



**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
ORGANIZATION (ECO) RELATING TO THE RIGHTS,  
PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF THE  
ECO SECRETARIAT**

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Economic Cooperation Organization:

In accordance with the internationally recognized norms and practices on diplomatic conduct, rights and privileges provided for, inter-alia, in the 1946 Convention on the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and in the 1961 Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations; recognizing the need for a central administrative organ to provide for efficient coordination of the ECO organs and effective implementation of ECO activities; and in implementation of Article-IX of the Treaty of Izmir regarding the ECO Secretariat;

Agree as follows:-

**Article - 1**

**Definitions**

1. For the purpose of this Agreement:
  - (a) the "Host Country" means the Islamic Republic of Iran
  - (b) the "Government" means the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran;
  - (c) "Secretariat" means the ECO Secretariat which may also be referred to as the "Headquarters";
  - (d) "Secretary General" means the Secretary General of ECO or his authorized representative;

- (e) "appropriate Iranian authorities" means the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran or such other authorities which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deems appropriate;
- (f) "laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran" includes legislative acts and decrees, regulations or orders, issued by or under authority of the Government or appropriate Iranian authorities;
- (g) "premises of the Secretariat" means the building or parts of the buildings and the land ancillary thereto, irrespective of ownership, used for the purposes of the Secretariat;
- (h) "archives of the Secretariat" means the records and correspondence, documents, manuscripts, still and moving pictures and films, and sound recordings, belonging to or held by the Secretariat;
- (i) "staff of the Secretariat" means all staff members of the Secretariat who are appointed, in accordance with Article-IX of the Treaty of Izmir and Staff Regulations.
- (j) "property" means all property, including funds, assets and income belonging to the Secretariat;
- (k) "representatives of Governments" means all accredited members of delegations of the ECO member countries to any ECO meeting held in the host country.

## Article - 2

### Objective

The objective of this Agreement shall be to facilitate the work of the Secretariat, as envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir and to allow all concerned, including the Secretary General, Officers and the General Services Staff to discharge their responsibilities efficiently and in good faith.

## Article - 3

### The Seat of the Secretariat

1. The Secretariat shall be located in Tehran city of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
2. The Islamic Republic of Iran as host Government shall provide or cause to be provided to the Secretariat appropriate accommodation with necessary fixtures, conference

premises, sufficient parking space and provision of basic utilities and services including power, water, gas, air-conditioning, heating, telephone, telex, fax and major maintenance of the same.

3. The premises of the Secretariat shall be used for the sole purpose of attaining the objectives of the Organization as stipulated in the Charter.

4. The utilities charges shall be borne by the Secretariat.

5. The Islamic Republic of Iran shall take all necessary action to ensure that the Secretariat is not dispossessed of all or any part of its premises without its prior consent.

6. The premises of the Secretariat, their furnishings and other property of the Organization including the means of transport wherever situated in the Islamic Republic of Iran and by whomsoever held shall be immune from search, requisition, attachment, execution or any other form of interference.

7. The Islamic Republic of Iran as the host Government is under a special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the Secretariat against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the Secretariat or impairment of its dignity.

#### Article - 4

##### Juridical Capacity of the Secretariat

1. The Secretariat shall, within the internationally recognized norms and practices on diplomatic conduct, rights and privileges, have the capacity:

- (a) to conclude contracts;
- (b) to acquire and dispose of immovable and movable properties; and
- (c) to institute legal proceedings.

#### Article - 5

##### Inviolability of the Premises and the Archives of the Secretariat

1. The premises of the Secretariat shall be inviolable, and shall be under the control and authority of the Secretary-General as provided in this Agreement.

2. The archives of the Secretariat belonging to or held by the Secretariat shall be inviolable.

3. Officers or officials of the Government whether administrative, judicial, military or police shall not enter the premises of the Secretariat to perform any official duties therein except with the consent of the Secretary-General.

4. Without prejudice to the provisions of Article-11 of this Agreement, the Secretariat shall not permit its premises to be used as a refuge for avoiding arrest under the laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran or in any other manner incompatible with the purposes of the Secretariat as laid down in the Treaty of Izmir.

#### Article - 6

##### Protection of the Premises of the Secretariat

1. The appropriate Iranian authorities shall take whatever action that may be necessary to ensure that the Secretariat shall not be dispossessed of its premises, except in the event that the ECO ceases to use the same.

2. The appropriate Iranian authorities shall exercise due diligence to ensure that the tranquility of the premises of the Secretariat is not disturbed by unauthorized entry of persons or group of persons from outside or by disturbance in its vicinity and shall cause to be provided outside the boundaries of the premises of the Secretariat such police protection as is required for these purposes.

3. If so requested by the Secretary-General, the appropriate Iranian authorities shall provide a sufficient number of police for the preservation of law and order on the premises of the Secretariat, and for the removal therefrom of persons or group of persons as requested under the authority of the Secretary-General.

#### Article - 7

##### Communications

1. The Secretariat shall enjoy for its official communications, treatment not less favourable than that accorded by the Government to foreign diplomatic missions and representative offices of international organizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. No censorship shall be applied to official correspondence and other official communications of the Secretariat.

3. The Secretariat shall have the right to despatch and receive official correspondence, either by couriers or in sealed bags which shall have the same immunities and privileges as diplomatic couriers and bags.

4. The Government shall, as far as feasible, provide the Secretariat with sufficient facilities pertaining to operation of telephone and telex services on the premises of the Secretariat.

5. Whenever deemed necessary, and subject to approval by the Government, the Secretariat shall also be entitled to operate short wave sending and receiving radio broadcasting including emergency link.

#### Article - 8

##### Immunity and Exemption from Taxation of the Property

1. The property wherever located or by whosoever held shall enjoy immunity from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation and any other forms of interference, except in so far in any particular case the Secretary General shall have expressly waived its immunity.

2. The property shall be exempted:

(a) from any form of direct taxation. It is understood, however, that the Secretariat will not claim exemption from taxes which are, in fact, no more than charges for public services;

(b) from customs and other levies and from prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports in respect of articles imported or exported by the Secretariat for its official use, on the understanding that articles imported under such exemptions shall not be transferred by the Secretariat within Islamic Republic of Iran except under conditions agreed upon with the Government and in accordance with the laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

(c) from customs duties and other levies and from prohibitions and restrictions in respect of importation and exportation of its publications.

3. While the Secretariat will not, as a general rule, claim exemption from excise duties and from taxes on the sale of movable and immovable property which forms part of the price to be paid, nevertheless when the Secretariat is making important purchases for official use of the property on which such duties and taxes have been charged or chargeable, the Government will, whenever possible, make appropriate

administrative arrangements for the remission or return of the amount of duty or tax.

#### Article - 9

##### Financial Facilities

Without being subject to any financial controls regulations or moratoria of any kind,

- (a) the Secretariat may hold funds or currency of any kind and operate accounts in any currency;
- (b) the Secretariat shall be free to transfer its funds, securities or currency from one country to another or within the Islamic Republic of Iran and to convert any currency held by it into any other currency.

2. The Secretariat shall, in exercising its privileges under the above paragraph of this Article, pay due regard to any representation made by the Government.

#### Article - 10

##### Visa and Residence Facilities

1. The appropriate Iranian authorities shall facilitate transit to and from the premises of the Secretariat of the following persons in accordance with the internationally recognized norms and practices on diplomatic conduct, rights and privileges:

- (a) representatives of Governments;
- (b) Secretary General and Staff of the Secretariat, their families and other members of their household;
- (c) other persons invited by the Secretariat on official business;
- (d) representatives of press, radio, film or other information agencies, who have been accredited to the Secretariat.

2. Visas which may be necessary for persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, shall be granted irrespective of the nature and type of the passport as speedily as possible

and without charge. This, however, shall not obviate the requirement of reasonable evidence to establish that persons claiming the right granted under this paragraph fall within the categories described in paragraph 1 of this Article or of the application of quarantine and health regulations.

3. Subject to the provisions of Article 11, paras 5(a), (b), (c), laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the residence of aliens shall be applied in accordance with the privileges referred to in paragraph 1(a), (b), (c) of this Article. They shall not be applied in such a manner as to require any person to leave the Islamic Republic of Iran, on account of any activities performed by him in his official capacity.

#### Article - 11

##### Privileges and Immunities of the Secretary General and Staff of the Secretariat

1. The Secretary General and the Staff of the Secretariat, shall enjoy within and with respect to the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- (a) immunity from legal process in respect of acts, including words spoken or written, performed by them in their official capacity and in the discharge of their duties;
- (b) immunity from search and seizure of their official baggage.

2. The Secretary General and the Staff of the Secretariat at the comparable rank of the members of diplomatic missions, who are not nationals of the receiving State, shall enjoy within and with respect to the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran the following privileges and immunities:

- (a) exemption from taxation on the salary and emoluments paid to them by the Secretariat;
- (b) immunity together with their spouse and relatives dependent on them, from immigration restriction and alien registration;
- (c) the same privileges in respect of exchange facilities as are accorded to the officials of comparable rank of diplomatic missions;
- (d) the same repatriation facilities, together with the spouses and relatives dependent on them, in time of international crisis as accorded to officials of comparable rank of diplomatic missions;

- (e) immunity from personal arrest or detention;
  - (f) immunity from search and seizure of their personal baggage;
  - (g) freedom to maintain within the Islamic Republic of Iran, or elsewhere, foreign securities, and other movable and immovable property, and while employed by the Secretariat in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and at the time of termination of such employment, the right to take out of the Islamic Republic of Iran fund in any foreign currency without restrictions or limitations, provided that the said officials can show good cause for their lawful possession of such funds;
  - (h) the right to import free of duty and other levies, prohibition and restriction on imports, their furniture and effects within six months after first taking up their post in the Islamic Republic of Iran; the same regulations shall apply in the case of importation, transfer and replacement of automobiles as are in force for the resident members of diplomatic missions of comparable rank.
  - (i) the right to take out of the Islamic Republic of Iran without any hinderance or restriction and free from search and seizure, their furniture and effects at the time of termination of their employment in accordance with the privileges and immunities accorded to the resident members of diplomatic missions of comparable rank.
3. (a) The Secretary General shall be entitled to the appropriate diplomatic category and shall enjoy such other privileges and immunities as are accorded to diplomatic chiefs of mission not covered by paragraph 2 of this Article;
- (b) The residence of the Secretary General and the Staff of the Secretariat shall enjoy the same inviolability and protection as accorded to diplomatic staff within internationally recognized norms and practices on diplomatic conduct, rights and privileges.
4. Without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of the Secretary General and the Staff of the Secretariat to respect the laws of the Member Countries and to avoid any interference in the internal affairs of the ECO countries.
5. (a) Privileges and immunities are granted to officials and experts in the interests of the Secretariat and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. The Secretary General may,



with the approval of the Member Government to which the official belongs, waive the immunity of any official or expert in any case where, in his opinion the immunity would impede the course of justice and can be waived without prejudice to the interest of the Secretariat. In case of the Secretary General, the Council of Ministers shall have the right to waive the immunity.

- (b) The Secretary General shall take every precaution to ensure that no abuse of a privilege or immunity conferred by this Agreement shall occur, and for this purpose shall establish such rules and regulations as he may deem necessary and expedient for Staff of the Secretariat and persons performing missions for, or serving on missions of the Secretariat.
- (c) The Secretariat and its Staff shall cooperate at all times with the appropriate Iranian authorities to facilitate the proper administration of justice, and prevent the occurrence of any abuse in connection with the privileges and immunities conferred by this Agreement. If the Government considers that any person has abused the privileges and immunities granted to him under the Agreement, the Secretary General on the decision of the Government shall ask him to leave the territory of the host country.

6. The appropriate Iranian authorities shall provide the Secretary General and the Staff of the Secretariat with identity cards.

## Article - 12

### Public Services and Division of Responsibilities concerning Installation and Maintenance of Premises of the Secretariat

1. The appropriate Iranian authorities will exercise to the extent requested by the Secretary General the powers which they possess in this respect to ensure that premises of the Secretariat shall be supplied on equitable terms with all the necessary public services. In case of any interruption or threatened interruption of any service, the appropriate Iranian authorities will consider the needs of the Secretariat as being of equal importance with the similar needs of essential agencies of the Government, and will take steps accordingly to ensure that the work of the Secretariat is not jeopardized.

2. The Secretariat will be responsible for all charges arising out of maintenance, repairs and use of all public services as mentioned in paragraph-1 on the premises of the Secretariat.

Article - 13

Final Provisions

1. This Agreement shall be signed and shall enter into force on the date of notification to the Secretary General of its ratification by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
2. Consultations with respect to the amendments to this Agreement shall be entered into upon request of either party and any such amendment shall be by mutual consent.
3. This Agreement shall be interpreted in the light of each primary purpose to enable the Secretariat fully and efficiently to discharge its responsibilities and fulfil its objectives.
4. Wherever this Agreement imposes obligations on appropriate Iranian authorities, the ultimate responsibility for the fulfilment of such obligations shall rest with the Government.
5. This Agreement shall remain in force as long as the Treaty of Izmir is valid and the Secretariat remains in Tehran.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF:

The respective Representatives have signed this Agreement in duplicate in the English language.

DONE in Ashgabat this 14th day of May one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six.

For the Economic Cooperation  
Organization (ECO)



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Mr. Shamshad Ahmad,  
Secretary General of ECO

For the Government of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran



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Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati,  
Foreign Minister of the  
Islamic Republic of Iran