

**THE SPEECH MADE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE AT THE 15TH ECONOMIC
COOPERATION ORGANIZATION LEADERS' SUMMIT**

(28 NOVEMBER 2021, ASHGABAT)

Honourable Heads of State and Government,

Esteemed Secretary General,

Distinguished Members of Delegations,

I wholeheartedly greet you on behalf of my nation and myself.

I am very happy to be with you on the occasion of the 15th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I would like to thank our Turkmen brothers and sisters, first and foremost my brother H.E. BERDIMUHAMEDOV, for their hospitality.

As Türkiye, we are handing over the Summit Presidency.

I wish success to the new Chairman, friendly and brotherly country Turkmenistan.

I pray to Allah that the Summit be beneficial for our countries and our region.

Once again, I wholeheartedly congratulate Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan on the 30th anniversary of their independence.

Esteemed Friends,

As whole humanity, we have been fighting with a global threat for about two years.

The pandemic, which has cost the lives of more than five million people, continues to show its effects in every field, especially in economy, trade and tourism.

I hope that our Summit will be instrumental in further strengthening our cooperation and solidarity in the fight against the coronavirus.

As Türkiye, we have endeavored to meet the requests for assistance we have received from all over the world during this difficult period.

So far, we have provided aid to 160 countries and 12 international organizations, including our Organization's Members.

We have also supported some members of our Organization by providing medical equipment export licences, purchasing permits and training and personnel support.

In addition, we have supplied vaccines to 11 countries.

We have recently applied for emergency use approval for our domestic vaccine, TURKOVAC.

Hopefully, when the process is completed, we will put our vaccine to the service of all humanity along with our nation.

Esteemed Brothers and Sisters,

Our summit is organized under the theme "Into the future together".

It is important that we determine how we can take better advantage of our organization in terms of strengthening our economic cooperation.

The ECO Vision 2025 Document contains the necessary roadmap for us to achieve our common goals.

We also consider the Ashgabat Consensus for Action, which we will ratify today, as a document emphasizing our strong will in this direction.

We should take more advantage of the vast potential offered by our geography, which has a population of approximately 500 million in an area of eight million square kilometres.

We must intensify our efforts to raise our trade volume to the level of 100 billion dollars.

In this context, we must primarily put into force the Trade Agreement ECOTA, which is also among the strategic goals of the ECO Vision 2025 Document.

I believe that this agreement, which has unfortunately not been implemented for 17 years, is the main instrument which will enable intra-regional trade to reach the level it deserves.

ECOBANK, which we host in Istanbul, can also fulfil more important functions in our development, with the participation of all Members of the Organization, by increasing its corporate and financial capacity.

The Educational Institute in Ankara has started to make serious contributions to humanitarian development by increasing cooperation between our Members.

The Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security, which continues its activities in Ankara, also plays an important role in ensuring food safety and developing the agricultural sector in our region.

Esteemed Brothers and Sisters,

The significance of regional and global transport networks has also become apparent once again during the pandemic.

Our efforts to develop the transport infrastructure in our region and revive the Modern Silk Road continue unabated.

The Trans-Caspian East-West Middle Corridor Initiative led by Türkiye and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway line are the most concrete manifestations of our efforts in this context.

The significance of Zangezur corridor, which will establish a direct road connection between Türkiye and our region, is also obvious.

Likewise, “Marmarail”, “Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge”, “Eurasia Tunnel”, “Istanbul Airport”, “Marmara Motorway” and “Istanbul-Izmir Motorway”, connecting Asia to Europe, are among our complementary projects.

Also, our endeavours regarding the projects “Filyos Port”, “1915 Çanakkale Bridge” and “Çandarlı Port”, which will contribute to the east-west connection, are underway.

We also welcome the efforts to make the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor operational and revive the Railway on the same route.

Accordingly, I believe that we should further embrace our Organization, continue the reform process and make it effective with a strong budget.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is essential to establish lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan, which faces a serious humanitarian and economic crisis, as soon as possible.

It is our common wish and goal to develop a sense of governance that will meet the expectations of all segments within the country.

We support the efforts to keep the fundamental state structures operational in Afghanistan, including critical sectors such as health and education.

We need to help the Afghan economy recover to prevent a refugee crisis that will affect our entire region.

Turkish Red Crescent and our non-governmental organizations increased their humanitarian activities against the growing danger of hunger and famine in this country.

Ending unilateral sanctions imposed on Iran, and the return of all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and reassuming their obligations will contribute to the economic prosperity and stability of our region.

Our brother Azerbaijan's liberation of its occupied territories also enabled the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the region.

The successive projects by Azerbaijan to increase prosperity in the region are praiseworthy.

These steps will support the efforts for normalization in the region.

Türkiye will continue to be on the side of Azerbaijan in this process.

It is of great importance that we are in full solidarity with Azerbaijan as an Organization.

Reaffirming the sovereign equality and equal international status of the Turkish Cypriot people is the key to a solution regarding the Cyprus issue.

I ask all friendly and brotherly countries to consider without prejudice the vision of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for a solution.

We encourage the development of relations in areas such as sports, culture, education and tourism, so as to alleviate the isolation of Turkish Cypriots who enjoy Observer Member status in our Organization.

Regional and international cooperation is vital in the fight against terrorism.

We must persist in our struggle without making exceptions for different terrorist organizations.

Peace, stability and economic development will also gain momentum as our region is cleared of bloody terrorist organizations such as the PKK-YPG, FETO, DAESH.

In this regard, it is vital that we act in solidarity against all forms of terrorism.

As I end my words with these thoughts, I once again greet you with affection and respect.

I would like to thank all the Member States and the Secretariat for their efforts for the success of our Summit, especially the Summit President and our host country Turkmenistan.

Now I leave the floor to my my brother Mr. BERDIMUHAMEDOV to make his speech and preside over the Summit Meeting.