

**Statement by Ambassador Khusrav Noziri,  
Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization  
at the International Conference on  
Cooperation on Food Security in the context of Climate Change  
*Ashgabat, March 10, March 2023***

**Honorable Chairman,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed a privilege for me to attend this important International Conference on Food Security in the context of Climate Change.

I sincerely congratulate the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection of Turkmenistan as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations for organizing this event of great global magnitude, inviting me to represent the Economic Cooperation Organization and express my reflection on the subject.

**Distinguished participants,**

Food security, characterized as access to safe and sufficient food. According to World Food Summit, “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”.

End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition is at the heart of the sustainable development goals. At the same time, climate change is already impacting agriculture and food security and will make the challenge of ending hunger and malnutrition even more difficult. The effects of climate change on our ecosystems are already severe and widespread, and ensuring food security in the face of climate change is among the most daunting challenges facing the humankind. While some of the problems associated with climate change are emerging gradually, an immediate and collective action is required in order to allow enough time to build resilience in agricultural production systems.

Climate change has both direct and indirect impacts on agricultural production systems. Direct impacts include effects caused by a

modification of physical characteristics such as temperature levels and rainfall distribution on specific agricultural production systems and indirect effects are those that affect production through changes on other species such as pollinators, pests, disease vectors and invasive species. These indirect effects can play a major role. They are much more difficult to assess high number of interacting parameters, many of which are still unknown.

Climate change brings a cascade of risks from physical impacts to ecosystems, agro-ecosystems, agricultural production, food chains, incomes and trade, with economic and social impacts on livelihoods, food security and nutrition. It will also have broader impacts through effects on food markets and price stability and could introduce new risks for human health.

### **Dear participants,**

According to statistics, inhabitants of ECO region with travels and migrations is about 500 million, while the region's population growth rate is more than the world's average which may increase more than ten percent. About half of the total population of the ECO Region lives in rural areas and around one-third is employed in agriculture. Despite agriculture's role as a driving force, it faces various challenges as low productivity, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, and land and water pollution. The ECO countries appear to face climate change and the increased challenges emanating out of rapid climate change.

As an intergovernmental forum, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is committed to Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger, the accomplishment of which will lead to greater food security, health and welfare.

Given the magnitude of the above mentioned problems and while acknowledging that the improvement of the situation, globally and regionally, requires pervasive and multi-faceted action at all levels, ECO Secretariat in cooperation with ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS) and FAO updated and adopted the ECO Regional Program for Food Security (ECO-RPFS) according to the post-pandemic situation during the 7<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (July 6, 2022, Tashkent) and will accordingly make its utmost efforts to

facilitate moving towards the implementation stage aimed at improving and enhancing ECO Member States resilience to future shocks and ensuring food security.

### **Distinguished Delegates,**

Climate change threatens to reverse the progress made so far in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. We must do more towards a better integration to ensure that actions across and within sectors such as environment, food, agriculture and health, pursue coherent objectives to address the negative impacts and threats that changing climate variability and increased climate extremes pose to people's food security, access to healthy diets, safe nutrition and health.

No country has enough resources to confront these challenges by itself, therefore there is a strong need to find global and regional sustainable solutions to overcome the existing problems especially in the field of agriculture as it has a deep impact on the livelihoods of people. Greatly expanded efforts to respond to climate change are needed immediately to safeguard the capacity of food systems to ensure global food security.

Concluding my remarks, I optimistically believe that your active engagement and brainstorming will undoubtedly contribute to the success of this event and advancement towards our shared and greater food security objective.

Thank you.