

Your Excellency Mr. Secretary General,

Distinguished delegations,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It has been a pleasure for us, as the Turkic Council to follow the Regional Planning Council meetings since 2012, the year in which the Council was granted an observer status at ECO.

I have the mission to deliver the greetings of our Secretary General Ambassador Mr. Ramil Hasanov and his best wishes for the discussions and deliberations to be carried out during the meetings.

Our relations with the ECO have been flourished throughout five years and gained a sound basis with the signing of an MoU in 2014 and preparation of a work plan to take concrete steps in some of the areas of mutual concern.

Today I will not take much of your time and will briefly communicate two of our recent concrete initiatives that we think ^{we} can cooperate as the two Organizations.

First of the ^{initiatives} projects is about enhancing trade among our members through facilitating customs procedures. In accordance with the decisions taken at the Fifth Meeting of the Heads of Customs Administrations which was held in June in Baku, we are preparing a regional workshop on AEO and SAFE framework of standards, in contact with the World Customs Organization.

The goal of the event would be raising awareness of the benefits of the AEO programmes, drafting adequate regulations, discussing the challenges of implementation and possible solutions for facing them. We plan to invite relevant regional and international organizations such as the ECO, IDB and EEC in addition to the customs representatives from governments and partners from the business world. We will inform the parties we intend to invite the date and place of the event as soon as we produce an agreement with the WCO. I am ready to talk about the details of it with the colleagues here at ECO.

The second of the projects is rather a long-term project. It is about reviving the ancient silk road through promoting tourism in the historical landmarks located in our member states under the "Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Tour Package Project". Much has been done for the necessary legal framework between the ministries and tour operators. We are very near to launch the promotional tours.

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With that conclude my remarks, and let you enjoy the video prepared to show the cities to be included in the package.

Thank you.