajikistan, reflect the country's deep dedication and strong commitment, especially being as one of the notable ECO Member States, to the causes of great magnitude.

ECO region, which is inhabited by more than half a billion people, spans over 8 thousand square kilometers through West, Central and East Asian countries, encountering growing challenges of water security, sustainability, management and some others that emanate from climatic and human-led problems. To deal with such critical phenomena, the ECO Member States aspire, indeed, to consider the water as a primary source

or catalyst for cooperation as well as maintenance of peace and stability that are prerequisite to promote sustainable socioeconomic development.

Distinguished Delegates,

Undoubtedly sustainable development goals cannot be achieved without just management of water resources. What brings the ECO nations together is their common objective to promote sustainable conditions to make shared progress for their joint prosperity and development through strengthening regional and international cooperation. The ECO is very keen to work closely with peering regional and international organizations and other stakeholders on water related areas.

Dear Participants,

The climate crisis is a water crunch: the effects of climate change are felt through water, as higher temperatures lead to more droughts, floods, and rainfall variability. As the effects of climate change intensify and the world battles the long-term impact of the pandemic, progress on achieving the SDGs by 2030 is lagging further behind.

In this vein, I would like particularly emphasize Honorable President H.E. Emomali Rahmon's initiative within 15th ECO Summit, to declare 2025 the International Year for Preservation of Glaciers, as well as to establish an International Glacier Protection Fund, which can be one of triggering points toward addressing and contributing in tackling one of climate change implications on water challenges of our globe.

Our Organization is building partnerships to roll out an integrated response to these challenges, and to achieve progress at regional level. One of the mainstreams in this vein is to overcome water challenges by generating specialized knowledge, building capacity, and supporting sector reforms.

One of our priorities ahead is building resilience through better management of water resources. We will continue to support our Member States as they work to understand and address their water security challenges.

Excellencies,

Cross-border water cooperation is about sustainable development. It is about making progress through partnerships. It is about peace and security. But above all it is about people and about our future. There is no greater need for the world to work together.

Concluding my remarks, I am confident that the Dushanbe Water Conference's conclusions will produce some more effective ways and guidelines, paving fresh avenues of cooperation on water for sustainable development as well as our transformation towards more resiliency.

Thank you all and best wishes.
