

## **The 12<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit**

**Baku Declaration 2012**

*(Baku, 16 October 2012)*

The Twelfth Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2012. The Meeting was presided over by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and attended by:

**H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai**  
**President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

**H.E. Dr. Mahmood Ahmadi Nejad**  
**President of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Zardari**  
**President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

**H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon**  
**President of the Republic of Tajikistan**

**H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan**  
**Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey**

**H.E. Mr. Ilgizar Sobirov**  
**Chairman of Senate of Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

**H.E. Mr. Askar Zhumagaliyev**  
**Minister of Transport & Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

**H.E. Mr. Erlan Abdyldaev**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic**

The Heads of State/Government/Delegation had in-depth exchange of views on important regional and global issues of common interest with a view to promote the socio-economic well-being of the peoples of the ECO region in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. They also reviewed the performance/progress made by ECO during the last two decades towards achieving its aims, objectives and principles as envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir, taking into account the political, social, technological and economic developments that took place in the region as well as in the world, defined policy guidelines to be followed, and emphasised that continued peace, stability and security in the region were prerequisites for attaining ECO goals and objectives. In this context, the Heads of State/Government/Delegation:

**Bearing** in mind the goals and objectives of ECO as set forth in the Treaty of Izmir as well as the declarations and communiqués of previous Summits;

**Reaffirming** their resolve to enhance efforts towards improved economic cooperation, social welfare, quality of life, economic growth and sustainable development in the ECO region;

**Reiterating** strong political will of the Member States towards strengthening regional cooperation within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization;

**Expressing** concern about the existing unresolved conflicts in the ECO region, particularly conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which impedes the development of economic cooperation on regional as well as broader level and stressing the importance of making increased efforts for earliest resolution of this conflict within territorial integrity, sovereignty and the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

**Expressing** concern at the unilateral coercive economic sanctions, which hinder economic development, cooperation, freedom of commerce and trade essential for friendship among nations including regional cooperation within the ECO region;

**Acknowledging** the importance of regional cooperation; welcoming and supporting the progress achieved in the Istanbul Process “Heart of Asia” on Regional Security and Cooperation for a secure and stable Afghanistan and, in this regard, reiterating their further support to the implementation of the seven priority Confidence Building Measures;

**Recalling** the major international conferences since their last Summit, including Istanbul UNLDC IV Conference in May 2011, Rio+20 in June 2012 as well as Tehran XVI NAM Summit in August 2012 and other relevant international and regional conferences;

**Reiterating** the importance of implementation of the key ECO Agreements for achieving ECO goals and objectives;

**Appreciating** actions taken to implement the ECO projects/programmes in advancement of the initiatives which would further strengthen ECO as an effective Organization for regional economic cooperation and encouraging further actions to this end;

1. **Appreciated** the work done by Council of Ministers in its 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 and endorsed its Report as well as instructed the Secretary General to ensure its full implementation.

2. **Welcomed** the positive developments during the "Treaty Event" organized in the framework of the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of COM.
3. **Invited** the Member States to consider the possibility for signing/ ratifying of the remaining ECO agreements.
4. **Expressed** their satisfaction with successful holding of the Fourth ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade in Kabul in 2011 and invited the ECO Member States to take all necessary measures to implement the decisions of the Ministerial Meeting.
5. **Underlined** the need for achieving substantial increase in intra-ECO trade and the share of ECO region in the world trade by gradual reduction and removal of, to the extent possible, the tariff and non-tariff barriers.
6. **Renewed** their commitment for implementation of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) by the contracting parties and emphasized the need for operationalizing the Agreement by 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2013 as reflected in the Report of the Third Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council. Invited the remaining Member States to accede to the Agreement.
7. **Reaffirmed** their commitment to support accession of the Member States to the WTO.
8. **Appreciated** the role played by the ECO Trade and Development Bank and urged strengthening its financial capacity to meet the growing demand for economic exchange, expansion of the scope of the Bank's activities in the ECO region and called upon the remaining Member States to consider joining the Bank and welcomed the signing by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan of the Articles of Agreement of the Bank.
9. **Reiterated** the importance of early operationalization of ECO Reinsurance Company, and called on the contracting parties to attach high priority to expedite all the required procedures in order to establish the company.
10. **Acknowledged** the significant role of the private sector as an engine of growth and economic development in the region and called upon the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry to enhance its role in cooperation with the private sector of the ECO Member States.

11. **Expressed** their satisfaction on successful holding of the 8th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport and Communications in Ashgabat in June 2011 and urged ECO Member States to take all necessary measures to implement the decisions of the Ministerial Meeting.
12. **Welcomed** the establishment of road corridors along Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul and called for establishing additional ECO road corridors; recognizing the progress in the Uzen-Bereket-Gorgan and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway Projects, called for faster implementation of the rail projects along Qazvin-Rasht-Astara(Iran)-Astara (Azerbaijan), Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China and Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran-Turkey, and early removal of the existing obstacles to smooth operation of the Bandar Abbas-Almaty, Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul, and Istanbul-Almaty rail corridors.
13. **Recognizing** the importance of regional cooperation on information and communication technology through developing projects and programmes, and in this regard, took note of the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting on ICT.
14. **Invited** the international and regional funding institutions and the Member States to participate in financing and implementing the "ECO Railway Network Development Plan", which was prepared under the aegis of the ECO/IDB Joint Project on TTFA, and adopted by the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Railway Authorities (Ankara, June 2012). They also called upon the Secretariat to expedite preparation of the road, maritime, and customs transit development plans.
15. **Invited** the Member States to address the existing obstacles, including infrastructural, administrative, customs, transit, tariffs and security, facing operationalization of all established road and rail corridors, where possible.
16. **Acknowledged** the importance of cooperation in the energy sector among the Member States for the development of their economies and called on the ECO Third Ministerial Meeting on Energy to be held in Tehran to consider relevant initiatives in this regard.
17. **Acknowledged** also the vast potential of the ECO region in the field of renewable sources of energy and its importance for sustainable development, increase of energy productivity and efficiency, as well as cleaner energy production.

18. **Reaffirmed** the right of all countries to develop, research, produce and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
19. **Expressed** their satisfaction for successful holding of Fourth ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Tehran in June 2011 and appreciated the adoption of the Framework Plan of Action on Environmental Cooperation and Global Warming in ECO region for the period of 2011–2015 and urged the environmental organizations of Member States to consider the possibility of extension of their technical and financial support for its implementation.
20. **Noted** the increased concerns of the Member States on food security which is one of the major challenges at global level and emphasized the importance of ensuring Food Security in the region and supported the efforts of the Republic of Turkey for the establishment of the Regional Coordination Centre (RCC), to be inaugurated in the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of Agriculture to be held in Antalya in November 2012, for the implementation of the regional programme for food security.
21. **Emphasized** the importance of strengthening cooperation among ECO Member States in the field of industry especially in standardization and SMEs development to enhance productivity, in the Member States and facilitate the trade of goods in the region, requested the Member States to expedite signing/ratification of Statute of Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM) for its early operationalization.
22. **Acknowledged** the crucial role of tourism for strengthening cultural affinities, enhancing trade and the spirit of solidarity in the region, decided to facilitate the movement of tourists and conduct joint events and studies for promotion of tourism in the ECO region.
23. **Appreciated** the progress made through the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Enhancement of External Relations of ECO to strengthen its ties with the United Nations system, regional and International Organizations, keeping in view the provisions of the Treaty of Izmir and previous high level decisions.
24. **Appreciated** ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) for its contributions to the enhanced cultural cooperation in the ECO Region and invited the remaining signatories to ratify its Charter.
25. **Appreciated** operationalization of ECO Science Foundation in Islamabad aimed at fostering regional cooperation in science and technology among

*the Member States and invited the remaining Member States to sign/ratify its Charter.*

26. **Appreciated** operationalization of ECO Educational Institute in Ankara aimed at fostering regional cooperation in education and invited the Member States to kindly initiate follow-up actions on the provisions of the Charter of the Educational Institute and invited the remaining Member States to sign/ratify its Charter.
27. **Acknowledged** the need for strengthening the cooperation on essential issues that are in the centre of the sustainable Human Resource Development in the ECO region with special focus on Education and reaffirmed their commitment towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the ECO region, particularly health related MDGs to Reduce Child Mortality, Improve Maternal Health and Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases.
28. **Recognized** the need to strengthen the work of the Regional Center for Disaster Risk Management (RCDRM), Mashhad and encouraged it to develop, in consultation with the Secretariat, a coordinated regional approach for effective cooperation among the Member States in this field.
29. **Noted** with satisfaction, progress on the implementation of the EU-funded project titled “Fight Against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan with the ECO Member States”.
30. **Expressed** their satisfaction on successful holding of the Third ECO Interior Ministers Meeting in Istanbul in December 2010 and its outcomes, and called upon interested Member States to take necessary measures for establishment of ECOPOL.
31. **Reaffirmed** their commitment to render all necessary support to enhance public – private partnership in ECO region.
32. **Welcomed** the initiative by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Economic Cooperation Organization and expressed the hope that the Assembly would enable the ECO Parliaments to support activities/programmes of ECO through necessary legislative measures.
33. **Appreciated** the work done by the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) established on the initiative of the Republic of Turkey, which undertook performance appraisal of the Organization, identified major challenges

*and recommended ways to improve ECO's efficiency, dynamism and visibility.*

34. **Appreciated** *the contribution of the former Secretary General, H.E. M. Yahya Maroofi to the organization and welcomed the appointment of H.E. Dr. Shamil Aleskerov as the new ECO Secretary General and expressed confidence that he would effectively contribute to the enhancement and acceleration of regional cooperation, take appropriate initiatives to that end and promote projection of ECO's image and activities.*
35. **Underlined** *the importance of timely payments by the Member States of their mandatory budgetary contributions to ensure the efficient, effective and result-based functioning of the Organization.*
36. **Emphasized** *the importance of effective monitoring and follow up, by Member States and Secretariat, of ECO Projects and regional programmes to ensure their timely implementation and operationalization.*
37. **Welcomed** *the appointment of Mr. Iftikhar Hussain Arif effective from 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2013 as the new President of ECO Cultural Institute; Mr Manzoor Hussain Soomro as President of ECO Science Foundation, Mr. Selahattin Turan as President of ECO Educational Institute and Mrs. Atousa Goudarzi as the Dean of ECO College of Insurance.*
38. **Welcomed** *the endorsement by the Council of the observer status to the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States. The future relationship would be governed by "ECO Modalities for Granting Observer/Dialogue Partnership Status".*
39. **Noted** *the attendance of the delegation of Turkmenistan at the 12<sup>th</sup> Summit of ECO and its support to ECO.*
40. **Expressed** *their special thanks to the Republic of Turkey for holding the chairmanship of the ECO during December 2010 – October 2012 in a very efficient way.*
41. **Welcomed** *the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 13<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit in 2014 in Islamabad.*
42. **Welcomed** *the offer of the Republic of Tajikistan to host the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers in 2013 in Dushanbe.*
43. **Expressed** *their profound thanks for the sagacious manner in which H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, led the*

*deliberations of the 12<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit to a successful conclusion. They also expressed their sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Summit.*

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