

# The 75<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

## Report

( Tehran, Monday, April 14, 2003 )

1. The 75<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held at the ECO Secretariat on April 14, 2003, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Selahattin Alpar, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey, Tehran. The Permanent Representatives/Representatives of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan as well as the ECO Secretary General along with the ECO staff attended the meeting. The list of participants is placed at **Annex-I**.

### **Agenda Item No.1**

#### Adoption of the Agenda

2. CPR adopted the following agenda for the 75<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR):
  1. Adoption of the agenda.
  2. Adoption of the draft report of the 74<sup>th</sup> CPR meeting.
  3. Follow-up of the implementation of the decisions of 12<sup>th</sup> COM, 7<sup>th</sup> Summit and Istanbul Declaration.
    - a) ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI).
    - b) ECOTA
    - c) ECO Trade & Development Bank and ECO Reinsurance Company.
    - d) Harmonization of TTA and TTFA.
    - e) ECO Shipping Company.
  4. Contributions of the member states to the Secretariat budget.
  5. Preparation for the 13<sup>th</sup> RPC meeting:
    - a) Confirmation for participation.
    - b) Working papers
    - c) ECO Calendar of Events for 2003-2004.
    - d) List of ECO Events to benefit from the Special Support Fund (SSF).
  6. Institutionalized meetings of the Finance/Economy Ministers of the ECO member states.
  7. Preparation for the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council of Ministers.
    - a) Draft Agenda.
    - b) Confirmation for participation.
    - c) ECO Business Forum
  8. Appointment of the new Secretary General and directing staff.
    - a) Kazakhstan's nomination for the post of Secretary General
    - b) Nominations for DSGs and other directing staff

- c) Appointment of the President of ECO Cultural Institute.
9. Reconstruction of Afghanistan – Visit of Secretary General to Afghanistan.
10. Status of ECO Feasibility Fund and modality for its utilization.
11. International activities.
  - a) Draft MOU between ECO and UNECE
  - b) MOU between ECO and WCO
  - c) MOU between ECO and Colombo Plan
  - d) Signing a project document with FAO
12. Any other business.
13. Date of the next meeting.

## **Agenda Item No. 2**

### Adoption of the draft report of the 74<sup>th</sup> CPR meeting

3. CPR adopted the report of the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives with some changes. The adopted report was circulated vide Secretariat note No. SG/CPR/2003/0559 dated April 16, 2003.

## **Agenda Item No. 3**

### Follow-up of the implementation of the decisions of 12<sup>th</sup> COM, 7<sup>th</sup> Summit and Istanbul Declaration

4. CPR considered the report as prepared by the Secretariat, bearing No.COM.SUM/12<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> /2003/5, on the follow-up of the implementation of the decisions of 12<sup>th</sup> COM, 7<sup>th</sup> Summit and Istanbul Declaration. In this context, the Council pointed out the following:

- a) ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI).

5. CPR, while appreciating the background paper prepared by the Secretariat on the activities of ECO-CCI, recommended to include it as an agenda of next COM meeting.

- b) ECOTA

6. CPR also appreciated the background paper prepared by the Secretariat on ECOTA. However, the Council pointed out that the study should highlight the following too:

- i) How much increase in the intra-regional trade would be affected by ECOTA.
- ii) The expected increase in GDPs of member states of ECO as a result of ECOTA.
- iii) Expected increase in the efficiency of economies of ECO member states as a result of ECOTA.

7. Therefore, CPR asked the Secretary General to complete the study benefiting (i) papers on ECOTA already prepared by ITC, WTO and UNESCAP (ii) with the assistance of international organizations which ECO has cooperative relationship i.e. ITC, WTO, UNDP and UNESCAP and consultants from the member states and (iii) from the official circles of those member states who could help the Secretariat in this regard. The study thus completed should be submitted to the next COM meeting. It was also suggested that HLEG should be more involved in the preparation of the supporting documents for ECOTA.

c) ECO Trade & Development Bank and ECO Reinsurance Company.

8. The Council reiterated its request to the concerned member states to take the necessary steps to resolve the legal issues with regard to the establishment of ECO Trade & Development Bank and Reinsurance Company.

d) Harmonization of TTA & TTFA.

9. CPR requested the member states to confirm their participation to the meeting of the Road Transport and Customs experts to be held on June 18-19, 2003, in Istanbul, Turkey, to reconcile the existing inconsistency between TTA and TTFA.

e) ECO Shipping Company (ESC).

10. Permanent Representative of Pakistan informed CPR that they were still awaiting information on the date and other arrangements for the General Assembly meeting of the Company to be held in Pakistan.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

##### Contributions of the member states to the Secretariat budget

11. With regard to the unpaid contributions of the member states for years between 1998 to 2003, the Secretary General informed the Council about the latest developments as follows:

- a) Iran had paid its unpaid contributions for 2002 and part of its contributions for 2003.
- b) Kazakhstan intimated that they had paid their contribution for 2002 and 2003 in February 2003.
- c) Since the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly decided to re-evaluate the rates of assessment in 2003 for Afghanistan at 0.001 percent, the Secretariat had to recalculate the contributions of the seven member states for the budget 2003 accordingly. The new figures for contributions of the seven member states and the copy of the Resolution of the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of UN were circulated during the meeting among the member states. Copy of the Resolution is placed at **Annex-II**.
- d) The Secretariat did not receive information yet from the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan regarding the appeal they had made earlier regarding incorrect calculation of their contributions.

12. Furthermore, some Permanent Representatives informed CPR on the issue as follow:

- i) The Permanent Representative of Pakistan informed that the Government of Pakistan had transferred its contribution to the account of ECO Secretariat for 2003 on March 21, 2003.
- ii) The Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan informed that the contributions of Uzbek Government would be paid fully or partially this year.
- iii) The Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan informed that his Government had paid its contribution for 2003 by the end of February 2003.

13. CPR, while thanking the member states who had already paid their contributions, requested the Secretary General, after adjusting the contributions of Afghanistan in accordance with the new Resolution of UN to inform the six member states about their

recalculated unpaid contributions.

### **Agenda Item No. 5**

#### Preparation for the 13<sup>th</sup> RPC meeting:

##### **a) Confirmation for participation**

14. The Secretary General informed CPR that all member states had confirmed their participation in the meeting, though only some of them conveyed the list of their participants along with flight schedules.

15. CPR urged the member states who did not do so to inform the Secretariat about the list of their participants along with flight schedules as soon as possible for onward transmission to the host country, Iran, to make necessary arrangements i.e. accommodation and reception etc.

##### **b) Working papers**

16. The Secretariat, during the meeting, distributed a list of documents which had been circulated to the member states so far for preparation. The said list is placed as **Annex-III**.

##### **c) ECO Calendar of Events for 2003-2004**

##### **d) List of ECO Events to benefit from the Special Support Fund (SSF)**

17. CPR decided to review the calendar of events for 2003 and 2004 and approve the list of events out of the calendar to benefit from SSF following the endorsement of the calendar of events by the 13<sup>th</sup> RPC meeting.

### **Agenda Item No. 6**

#### Institutionalized meetings of the Finance/Economy Ministers of the ECO member states.

18. CPR pointed out that the subject was included in the agenda of the 13<sup>th</sup> RPC meeting. RPC would discuss the subject and give its recommendations. Following the approval of the recommendations by COM, the member states and the Secretariat would proceed to complete the necessary formalities for holding the meeting.

19. CPR pointed out that the member states who had two Ministers both in the fields of economy and finance could decide themselves which Minister should take part in the meeting, taking into account the subjects to be discussed.

### **Agenda Item No.7**

#### Preparation for the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council of Ministers.

##### **a) Draft Agenda**

20. CPR deferred the consideration of the draft agenda to its next meeting.

##### **b) Confirmation for participation**

21. The Secretary General briefed CPR that so far Pakistan, Iran and Kazakhstan had confirmed their participation at the Ministerial level. During the meeting, the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan, Turkey and Tajikistan confirmed that their ministers would also participate in the meeting.

22. The Permanent Representative of Kyrgyz Republic informed CPR that he would give detailed information on the arrangements for the meeting in due course.

**c) ECO Business Forum**

23. With regard to the request of the Kyrgyz Government for organizing ECO Business Forum on the sidelines of the 13<sup>th</sup> COM meeting with ITC support, the Secretary General informed CPR that the ECO-ITC project had planned three programmes and two of them were implemented and the third one namely the 2<sup>nd</sup> Buyers-Sellers meeting on Food & Beverages would be held in Almaty on May 26-27, 2003. Therefore, ITC had informed us that no budget was available to organize an ECO Business Forum in Bishkek and allocation for this purpose could be made only in the budget for 2004. Thus Secretary General informed the member states further that organizing an ECO Business Forum with financial support of ITC on the sidelines of 13<sup>th</sup> COM meeting was, therefore, not possible. But the member states could decide whether they should finance organization of the proposed Business Forum. The Secretary General also informed that the seminar on HIV/AIDS disease in consultation with UNFPA could be held in Bishkek on the sidelines of COM on June 5-7, 2003. CPR agreed to hold further consultations on organizing ECO Business Forum during its next meeting. In this regard, the Secretariat was tasked to prepare a detailed note.

24. CPR asked the Secretary General to cooperate with the Kyrgyz Embassy in Tehran and workout necessary arrangements for 13<sup>th</sup> COM and report to the next CPR.

**Agenda Item No.8**

Appointment of the new Secretary General and the Directing staff.

**a) Kazakhstan's nomination for the post of Secretary General**

25. CPR considered the Kazakhstan's nomination of H.E. Dr. Bekzhasar Narbayev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the I.R. of Pakistan for the post of Secretary General. However, since some member states had yet to receive concurrence with the nomination formally from their capitals, CPR deferred its recommendation on this issue to its next meeting.

**b) Nominations for DSGs and other directing staff**

26. CPR reiterated its request for Iran and Pakistan to nominate candidates for the DSG posts for the next three-year term. CPR also urged all member states to nominate for posts falling vacant in the category of other directing staff as soon as possible.

27. The Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan pointed out that his Embassy, through a note verbale, had asked from the Secretariat on the possibility of the second renewal for the post of a Director. The Secretary General as well as the Legal Adviser explained about the provisions of ECO Staff Regulations and in line with those Regulations the Secretariat could not renew a Director beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> term. A reply to the Kazakhstan Embassy on the issue would be sent and the same would be circulated to the member states for information.

28. The Secretary General informed CPR that the deadline for nomination of the Directing staff was May 1, 2003 and requested the member states to send their nominations before the deadline so that the next CPR could finalize the appointments and submit the same to COM for approval. Therefore, the same item would be kept in the agenda of next CPR meeting. The selection panel could take place before the next CPR meetings to make its recommendations on the nominations.

**c) Appointment of the President of ECO Cultural Institute.**

29. Iran informed that they had nominated H.E. Mr. Shoaee as the President of ECI and the Ministers of Culture of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan had conveyed their agreement in writing for the appointment of Mr. Shoaee. CPR endorsed the appointment of Mr. Shoaee and decided to submit it to the next meeting of COM for approval.

**Agenda Item No.9****Reconstruction of Afghanistan - Visit of Secretary General to Afghanistan.**

30. The Permanent Representative of Afghanistan pointed out that peace and stability in Afghanistan was mainly dependent on the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Therefore, they expected from the ECO member states to take part in the reconstruction work of Afghanistan. The next meeting of COM should, therefore, be requested to take concrete measures in this regard.

31. CPR considered the summary report on the visit of the Secretary General to Afghanistan; Conclusions and Recommendations (document No.PR/AFG/2003/2) and recommended the followings:

- i) The date for preparation of the plan of action mentioned in recommendation No.2 of the report should be specified.
- ii) The Secretary General and the Ambassador of Afghanistan should work on submission of projects, one by one, to CPR for approval.
- iii) The bearer of the expenses for the experts to be hired for the training courses should be identified.

32. CPR asked this item to be kept on the agenda.

**Agenda Item No.10****Status of ECO Feasibility Fund and modality for its utilization.**

33. CPR deferred the consideration of the paper prepared by the Secretariat entitled: ECO Feasibility Fund: utilization for pre-feasibility/feasibility studies to its next meeting. However, CPR pointed out that the ECO Functional Methodology was comprehensive and addressed all possible procedural as well as substantive issues related to utilization of the Fund.

34. CPR emphasized the need for utilizing the Fund in each fiscal year and asked for a report on the status of its utilization at the end of each year.

**Agenda Item No.11****International activities.****a) Draft MOU between ECO and UNECE**

35. CPR approved the text of the draft MoU and authorized the Secretary General to follow up the matter with UNECE for finalization of the draft. The Secretary General informed the Council that he would send the approved draft to UNECE and inform the member states if there were any proposal from UNECE for a change. If there were no proposal, to change the draft, he would sign it with UNECE.

**b) MoU between ECO and WCO**

36. The Secretary General informed CPR that he had signed the approved MoU with WCO on March 17, 2003, in Brussels.

**c) MoU between ECO and Colombo Plan**

37. The Secretary General informed CPR that since the Secretary General of Colombo Plan would not come to Tehran as scheduled, the MoU, therefore, could not be signed. CPR requested the Secretary General to take necessary action and sign the MoU at the earliest.

**d) Signing a project document with FAO**

38. The Secretary General informed CPR that he signed a project document with FAO within the framework of cooperation between the two organizations amounting to 400,000 US \$ on April 7, 2003.

**Agenda Item No.12**

**Any other business.**

39. During the meeting, the Secretariat circulated a brief information on the following, placed at ***Annex-IV***.

- i) 5<sup>th</sup> HLEG meeting on Tariff & Non-Tariff Barriers (TTB), Tehran (Iran), April 28-30.
- ii) International Training Course on Combating Desertification for the ECO member states, Tehran (Iran) – April 28 - May 7, 2003.
- iii) The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Experts Group to finalize a draft MoU on ECO Railway Tariff Policy in International Freight Traffic (Almaty, April 28-30, 2003).
- iv) The UNEP Sasakawa Environment prize.

40. CPR agreed that the nominations received from the Kyrgyz Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran for the UNEP Sasakawa Environment prize may be submitted to UNEP.

**Agenda Item No.13**

**Date of the next meeting.**

41. CPR decided to hold its next meeting at 1430 hours on May 4, 2003.

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