

SPEECHES/STATEMENTS OF MINISTERS/HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

Statement by H.E. Mr. Ali Asghar Shalbafan,
Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts
of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr. Chairman

Excellency's, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Taking the floor, it is my honor to express my gratitude to all honorable guests and member states representatives on behalf of my country, government and people and as Tourism Deputy of MCTH.

ECO Vision 2025 adopted at the 22nd Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held in 2017 in Islamabad, specified the tourism industry as the priority development field for the coming decade. This vision emphasizes on stimulating the demand for tourism requires great incentive for all stakeholders. Toward this end, active participation of private investors, creating special travel agents, virtual tourism, using technology for promotion, well-trained human resource as well keep updating the staff in order to improve their potential to deal with real life crisis and problems. That in itself can bring about peace, friendship and mutual understanding among member states. Bear in mind that social welfare need integrated actions among all.

I do believe that as all Eco, member states are to focus on a unified strategy to introduce the region as a niche for today tourists seeking diversified options in a trip enjoying Cultural and natural diversity, unspoiled connections. .

Islamic Republic of Iran plans to boost its connections to all neighboring countries in particular; those have some close ties in form of regional organizations. Realizing this a lot of previous agreement under close inspection to put them into practice. Recent visits and meeting highlights our efforts to realize the goal as a remedy to go through transitional period after Covid-19.regional connections can pave the way for tourism stakeholders to regain confidence and practice to get along with new requirement of tourism demand like active participation of tourists in activities and new hygienic standards.

Realizing the regional view to have peaceful and green destinations requires joining forces and adopting a comprehensive strategy.

Ardabil Province in my country has been elected as Tourism Capital of ECO in 2023 .this stands for great much of potential the region has, an area enjoys diversified natural and cultural potent and a sample of the ECO countries great variety. Sari was elected as ECO tourism capital in 2022 and a ceremony was held to commemorate this election. The event attended by great of member states and it was a valuable exchange of experiences.

Toward expanding our ties with our potential destinations, Iran will hold its international tourism Exhibition from 7th to 10th February 2023. Taking this opportunity, I invite all attendants actively take part in it. Iran has provided some incentives like free installs and son on for applicants.

Iran will also host Eco – Silk Road Food festival in Zanjan in May 2023. This is the fifth festival, which is held annually, welcomed by great many visitors every time.

Connection is the foundation of all civilizations and the importance of Silk Road rooted in great value of communication for the nations live by that. Throughout the history, Silk Road has played a role as a significant business vehicle among ancient empires in China, Mid and West of Asia, India and Rome. Going through some ancient civilizations, the road was of importance in making connection among ancient communities and tribes. Silk Road path went through Iran as undoubtedly the country has been enjoying a great strategic location and ancient civilization

My country also voices its readiness to ECO Secretariat in order to host the fifth Ministerial Meeting of ECO.

I hope that all member states collaborate I order to realize communal goals have been envisioned for ECO states in 2025.

I really appreciate the opportunity once again and express my special thanks to Uzbekistan as the host for the meeting.

**Приветственное слово Союзбека Надырбекова, Заместителя министра
культуры, информации, спорта и молодежной политики
Кыргызской Республики**

(ОНЛАЙН-ФОРМАТ)

Уважаемые участники 4-й министерской встречи Организации экономического сотрудничества по туризму,

От имени Кыргызской Республики приветствую всех участников мероприятия. Прежде всего хотел бы выразить признательность организаторам за приглашение принять участие на 4-й встречи министров Организации экономического сотрудничества по туризму (далее-ОЭС).

Касаясь культурно-гуманитарного аспекта, следует отметить, что государств-членов оэс связывают многовековая история и богатая культура, которые уходят в глубокую древность - во времена становления и расцвета великого шелкового пути. История нашего культурного взаимодействия свидетельствует о глубоких связях между народами стран участников оэс, которые с каждым годом все больше укрепляются.

Мы твердо нацелены на расширение и дальнейшее развитие взаимосвязей в области туризма, культуры и искусства между странами участниками ОЭС, надежным пластом для этого являются прочные дружеские отношения и тесное сотрудничество.

Убежден, усилиями Организации экономического сотрудничества удастся укрепить весь комплекс взаимовыгодных связей, реализовать намеченные проекты, в полном объеме использовать открывающиеся возможности.

С учетом быстрых социально-экономических, политических и научных разработок, происходящих на региональном и глобальном уровнях, также принимая во внимание возможности и вызовы Организации, Кыргызская Республика убеждена что ОЭС проложит путь к территории интегрированных и стабильных экономических систем, а также зоне свободной торговли, достигнутых высокообразованными обществами и улучшенным управлением через усиленное сотрудничество.

Уверен, что очередная встреча министров в рамках ОЭС окажет положительное влияние на процессы дальнейшего сближения наших

государств и народов, консолидации усилий в противодействии современным вызовам и угрозам миру, стабильности и безопасности.

Я искренне верю, что реализация этих договоренностей послужит прочным фундаментом взаимовыгодного сотрудничества между странами участниками ОЭС.

Кыргызстан – одна из потенциальных стран мира для экологического туризма. Здесь можно посетить огромное количество заповедников и природных парков, понаблюдать за дикими животными, занесенными в Красную книгу и увидеть редкие виды растений, среди них есть и такие, которые встречаются в единичных экземплярах только в Кыргызстане.

На территории Кыргызстана находится более 5000 тысяч исторических и культурных памятников давно минувших времен и народов. Пещерные стоянки первобытного человека и уникальные рунические надписи на валунах, и удивительные наскальные рисунки (петроглифы) и останки античных поселений, средневековые крепости, поражающие своей неприступностью и рациональностью.

Кыргызская Республика уделяет повышенное внимание охране окружающей среде. Чтобы достичь баланса между экономическим и экологическим развитием, страна стремится отвести развитие экономики от нанесения чрезмерного вреда окружающей среде и добиться ее скоординированного сохранения, начата работа по рациональному использованию природных ресурсов с меньшими последствиями для окружающей среды, повышению эффективности использования природных ресурсов, что будет способствовать экономическому росту, улучшению благосостояния людей и созданию возможностей для занятости, также сохранит зеленую природу для будущего поколения.

Посредством совместной работы ОЭС наши народы еще глубже будут знакомиться с богатой историей и культурой друг друга. Надеюсь, что итоги сегодняшней встречи даст сторонам возможность активизации и плодотворного сотрудничества в целях устойчивого развития туризма на пространстве ОЭС.

От имени Кыргызской Республики и от меня лично позвольте, пригласить Вас посетить наш бесконечно уникальный Кыргызстан!

В завершение своего выступления желаю всем успехов и здоровья.

**Welcoming Speech by H.E. Mr. Soyuzbek Nadyrbekov, the Deputy
Minister of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy
of the Kyrgyz Republic**

**Dear participants of the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Tourism of the
Economic Cooperation Organization,**

On behalf of the Kyrgyz Republic, I am honored to welcome all participants of today's event. First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the organizers of the 4th Ministerial Meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation on Tourism (hereinafter - ECO) for their extended invitation to attend the aforesaid event.

With regard to the cultural and humanitarian aspect, it should be noted that the ECO member states are linked by centuries-long history and rich culture that date back to deep antiquity - during the formation and epoch of the Great Silk Road. Our cultural interaction history witnesses the deep ties between the ECO countries' nations are becoming stronger with every passing year.

We are firmly oriented on the expansion and further development of linkages in tourism, culture and art spheres between the ECO member states, strong friendships and close cooperation ensure reliable condition for this.

I am convinced that through the Economic Cooperation Organization efforts, we will be able to strengthen the entire range of mutually beneficial ties, implement the planned projects, and fully utilize emerging.

Given the rapid socio-economic, political and scientific developments occurring at the regional and global levels, considering the ECO opportunities and challenges, the Kyrgyz Republic is convinced that the ECO will pave the way to the integrated and stable economic systems, as

well as the free trade zone achieved by highly educated societies and improved governance through enhanced cooperation.

I am confident that the ongoing ministerial meeting within the ECO will positively impact on the processes of further close approach of our states and nations, consolidation of efforts in countering modern challenges and threats to peace, stability and security.

I sincerely believe that the implementation of these agreements will serve as a solid foundation for mutually beneficial cooperation between the ECO member states.

Kyrgyzstan is one of the potential countries in the world for ecological tourism. Here you can visit a huge number of reserves and natural parks, observe wild animals listed in the Red Book and see rare plants' species, among them there are those that are found in single specimens only in Kyrgyzstan.

There are more than 5000 thousand historical and cultural monuments and peoples of the past long ago times in the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The primitive man cave sites and unique runic inscriptions on boulders, and amazing cave paintings (petroglyphs) and the ancient settlements' remains, medieval fortresses that amaze with their impregnability and rationality.

The Kyrgyz Republic attaches great importance to environmental protection. With the aim to achieve a balance between economic and environmental development, the country seeks to divert the development of the economy from causing excessive harm to the environment and achieve its coordinated preservation, work on the rational natural resources management with less environmental impact and improving the efficient utilization of natural resources has been initiated, which will contribute to economic growth, improving people's well-being and creating employment opportunities, as well as will preserve a green nature for the future generation.

Through the ECO joint work, our nations will get to know each other's rich history and culture even more deeply. I hope that the outcome of today's meeting will ensure the parties with intensified and fruitful cooperation for the sake of sustainable tourism development in the ECO arena.

On behalf of the Kyrgyz Republic and my own behalf, let me invite you to visit our infinitely unique Kyrgyzstan!
In conclusion, I wish everyone success and health.

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to
Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports,
Government of Pakistan**

Mr. Chairman, Excellences and respected delegates

Asalam o Allikum and very warm greetings from Pakistan!

It is a matter of great pleasure and honour for me to be part of 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism.

First of all, I would like to thank the government of Uzbekistan and ECO Secretariat for hosting this important meeting.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pakistan assigns great importance to its membership of ECO as one of its Member State. The ECO Member States have huge potential of tourism which is based on the rich natural, culture and historical diversity of this region.

I am confident that by working together in a cooperative and collaborative manner, we can utilize this rich potential for the socio-economic development of the people of this region as well as we may promote peace and security in the region by promoting people to people contact through the promotion of tourism among the ECO member states.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I fully endorse the Road Map on Facilitating Accelerated Recovery, Safe and Sustainable Development of Tourism in the ECO Region.

In order to promote regional tourism among member states we can improve the facilitation in the movement of tourists among the ECO Member States by providing better road, rail and air connectivity. For this purpose, we may also introduce joint economical air fares for the citizens of the member states to encourage them to visit each other countries. There is a greater need to increase the flight connectivity among the main cities of member states to facilitate business and recreational travel.

We also need to adopt more tourist friendly visa policies especially for the citizens of member states to increase people to people contact.

Moreover, we need to promote the exchange program among the tour operators and tourism professionals of the ECO Member States to develop joint tour products and tour packages. We also need to arrange travel related exhibitions and road shows in different member states to create awareness of tourism potential of the member counties. I am sure these steps will greatly help in creating new combine tourist routes in the ECO Region.

Thank you all for your kind attention and looking forward for the positive outcome of today's meeting.

Выступление

**Председателя Комитета по развитию туризма при Правительстве
Республики Таджикистан господина Тоджиддина Джуразода на 4-ой
министерской Встрече по туризму среди государств членов ОЭС
(13 декабря 2022 года, 11:00 часов, онлайн формат)**

**Уважаемый Азиз Абдукахарович,
Уважаемый Хусрав Нозири!
Уважаемые участники Встречи!**

С большим почтением хочу поприветствовать каждого из вас и поблагодарить Министерство туризма и культурного наследия Республики Узбекистан и Секретариата ОЭС за организацию 4-ой министерской Встрече по туризму государств членов ОЭС.

Сегодняшнюю министерскую Встречу мы сотрудники сферы туризма рассматриваем как еще одну благоприятную возможность для расширения, обсуждения и углубления взаимодействий между туристическими органами среди государств-членов ОЭС в продвижении туризма.

Мы также высоко ценим прочные связи, сложившиеся между Таджикистаном и странами ОЭС, и надеемся на их углубление для достижения долгосрочных целей развития туризма как внутри страны, так и в пространстве ОЭС.

Уважаемые коллеги!

Необходимо отметить, что 3-я министерская Встреча по туризму государств членов ОЭС проходила в Республики Таджикистан в городе Худжанд в 2019 году и в результате этой Встречи было принято соответствующие решения.

Как известно, пандемия COVID-19 повлияла на нашу повседневную жизнь и привела к значительным потерям во всех сферах, в том числе в туристическом секторе, вынудив мировое сообщество противостоять беспрецедентным социальным и экономическим вызовам с перспективой глобального спада, потеря сотней тысяч рабочих мест, нанеся особенно тяжелый удар по малому и среднему бизнесу и по самым уязвимым категориям населения, такими как женщины, молодежь и сельские общины.

Несмотря на это Республика Таджикистан в рамках ОЭС смог проводить 29-30 августа 2021 года международный Фестиваль «Душанбе - туристическая столица ОЭС» и международный Форум «Развитие агротуризма в Таджикистане». Также, 2020-2021 гг. город Душанбе был торжественно объявлен туристической столицей ОЭС.

Уважаемые коллеги!

Огромные туристические ресурсы Таджикистана предоставляют возможность для развития различных видов туризма, таких как экологический, культурный, исторический, оздоровительный, альпинизм, охота и путешествия, гастрономия, которые мы можем использовать для открытия новых рынков туризма, посредством создания благоприятных условий для привлечения туристов и максимального использования потенциала в сфере туризма.

Исходя из этого Республика Таджикистан придает важное значение углублению международного сотрудничества в рамках ОЭС и выражает готовность способствовать дальнейшему развитию туризма в пространстве ОЭС.

Будем надеяться, что обсуждаемые вопросы на сегодняшней министерской Встречи государств членов ОЭС дадут новый импульс развитию туризма в регионе.

В заключение позвольте пожелать всем Вам успешной совместной работы.

Спасибо большое за ваше внимание!

Statement by H.E. Mr. Tojiddin Jurazoda, Chairman of the Committee for Tourism Development under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan

Distinguished Aziz Abdukaharovich,

Esteemed Khusrav Noziri!

Dear participants of the Meeting,

With great reverence and respect, would like to welcome each of You and thank the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the ECO Secretariat for organizing the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Tourism of the ECO member states.

As a members of tourism industry, we consider today's Ministerial Meeting as another favorable opportunity for expanding, discussing and deepening interactions between tourism agencies among the ECO member states in promoting tourism sector.

We also highly appreciate the strong ties that have been developed between Tajikistan and the ECO member states and look forward to deepening them to achieve the long-term goals of tourism development both within the country and at the ECO arena.

Distinguished colleagues,

It is worth mentioning that the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism of the ECO member states was held in Khujand city of the Republic of Tajikistan in 2019 and the appropriate decision was made as a result of this Meeting.

As you are all aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our daily life and led to significant losses in all areas, including in the tourism sector, forcing the world community to confront unprecedented social and economic challenges with the prospect of a global recession, the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, adversely affecting small and medium-sized businesses and the most vulnerable

categories of the population, such as women, youth and rural communities.

Despite of the above-mentioned challenges, the Republic of Tajikistan was able to hold the International festival "Dushanbe - the ECO Tourism Capital" and the "International forum on Agro-Tourism Development" on August 29-30, 2021 within the ECO Organization. Also, Dushanbe city was solemnly declared the "ECO Tourism Capital for 2020-2021.

Distinguished colleagues,

Tajikistan's huge tourist resources provide an opportunity for the development of various types of tourism, such as ecological, cultural, historical, health, mountaineering, hunting and travel, gastronomy, which we can use to open new tourism markets, by creating favorable conditions for attracting tourists and maximizing tourism potential utilization.

Consequently, the Republic of Tajikistan attaches primary importance to deepening international cooperation within the ECO and expresses its readiness to contribute to the further tourism development in the ECO arena.

Will hope that the issues to be discussed at today's Ministerial Meeting of the ECO member states will give a new impetus to the tourism development in the region.

In conclusion, let me wish you all a successful collaboration.

Thank you very much for your kind attention!

Statement by H.E. Dr. Serdar am,
Deputy Minister for Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Trkiye

**His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism and Cultural Heritage Aziz Abdulkhakimov,
Distinguished Secretary General,
Distinguished Ministers,
Distinguished Guests,**

On behalf of Minister of Culture and Tourism of Republic of Trkiye, His Excellency Mehmet Nuri ERSOY, I am pleased to address you on the occasion of the 4th Meeting of the Ministers of Tourism of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Aziz Abdulkhakimov for their chairmanship.

To His Excellency Khusrav Noziri, as the Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation, I would like to thank for this meeting that brought us together in 2022, in the year which marks the 30th Anniversary of the enlargement of one of the oldest intergovernmental organizations of the world, namely ECO.

Distinguished Ministers,

Trkiye has made ground-breaking progression since 1960s in tourism planning, diversification of tourism as maritime, culture, winter, gastronomy and health tourism, infrastructure for accessibility and investments, tourism risk management, development of qualified human resources as well as institutionalization of actors in public and private sector, which made Trkiye one of the leading players of the global tourism. We reached a milestone of almost 52 million visitors travelling to Trkiye by the end of 2019 with around 30 billion \$ revenue just before the pandemic outbreak.

In Trkiye, immediate professional intervention against the pandemic, on time start of the comprehensive economic stability shield package and solid public health system backed by newly built high capacity city hospitals and qualified human resources, have played an important role to cope with the negative impacts of Covid-19 pandemic. Thanks to these timely interventions, in 2020, Trkiye's tourism industry retained its resilience and received 16 million international tourists. Thanks to all measures, despite the global crisis, in 2021 Trkiye hosted more than 30 million visitors and received about 24.5 billion \$ tourism revenue. By

the end of 2022, Türkiye expects to host 50 million visitors and receive 44 billion \$ tourism revenue.

Brothers and Sisters,

Türkiye, as one of the founding states of ECO has treated it as an indispensable platform for dialogue and cooperation. Needless to say, ongoing friendly and ancient dialogue between our countries is among our major strengths. Thanks to this proximity and backing, we have the opportunity to exist side by side in one of the most strategic and challenging regions of the world and to become stronger together.

Proclamation of this year 2022 by Economic Cooperation Organization as the “Year of Strengthening Connectivity” very diligently addressed to the priorities of our sector too. The crucial role of transport and connectivity without doubt constitute the major pillar needed for the growth of tourism mobility. Promoting “well-developed transport infrastructure, safe and smooth cross border transit, digitalization in services, well-managed integrated road, rail, maritime, air and communication networks and enhanced international interaction” all together deserve to be discussed by tourism and transportation experts. Thus, I would like to thank to Secretariat for the successful organization of Tourism Transport Task Force meeting for the first time this year.

ECO Vision-2025 provides us a solid framework and joint objectives envisaged in the Vision could be achieved by the implementation of selected activities by the enduring and enhanced support of Member States and capacity of Secretariat and Tourism Working Group.

Moreover, I believe that the Samarkand Declaration to be adopted will be an important reference document and I would like to state that we are ready to show the will required for this document to evolve into concrete projects.

His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Aziz Abdukhakimov, Distinguished Ministers;

Today world travel and tourism sector not talking only recovery, but rather discussing transformation to a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive sector for people, planet and welfare.

From our side, I would like to sincerely note that Türkiye is ready to make the necessary contribution to our cooperation not only through the core units of the

Ministry of Culture and Tourism, but also with our affiliated institutions and organizations operating in various fields all over the world like TIKA and Yunus Emre Institutes.

I congratulate Uzbekistan for the remarkable progress achieved in the tourism sector in the last couple of years. Samarkand successfully hosted the Presidential Summit of Organization of Turkic States and will also welcome World Tourism Organization General Assembly in 2023. These events will have significant contributions to Uzbekistan in reaching the global recognition it deserves.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to stress that we will continue to work devotedly towards the unity and solidarity of ECO Region.

Concluding my speech, I convey my earnest wishes to all esteemed participants. In the upcoming period, as always, we will work closely with our counterparts aiming to strengthen brotherly ties and construct the future together underneath a single roof.

Thank you.

Statement by H.E. Murodjon Buriboev,
President of ECO Cultural Institute

Honorable Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization

Good morning!

As the President of the ECO Cultural Institute, the oldest specialized agency of the Economic Cooperation Organization, it is my pleasure to take part in this august meeting to highlight the important relationship between tourism and culture, as culture is an indispensable part of tourism industry.

Cultural tourism or the cultural dimension of tourism is considered one of the most favorable solutions for promotion of tourist destinations around the world. It is almost impossible to travel to a destination without visiting at least some of its historical monuments and museums or participating in some of its local exhibitions and events. When we talk about cultural heritage tourism or historical tourism, we are referring to some parts of cultural tourism.

In fact, all the activities carried out to get more familiar with the culture and art of a destination are considered the elements of cultural tourism. According to a report by the World Tourism Organization in 2018, cultural tourism accounts for nearly half of the world's tourism industry (that is about 40 percent). This type of tourism is developing rapidly and includes a large part of tourist attractions such as heritages, religious sites, handicrafts, performing arts, cosines, festivals, and special events.

Many countries make use of their tangible and intangible heritages and contemporary culture in cultural tourism for economic growth and sustainable development of their tourist destinations; an effort that creates more jobs, restores rural and urban areas, and protects natural and cultural heritages. In fact, cultural tourism is one of the main pillars of employment in the world and is considered by many countries as the main priority for creating jobs for young people.

The position of culture is very important in terms of social communication and as a basic drive for economic development, as well as the convergence between economic and cultural discourse. The concept of cultural tourism is significant as an economic resource and an element in economic development and community

welfare. Cultural tourism and the promotion of the culture of the people of this region, who share many commonalities, is not only very interesting for tourists, but will also be profitable in the long run. If tourism is planned, managed, and developed in a socially and culturally responsible manner, it can bring a variety of socio-cultural benefits which include preserving cultural heritage, creating opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges between local residents and tourists, developing and maintaining museums, and other cultural facilities, strengthening a sense of pride among local communities and increasing living standards.

ECO Cultural Institute has always tried to provide a suitable platform for the promotion of culture and expansion of sustainable development for the people of the region, it has reached many achievements and has also carried out valuable activities in the field of tourism based on its mission in preserving the history, identity, and culture of the people of the region. In this regard, it has prepared and published the book “ECO Tourist Guide” in English in cooperation with the ECO Secretariat and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The ECO Cultural Institute has also published the quarterly journal “ECO Heritage” which deals with cultural subjects and promotes the traditions of the people of the region. Special issues of the magazine have also been dedicated to the promotion of the cities of the ECO region, such as Tabriz, Isfahan, Dushanbe, Khiva, Sari, and Sheki. Of course, by contribution of the member countries, this will continue until all the cultural and most visited cities of the region are promoted.

ECO Cultural Institute also assigned specific sections on its website to each ECO member country, where its tourism-related information, photos, and videos are available.

ECO Cultural Institute welcomes the initiatives of this meeting in order to increase the level of cooperation between ECO member countries as much as possible. Acknowledging that the shortages and inadequacies in the field of cultural tourism can be compensated with learning and keeping in mind that learning about the tourism centers will result in the achievement of the development goals in the fields of tourism and cultural tourism, ECO Cultural Institute can hold workshops and short-term and long-term training courses, help for the exchange of experiences, expertise and information in different cultural fields, conduct joint research projects to produce written and digital works, organize exhibitions and related activities to provide the necessary platform for the preservation and promotion of the culture of the people of the region as much as possible.

ECO Cultural Institute is on the belief that culture is a never-ending issue, even as the Covid outbreak spread across the globe, and new opportunities in all the cultural fields, tourism in particular, can be recognized and recovered. Therefore, the Institute made every effort to provide a platform with the help of virtual reality technology (VR) in order to facilitate online museum tours for the countries of the region. Of course, this demands the cooperation of all museums and cultural and historical centers of the region with the ECO Cultural Institute can provide a valuable collection of attractions of this region on the ECI website. We believe that this will not only promote the cultural-tourist attractions of the ECO region to millions of international tourists but also revives the desire to travel and gain new experiences in their hearts and encourages them to plan for their future trips.

ECO Cultural Institute can be a powerful cultural arm for the Economic Cooperation Organization in the tourism sector in such a way that it can help related institutions in the standardization of tourism destinations. We believe if hotels and hostels of this region follow the same standards, regarding their locations, posters, advertising brochures, qibla directions, common symbols, cultural elements, etc., ECO will soon become an important regional and tourism brand.

In order to improve the convergence and preserve the ancient rituals of the region, ECO Cultural Institute proposes that the Nowruz ceremony can be held every year in one of the ECO member countries in the presence of the Heads of Governments. This can be effective to attract cultural tourists to take part in the events and occasions.

In my opinion, as already mentioned at the beginning, through the poem of the renowned poet of the region, Saadi Shirazi, traveling together with all its cultural exchange possibilities can totally change the mindset of the travelers as they become familiar with the culture of the region and in experiencing the colorful, spiritual, and historical attractions, they can strengthen their eastern identities and be proud of it. Our vision of tourism development in the region, in addition to the economic goals that everyone mentioned, is to shape common tourist attractions and a welcoming personality in the ECO region.

In conclusion, once again I would like to appreciate the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for its hospitality and special arrangements and I hope that holding this meeting will be a step towards improving the level of tourism and enhancing the culture of the people of the ECO region. Thank you for your attention.
