

Annexes I-VIII of the Summary Record of the 13th ECO Summit

(1 March 2017; Islamabad-Islamic Republic of Pakistan)

Annex-I	List of Participants
Annex-II	Welcoming Remarks by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as the Chairman of the 12 th ECO Summit
Annex-III	Inaugural Statement by H.E. Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as the Chairman of the 13 th ECO Summit
Annex-IV	Statement by H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca, ECO Secretary General
Annex-V	Report of 22 nd COM presented by the Chairman of the 22 nd COM
Annex-VI	Statements by Heads of State/Government/Delegations of the ECO Member States: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2. Republic of Azerbaijan 3. Islamic Republic of Iran 4. Republic of Kazakhstan 5. Kyrgyz Republic 6. Republic of Tajikistan 7. Republic of Turkey
Annex-VII	Statements by the ECO Observers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turkish Cypriot State 2. Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States 3. Energy Charter Conference
Annex-VIII	Statements by Special Invitees: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Representative of the People's Republic of China 2. Special Representative of the UN Secretary General

13th ECO Summit

(Islamabad, 1st March 2017)

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

1. H.E. Hazrat Omar Zakhiwal, President's Special Envoy and Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to Pakistan
2. Mr. Naqibullah Hafizi, Duty Director General of Regional Cooperation Directorate of Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3. Seyed Abdul Nasir Yousofi, Deputy Head of Mission Afghan Embassy, Islamabad
4. Mr. Khan Mohammad Alamyar, Director (Foreign Relations) Ministry of Economy
5. Mr. Matiullah Kamawall, First Secretary, Afghan Embassy Islamabad.

The Republic of Azerbaijan

1. H.E. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
2. Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
3. Mr. Novruz Mammadov, the head of Foreign relations Department of Presidential Administration
4. Mr. Shahin Mustafayev, the Minister of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan
5. Mr. Natiq Aliyev, the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan
6. Mr. Ali Alizade, the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
7. Mr. Elshad Nasirov, Vice-President of State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SOCAR)

The Islamic Republic of Iran

1. H.E. Dr. Hasan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
2. H.E. Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Foreign Minister
3. H.E. Dr. Mohammad Nahavandian, Head of Presidential Office
4. H.E. Mr. Mehdi Honardoost, the Ambassador of the I.R of Iran to Pakistan
5. H.E. Mr. Hamid Abutalebi, Deputy Head of Presidential Office
6. H.E. Mr. Ebrahim Rahimpour, Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia & Pacific Affairs
7. H.E. Mr. Hesamoddin Ashena, Cultural consultant of the President
8. H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Director General for International Environmental and Sustainable Development Affairs, MFA
9. H.E. Mr. Mohammadreza HAJI KARIM JABBARI, Director General, Office of the Minister, MFA
10. H.E. Mr. Rasoul Eslami, Director General for West Asia Affairs, MFA
11. Mr. Abdolfazl MOHAMMAD ALIKHANI, Deputy Director General, International Environmental and Sustainable Development Affairs General Directorate, MFA
12. Mr. Ahmad SAFFARI, Deputy Director, ECO Affairs and Multilateral Economic Organizations Department, MFA

The Republic of Kazakhstan

1. H.E.Mr. Askar Myrzakhmetov, Deputy Prime Minister
2. H.E.Mr.A.Kamaldinov Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3. H.E. Mr. A. Bakayev, Director General of the Asia Cooperation Department
4. H.E.Mr.B.Amreyev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the I.R. Iran
5. H.E. Mr. B.Shabarbaye Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan

The Kyrgyz Republic

1. H.E. Mr. Zheenbekov Sooronbay Sharipovich, Prime Minister
2. H.E. Mr. Kozhoshev Arzybek Orozbekovich, Minister of Economy
3. H.E. Mr. Abdurazakov Avazbek Ishenbaevich, Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the ECO and to the Islamic Republic of Iran
4. H. E. Mr. Beishembaev Eric Aydarkanovich, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
5. H. E. Mr. Usenov Azamat Erkinbekovich, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
6. Mr. Aidarbekov Aibek Akmatbekovich, Head of Department of International Cooperation of the Government Office
7. Ms. Stamalievna Tolgonai Turdalievna, Head of the Information Department of the Government Office
8. Ms. Kubanichbek Altynay, Expert of the International Cooperation
9. Mr. K. Myrzakanov, Deputy Chairman of the State Committee on Industry, Energy and Sub-Soil Management
10. Mr. Ruslan Biybosunov, Special Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
11. Ms. Nazira Mamatkanova , Attaché of the Department of Integration Associations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan

1. H.E. Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister
2. H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs
3. H.E. Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistic and Privatization
4. H.E. Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning Development & Reforms
5. H.E. Eng. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Minister of Commerce
6. H.E. Seyed Tariq Fatemi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs
7. H.E. Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Foreign Secretary
8. H.E. Ms. Tehmina Janua, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN-Geneva
9. H.E. Mr. Asif Durrani, Ambassador of Pakistan to I.R. Iran
10. Mr. Babar Amin, Director General (ECO&CAR)
11. Mr. Taimur Zulfiqar, Director (ECO & CAR)
12. Mr. Ghulam Hussain, Second Secretary, Embassy of Pakistan, Tehran
13. Mr. Abdul Bari, Assistant Director (ECO)

The Republic of Tajikistan

1. H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President
2. H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, First Deputy Foreign Minister
3. H.E. Mr. Ilhom Abdurahmonov, Deputy Chief of Department of MFA
4. Mr. Anzor Tanibekov, Second Secretary, Embassy of Tajikistan, Islamabad

The Republic of Turkey

1. H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of The Republic Of Turkey
2. H.E. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu Minister of Foreign Affairs
3. H.E. Nihat Zeybekci Minister of Economy
4. H.E. Berat Albayrak, Minister of Energy And Natural Resources
5. H.E. Lütfi Elvan, Minister of Development
6. H.E. Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transportation, Maritime And Communication
7. H.E. Ambassador Ibrahim Kalin, Deputy Secretary General Of The Office Of The Presidency
8. H.E. Ambassador Sedat Önal, Deputy Undersecretary of Ministry Of Foreign Affairs
9. H.E. Ambassador Hakan Tekin, Turkish Ambassador In Tehran,

Turkmenistan

1. H.E. Mr. Guranguly Berdimuhamedov, President
2. H.E. Mr. Ahmet Kurbanow, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to I.R of Iran
3. Mr. Islam Sakhatow, Third Secretary

The Republic of Uzbekistan

1. H.E. Mr. Ulugbek Rozukulov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan
2. H.E. Mr. Furkat Sidikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
3. H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran
4. Mr. Bekzod Yusupov, Assistant to the Chairman of the Board of "Uzavtosanoat" JSC
5. Mr. Sarvar Kadyrov, Head of the Office of "Uzavtosanoat" JSC
6. Mr. Umid Babayev, Third Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan
7. Mr. Bahodir Tashmanov, Third Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Tehran.

Special Guests:

1. H.E. Mr. Zhang Yesui, Executive Vice Foreign Minister/Representative of the Government of the People's Republic of China
2. H.E. Mr. Tadamichi Tamamoto, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General

Turkish Cypriot State (Observer)

1. H.E. Mr. Sunat Atun, Minister of Economy and Energy

Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States

2. H.E. Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General

Energy Charter Secretariat (Observer)

1. Mr. Marat Terterov, Principal Coordinator
2. Mr. Can Ogutcu, Assistant (Expansion and Outreach)

UNESCAP

1. Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under Secretary General of the United Nations & Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

1. H.E. Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Mazaheri, President

ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO-TDB)

1. Mr. Javaid Aslam, President

ECO Science Foundation (ECO SF)

1. Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President

The ECO Secretariat:

1. H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca, Secretary General
2. Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi, Deputy Secretary General
3. Mr. Ahsan Ali Mangi, Deputy Secretary General
4. Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
5. Dr. Muhammad Adnan, Director
6. Mr. Bahodur Rahmonov, Assistant Director
7. Mr. Muhammad Muqet Asim Shah, Assistant Director
8. Mr. Muhammad Safdar, Programme Officer
9. Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
10. Mr. Djalylnber Turgumbaev, Programme Officer
11. Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan, Steno-Secretary
12. Mr. Ghulam Nabi, Steno-Secretary
13. Mr. Arshad Ali Jatoi, Steno-Secretary
14. Ms. Aynur Mammadova, Russian Interpreter
15. Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, Russian Interpreter
16. Mr. Berik Buzaauov, Russian Translator

**Welcome Remarks by H.E Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of
Azerbaijan
as the Chairman of the previous (12th) ECO Summit**

Dear Mr. Prime-Minister Nawaz Sharif,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I'd like to express gratitude to our Pakistani hosts for excellent organization of the ECO Summit.

Azerbaijan hosted two Summits of the ECO in 2006 and 2012. Our country assumed the ECO Chairmanship at our last meeting in Baku, in 2012. This is demonstration of our firm commitment to cooperation within the Economic Cooperation Organisation. [ECO is a product of our political will to cooperate closely for the benefit of our peoples. Successful activity of ECO is in our common interests. Peoples of our countries share common history, culture, traditions and religion.]

During our chairmanship, Azerbaijan contributed a lot to the development of our organization and deepening our regional cooperation. Having excellent relations with all the member states of ECO Azerbaijan strengthened its economic ties both on bilateral and multilateral level with its partners. We did our best to promote ECO not just as a physical bridge between East and West and North and South but also as a place which unites different civilizations and cultures./

Azerbaijan considers ECO as an important international organization. I'm sure that the role of ECO in international economic cooperation will grow in the future. In 2013 we convened the 1st ECO High level Working Group Meeting on the "Gazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran) – Astara (Azerbaijan)" Railway Project. This is a sign of high level interest and political support to realization of the North-South Corridor. Azerbaijan already completed its part of the project that can offer additional cooperation opportunities for other ECO countries. This year we will organize the ECO Rail Road ministers meeting to further our cooperation in this strategic direction.

We also initiated and held 1st and 2nd International Conferences on Energy, Regional Integration and Socio-Economic Development in 2013 and 2014 where cooperation within ECO was given a special attention. Azerbaijan is also committed to development of the ICT cooperation in the ECO region and as continuation of its efforts Azerbaijan is planning to host a meeting of the respective ministers this year. I am sure that the outcome of the meeting will contribute to achieving our common goals.

In 2013 and 2014 we organized 1st and 2nd Baku Forums of ECO Member States Economic Think-tanks to allow economic intellectuals to come together and discuss issues of economic growth and cooperation. We also hosted many other events with purpose of strengthening our cooperation in fields of healthcare, renewable energy, oil and gas, taxes, disaster management and etc.

Since 2012 Azerbaijan as the Chairman of ECO did its best to strengthen our organization, to increase its involvement in the world's economic cooperation and promote multilateral partnership between the member states. /

Now we will elect the Chairman of the 13th ECO Summit. I propose that the Prime-Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif be elected as the Chairman of the 13th ECO Summit meeting.

Prime-Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has been elected as the Chairman of ECO.

I congratulate You Mr. Chairman, wish You success and invite You to assume the Chairmanship.

INAUGURAL STATEMENT BY
His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif,
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as the Chairman of the
13th ECO Summit

(Islamabad, 1st March 2017)

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Assalam-o-Alaikum

On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, I have great pleasure in welcoming all our distinguished guests to Islamabad. It is an honor to host the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization and to assume the Chair of this important regional organization.

I wish to convey my deep appreciation to H.E. President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan for ably steering the ECO since the 2012 Summit in Baku.

I would also like to thank Secretary General ECO Halil Ibrahim Acka and the entire ECO Secretariat, for the support they have extended in making this Summit a success.

I also wish to express my gratitude to our special guests from the People's Republic of China and the United Nations. The choice of our Special Guests has direct salience to the theme of this Summit.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Summit marks the 25th anniversary of the Organization's expansion. It is a welcome occasion for us to renew our commitment to the ECO's founding principles and ideals. At its heart, the ECO has always subscribed to a people-centric agenda. At this Summit, we want to focus on greater connectivity and trade linkages amongst our countries, in order to deliver progress to the people of the ECO region.

The ECO region is not an insignificant geographical area. It represents a vast expanse of territory that is home to nearly a sixth of all humanity. Though the region has enormous potential, and accounts for 16% of the world's population, we generate only 2% of the world's trade. And, trade within the ECO region is a small fraction of our trade with the rest of the world.

These numbers are not commensurate with what we could achieve through greater integration and connectivity. They are also at variance with our rich historical legacy. This region was once synonymous with the fabled "Silk Road." It was a melting pot of civilizations; a conduit for trade and commerce, as well as a corridor for culture and ideas. We are the proud heirs of Al-Beruni, Farabi, Saadi, Rumi and Iqbal, to name just a few of our glorious ancestors.

It is now time for us to reclaim our historic role as Asia's center of economic and trade activity. Thus the theme of this Summit, "Connectivity for Regional Prosperity", is both inspired by our shared past and evidence of our commitment to a future of shared prosperity.

The ECO can be an example of regional cooperation, which touches upon and enriches the lives of our peoples. What makes the theme especially relevant is that more countries in the region are already making large investments in connectivity projects. Central Asia is fast emerging as a Trans-Eurasian land bridge. Oil and gas pipelines across deserts and mountains are linking our markets, while railroad networks are harbingers of our commitment to connectivity. But we can and should achieve even more, by pooling together our individual efforts for greater synergy. The whole is always greater than the sum of its parts.

I believe that the ECO's time has truly come. It is primed to make momentous advancement. There has never been a more opportune time to realize our dream of "Connectivity for Regional Prosperity."

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since assuming office in 2013, it has been the aim of my Government to pursue a policy of "peaceful neighbourhood." Our vision of "peace for development" has consistently guided our efforts, to help create a conducive environment in which we can all achieve our true economic and development potential. Peaceful settlement of longstanding disputes would go a long way in advancing this noble goal. There is little doubt that as we find ways to strengthen mutual cooperation, we would be experiencing shared prosperity.

Enhancing trade and promoting transport connectivity in the region and beyond, are at the core of our vision.

Perhaps no project better symbolizes Pakistan's conception of win-win cooperation through connectivity, than the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It is gratifying that CPEC is now being recognized as a catalyst for energy infrastructure, transport connectivity and trade in the whole of South and Central Asia.

And why stop at just energy, or transport, or trade? We can and we must strive for loftier goals. Cooperation across a vast spectrum of areas - in agriculture, in culture, in education, and in science and technology - should all be on our agenda. After all, the Silk Road provided a medium for exchange of knowledge, as much as of goods.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pakistan's strategic location at the crossroads of the Middle East has always been prized for South Asia, Central Asia and its economic potential. The current performance of Pakistan's economy is living up to its promise. Indeed, Pakistan's economy has come to be acknowledged as one of the great success stories of recent years by global financial institutions and observers. Last year, Pakistan had the best performing stock market in

South Asia and the fifth best in the world. Our economic indicators are up and pointing in the right direction. Inflation is low and GDP growth has been robust.

Pakistan not only boasts a consumer market of 200 million people, with a large and growing middle class, we will soon be providing easier, quicker and cheaper physical access to markets in the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

But returning to the theme of this Summit, Pakistan has the location, the political stability, and, now increasingly, the physical infrastructure to achieve our common vision for making ECO a powerful economic bloc and an engine of growth. To that end, we need to work on streamlining our institutional mechanisms. The ECO Trade Agreement needs to be operationalized, while respecting and accommodating each Member State's interests and concerns.

Meaningful trade in the region cannot take place without better cooperation on transport infrastructure among Member States. The existence of efficient trade, transit and transport corridors across the region will guarantee economic development and prosperity of our people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The adoption of the Islamabad Declaration and the ECO Vision 2025 during this Summit will reflect the consensus and resolve of ECO Member States to collectively take on the contemporary economic challenges.

Sustained focus on the key areas identified in the Islamabad Declaration namely trade, transport and energy can lead to transformative change across the region.

Vision 2025 provides a realistic and achievable roadmap for accelerating economic integration that works to the common good of all our people.

Let us all strive towards transforming ECO's enormous potential into reality.

It is up to us to seize this historic opportunity and make this region a citadel of peace, progress and prosperity.

Once again, I welcome our honourable guests to Islamabad and wish them a productive and pleasant stay.

I thank you.

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Halil Ibrahim AKCA, ECO Secretary General at 13th ECO Summit

(Islamabad, 1st March, 2017)

Honourable Chairman

Honourable Heads of States and Governments

Honourable Delegates

Excellencies

Distinguished Guests

It is a great privilege for me to present to 13th ECO Summit a brief report on the activities of the Economic Cooperation Organization. At the outset, I wish to avail this opportunity to express my profound felicitations to His Excellency, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the honourable Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on his unanimous election as the Chairman of the 13th ECO Summit. Under his able leadership, ECO would make further progress.

I would also express my sincere thanks to the Honourable President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev for his excellent guidance the ECO since 2012. And I would like to extend my sincere thanks to leaders of ECO Member States and honourable guests.

The Summit is of prime importance for ECO as it presents an opportunity for the Heads of the ECO Member States to review our performance as well as guide us in our future endeavours. This 13th Summit with its very proper theme of “Connectivity for Regional Prosperity” will prove itself to be an important milestone in achieving our shared goals and objectives.

Excellencies

At the beginning of my statement, I want to share with you the overall profile of the ECO Region.

The population of ECO Region has reached to 471 million with the 30 percent increase compared to the world population increase of 20 percent in the last 15 years.

Meanwhile, total GDP of the member states crossed US \$ 1 trillion and 795 billion and income per capita is close to US \$ 4,000.

The share of ECO's aggregated GDP to the world GDP improved from 2.06 percent in 2000 to 2.63 percent in 2015.

On the trade count, ECO has modest performance. The share of ECO merchandise trade to world trade reached only 2.10.

ECO's intra-regional trade witnessed improvement to 8.7 percent in 2015 as against 5.3 percent in 2000, that is requiring concerted efforts to boost it to targeted level of 20 percent.

Honourable Chairman

During the period from the last Summit, ECO has continued to implement programmes and projects as developed and decided by the decision-making bodies. Trade, transport and energy continued to be the core areas of ECO agenda, while other issues of global and regional importance, including food security, environment, industrial production and tourism, were also pursued within ECO.

In trade and Investment sector, the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECOTDB) has expanded its operations and membership. Trade Capacity Building Project is being carried out in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in the areas of Standards and Quality. However, non-implementation of ECOTA calls for a new approach.

Activities of ECO in **Transport Sector** remain the strongest; under the 'Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA)', important initiative have been undertaken in partnership with IDB, which include approvals of several road and rail corridors. Special emphasis has been given to corridors which will give access to ECO land-locked countries to major sea ports in the South and markets in East and West. A study on development of border points and harmonization of customs provisions and ICT needs of the region have been finished successfully.

In the Energy Sector, we have little cooperation at the regional level at ECO platforms. Despite the fact that major pipeline projects are out of the ECO portfolio, certain progress in the ECO Regional Electricity Market (REM) and in renewable and alternative energy sources has been achieved.

Environment, as a cross-cutting sector in the region and in the world, got more interest from international organizations. ECO has worked closely with UN institutions and was granted Observer Status in the respective UN organizations and conventions.

The disaster risk reduction is also a prominent issue in ECO Region which is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. We are in the process of developing an ECO regional framework for cooperation on disaster risk reduction with the support of relevant regional and international organizations.

Agriculture is a key sector and essential in achieving food security for ECO region and developing countries. It employs 37 percent of total active population of the region. Under the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security several projects have been implementing targeting food security through collaboration with relevant international organizations.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, **tourism** has been proposed as a priority area in the ECO Vision 2025. A Memorandum of Understanding with the United

Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and collaboration with UNESCO to utilize mutual potentials of the two organizations to promote tourism activities are in process.

Excellencies,

Having derived the guidance from the Treaty of Izmir, decisions of the Summits/CoM, ECO has developed its external relations.

ECO enjoys observer status with the United Nations and its various organs; the Organization of Islamic Conference, and the Islamic Development Bank. Reciprocal observer-ship between ECO and Energy Charter Treaty has just adapted by the Council of Ministers.

Over the years, ECO has signed 45 Memorandum of Understanding and Agreements with the UN system as well as other regional and international organizations.

Excellencies

One of the important output of this summit will be the "ECO Vision 2025" that is adapted yesterday. The Vision 2025 addresses the emerging needs and requirements for economic development of ECO Member States and the Region, will guide the Economic Cooperation Organization in the next 10 years. The Vision document attempts to focus on core areas of trade, transport connectivity and energy, as per the needs and aspirations of the Member States, as well as tourism as another sector on which Member States have agreed to focus on realization of its great potential for the Member states as well as the Region.

By concluding my presentation, I would like to once again thank your Excellencies for your participation in this important and timely meeting and would like to reiterate the need for your valuable support and contributions to the Organization. Let me conclude by expressing my sincere thanks to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hospitality provided to the delegations and excellent organization of all events.

I thank you very much

Report of 22nd COM Presented by
H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs of
the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as the Chairman of the 22nd COM

Report of 22nd COM

The 22nd Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on 28th February 2017. The Meeting was attended by the delegations of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan. The delegations of the ECO Observers, including Turkish Cypriot State, Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and Energy Charter Conference, the Heads/Representatives of ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions, and Affiliated Bodies and UNESCAP also attended the Meeting. The ECO Secretariat delegation, led by the Secretary General participated in the Meeting. *The list of participants is attached as Annex-I.*

2. The Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) was preceded by the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on 26-27 February 2017. In his brief inaugural remarks during the SOM, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Halil Ibrahim Akca, profoundly thanked the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for making the excellent arrangements for the 22nd COM meeting and 13th ECO Summit in the beautiful city of Islamabad. He also welcomed and appreciated the delegates from Member States and ECO institutions for attending the Meeting. He gave a brief inaugural statement including on preparatory process for 22nd COM and 13th Summit and activities of ECO. He expressed that the SOM will make constructive contribution to the deliberations, focusing on important agendas; ECOTA, ECO scale of Assessments and Reforms, ECO Vision 2025 and Islamabad Declaration for 13th ECO Summit.

3. After taking over the Chairmanship of the SOM, Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Foreign Secretary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, delivered the opening statement. He welcomed the delegates from ECO Member States to Islamic Republic of Pakistan and wished them a pleasant stay in Islamabad. Acknowledging the valuable contributions by the ECO Member States, he underlined Pakistan's strong support to ECO's objectives in the areas of regional free trade, connectivity and energy market and stressed that economic integration and connectivity are the main pillars to galvanize economic growth, create more jobs, expand trade in the ECO Region. The Foreign Secretary also underscored strong need for creation of a world class logistics infrastructure within the ECO Region for speedy movement of goods and people at a reduced cost that stimulate investment and growth and highlighted the potential of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a major initiative, which would serve for the socio-economic development in the ECO Region. He called for removal of trade barriers and eventual establishment of free trade regime in the region through prompt operationalization of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA). He reassured Government of Pakistan's support for the peace and economic development in Afghanistan and hoped that ECO Vision 2025 will define the roadmap for the ECO activities and agendas.

4. The SOM held detailed deliberations on the agendas of the COM and Summit and prepared report for the COM.

Agenda Item No.1

Inauguration/Opening

5. The Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting was inaugurated with recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

6. His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the outgoing Chairman of Council of Ministers (COM), called the Meeting in order and delivered brief welcoming remarks highlighting the steps taken during Iran's Chairmanship to strengthen ECO in order to meet the new regional and global challenges. H.E Mr. Mohammad Javed Zarif underlined the enhanced ECO's activities in various fields of cooperation in order to meet the new regional and global challenges. He touched upon reforms in the ECO Secretariat and hoped that the new ECO Vision would pave the way for achieving ECO's goals and programmes in the coming decade. He called for broadening the regional cooperation among the ECO Member States for the socio-economic development and prosperity in the ECO Region, as well as further enhancing the cultural affinities. He assured his Government's full support to the new Chair of COM from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. *A copy of his statement is attached as Annex-II.*

7. His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif invited His Excellency Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca, ECO Secretary General for his welcoming statement.

8. His Excellency Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca, the Secretary General of ECO in his statement welcomed the distinguished participants and expressed his profound gratitude and appreciated the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the landmark Meetings of 22nd COM and 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad and providing warm hospitality to all delegations. He felicitated H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the new Chairman of the Council of the Ministers (COM) and expressed the hope that under his astute Chairmanship, the Organization would pursue the tangible goals and achieve overarching aims and objectives through enhanced regional cooperation. He also extended his sincere thanks to the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif, for his consistent support and guidance as Chairman of the 21st COM.

9. ECO Secretary General briefed the Meeting about important activities of the Organization and noted that after adoption of the ECO Vision 2025, the activities of the Organization will further be enhanced and prioritized focusing on Trade, Transport and Connectivity, Energy, Tourism, Economic Growth and Productivity and Social Welfare and Environment in line with the UN Global Development Agenda 2030. He called upon the Member States to expedite signing, ratification and implementation of the agreements within the ECO's framework, including ECOTA, ECO-TDB, ECO Culture Institute, ECO Science Foundation, ECO Educational Institute and other ECO entities. *A copy of his statement is attached as Annex-III.*

Agenda Item No.2

Election of the Chairman

10. As per Rule 23 of the ECO Rules of Procedure, H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was unanimously elected as new Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

11. After national anthem of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the new Chairman of the COM, H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, thanked the Members of the Council for reposing confidence in him and outlined his vision for further enhancing economic cooperation in the region. He reiterated that Pakistan has always attached great importance to ECO and will remain an active partner for actualization of the ECO's agenda and support projects of, among others, enhanced trade and investment opportunities, regional connectivity and infrastructure development, regional energy markets, oil and gas pipelines, and trans-regional socio-economic development projects, which will act as catalyst for transforming ECO into a prosperous trading bloc that stimulates and promotes industrial growth, reduces and eventually eliminates tariff and non-tariff barriers, promotes free trade through operationalization of ECOTA within the region and becomes an agent of global peace, stability and prosperity.

12. He further underscored the need for taking collective and coherent steps to give priority to certain areas of cooperation of the Organization for effective implementation of ECO Vision 2025 to make the Organization more effective, dynamic and vibrant. *A copy of the statement is attached as Annex-IV.*

Agenda Item No.3

Adoption of the Agenda

13. The Council adopted the following agenda of its meeting, as proposed by the Senior Officials Meeting (*Islamabad, 26-27 February 2017*).

AGENDA

1. *Inauguration*
 - *Welcome Statement by Chairman of the 21st COM*
 - *Statement of the ECO Secretary General*
2. *Election of the Chairman*
3. *Adoption of the Agenda*
4. *Reciprocal Observership between ECO Secretariat and Energy Charter Conference*
5. *Treaty Event*
6. *Statements by:*
 - *Ministers/Heads of Delegations*
 - *ECO Observers*
 - *Heads of Regional and International Organizations*
 - *Heads of ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions*
 - a. *ECO Cultural Institute (ECO-ECI)*
 - b. *ECO Science Foundation (ECO-SF)*
 - c. *ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO-TDB)*
7. *Consideration of the Report of ECO Secretary General*
 - *Follow-up to the decisions of 21st COM and 12th Summit Meetings*
 - *Agreements between ECO Member States*
 - *Implementation of ECO Projects/Programs*
 - *Financial Matters*

- ECO Secretariat's relations with International Agencies
 - ECO Regional/ Affiliated Institutions
8. ECO Vision 2025
 9. New Scale of Assessments & ECO Reforms and Amendments in ECO Legal Instruments
 10. Implementation of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA)
 11. Review and approval of ECO activities:
 - The Reports of ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) Meetings (213-217)
 - The ECO Secretariat's Budget for 2017
 - Report of the 27th RPC Meetings:
 - Annual Calendar of Events for 2017
 - Work Program for 2017
 - Appointments/Extensions
 12. Annual Reports of ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/ Affiliated Bodies:
 - i. ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)
 - ii. ECO Educational Institute (ECO-EI)
 - iii. ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)
 - **Ratification of ECOSF**
 - iv. ECO Trade & Development Bank (ECO-TDB)
 - **Increasing effectiveness of ECO-TDB**
 - v. ECO-Consultancy & Engineering Company (ECO-CEC)
 - vi. ECO Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ECO-CCI)
 - vii. ECO College of Insurance
 - viii. ECO Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ECO-IEST)
 - ix. ECO Postal College
 - **Availing training courses offered at Postal College**
 - x. ECO Regional Center for Risk Management for Natural Disasters (ECORCRM)
 - **Strengthening of Disaster Risk Management Regime in ECO Member States**
 - xi. ECO Regional Coordination Centre for the Implementation of the Regional Programme for Food Security (ECO-RCC)
 - xii. ECO Seed Association (ECOSA)
 13. ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/ Affiliated Bodies under the process of Establishment
 - i. ECO Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen (RCCACO)
 - ii. ECO Centre for Efficient Utilization of Water for Agriculture
 - iii. ECO Meteorological Calibration Center (ECO-MCC)
 - iv. Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Countries (PAECO)
 - v. ECO Police (ECOPOL)
 - vi. ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM)
 - vii. ECO Reinsurance Company
 - viii. ECO Research Centre (ERC)
 - ix. ECO Veterinary Commission (ECO-VECO)
 14. Preparation for the 13th Summit:
 - Draft Agenda
 - Draft Islamabad Declaration 2017
 - ECO Awards 2017
 15. Any other business
 16. Date and venue of the next meeting
 17. Adoption of Report of the 22nd COM Meeting
 18. Vote of Thanks and Closing of the Meeting

Agenda Item No.4

Reciprocal Observership between ECO and Energy Charter Conference

14. The Council approved the reciprocal observership status between ECO and Energy Charter Conference.

Agenda Item No.5

Treaty Event

15. Under this agenda item, no Treaty Event took place.

Agenda Item No.6

Statements by:

- Ministers/Heads of Delegation

16. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs/Heads of Delegation of the ECO Member States made their statements, elaborating their countries' policies, action plans/programmes and activities for the Organization and overall regional cooperation in the framework of ECO. *Copies of their statements made available to the Secretariat are attached as Annex-V.*

- Statement by the Observers

17. The Minister of Economy and Energy of the Turkish Cypriot State, the Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States and the Representative of Energy Charter Conference delivered their statements as Observers. *Copies of their statements are attached as Annex-VI.*

- Statements by the Heads of Regional and International Organizations

18. The Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations & Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), invited in the COM Meeting, also delivered the statement. *Copy of Statement is attached as Annex-VII.*

- Statements by Heads of ECO Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions

19. The Heads of ECO Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions delivered short statements, presenting overview of their activities undertaken and future plans. These included, (i) ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), (ii) ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and (iii) ECO Trade & Development Bank (ECO-TDB). *Copies of their statements are attached as Annex-VIII.*

Agenda Item No.7

Consideration of the Report of ECO Secretary General

20. The Council appreciated the Report of the Secretary General on the activities of ECO since the last 21st COM Meeting held in November 2013 in Tehran and the Secretary General's Report presented review of implementation of ongoing ECO Projects, Programmes and activities, financial matters, status of agreements amongst ECO Member States, ECO's relations with regional and international organizations, and update on ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies.

I) Follow-up on 21st COM decisions

21. The Council reviewed the progress made since the 21st COM and urged the Member States, to continue to implement the decisions of the 21st COM, in collaboration with ECO Secretariat and relevant authorities of the Member countries.

II) Agreements between ECO Member States

22. The Council considered the Status Report on implementation of the Agreements concluded by the Member States and invited those Member States who have not yet done so to sign/ratify these Agreements. The Council also urged the Member States to ensure smooth implementation of those agreements which have already come into force.

III) Implementation of ECO Projects and Programmes

23. The Council reviewed and considered the ECO projects and programmes included in the Secretary General's Report and urged the Secretariat to speed up implementation process of the projects.

IV) Financial Matters

24. The Council took note of the arrears and urged the concerned Member States to ensure its resolution and urged the Member States, Republic of Uzbekistan and Republic of Kazakhstan, to fulfill their obligations and contribute their outstanding budgetary shares to the Secretariat. The Council also asked the Member States to ensure timely remitting of their contributions.

25. Kazakhstan informed the Council that its contribution to budget 2017 will be limited up to US \$ 220,000/-.

26. The Member States took note with concern of Kazakhstan's unilateral decision and urged to review its position.

V) ECO's relations with Regional and International Agencies

27. The Council appreciated the efforts made by ECO in strengthening its cooperative relations with regional and international organizations. The Council urged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to further strengthen its external relations in light of the recommendations of the sectoral Meetings for enhancement of ECO external relations in concerned areas of cooperation for the visibility of the Organization.

Agenda Item No.8

ECO Vision 2025

28. The Council adopted the "ECO Vision 2025" along with "Implementation Framework for ECO Vision 2025" as the Basic Reference Document for the Organization, which was reviewed and finalized by the Senior Officials Meeting held on 26-27 February 2017. The Council urged the Member States to actively pursue the Implementation Framework of the ECO Vision 2025 for effective implementation of the goals envisioned

in the document for enhanced regional cooperation. *Text of adopted ECO Vision 2025 and Implementation Framework for ECO Vision 2025 are attached as **Annex-IX**.*

29. The Council welcoming the intention to create the ECO Vision Fund called upon the Member States to extend voluntary contributions for the Fund in order to implement the key projects of the Organization under the new ECO Vision and asked the Secretariat to make efforts for securing 'International Funding'. The Council directed the CPR to finalize modalities for the fund at the earliest.

30. The Kyrgyz Republic made observation that ECO Vision 2025 and its Implementation Framework would be implemented taking into account national interests and commitments within other regional and international integration entities.

Agenda Item No.9

New Scale of Assessments & ECO Reforms and Amendments in ECO Legal Instruments

31. The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat in preparing the proposals for the 'New Scale of Assessments' and "ECO Reforms" and directed the CPR to finalize these issues at the earliest, preferably within four months. The Council urged the Member States to resolve the issue of Scale of Assessments as soon as possible in order to keep the Secretariat financially viable.

Agenda Item No.10

Implementation of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA)

32. The Secretariat briefed the Meeting of the current state of implementation of the ECOTA, as well as signing/ratification of the agreement and its annexes.

33. The Council, after hearing the comments of all the Member States, which remained as before, decided to urge the CPR and the Secretariat to keep up the efforts to operationalize the 'ECOTA'.

34. The Council called upon Iran to submit lists so that the implementation process of the ECOTA could be started expeditiously. The Council also requested Tajikistan to submit the remaining lists and also ratify the Annexes to the Agreement at the earliest, as without the operationaliation of ECOTA the region cannot move forward economically.

35. The Council invited the remaining Member States to accede to ECOTA to pave the way for economic integration of the region, as envisaged in the 'Treaty of Izmir'.

Agenda Item No.11

Review and Approval of ECO Activities

- **Reports of ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) Meetings**

36. The Council adopted the Reports of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) 213th to 217th.

37. The Kyrgyz Republic Delegation recorded its reservation on Paras 44 and 45 of the agenda items 7 and 8 of the Report of 214th CPR Meeting, Paras 19 and 20 of the agenda item No 5 of Report of the 215th CPR Meeting, paras 57 and 59 of the agenda item 9 of Report of the 217th CPR Meeting as well as the para 4 of the Chapter "F" of the Report of

ECO Secretary General to the 22nd ECO COM where the Turkish Cypriot Republic has been mentioned.

- **ECO Secretariat's Budget for the Year 2017**

38. The Council held deliberations on the Secretariat Budget for the year 2017 and approved it as endorsed by 217th CPR Meeting (17th January 2017).

- **Report of the 27th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

- Annual Calendar of Events 2017
- Work Programme 2017

39. The Council adopted the Report of the 27th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC) held on 5-8 December 2016 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran along with ECO Work Programme 2017 and ECO Calendar of Events-2017. *Copy ECO Calendar of Events 2017 is attached as Annex-X.*

- **Appointments/Extension in Tenures**

- (i) **Extension of tenure of Deputy Secretary General**

40. The Council approved the extension in tenure of Mr. Seyed Jalaedin Alavi Sabzevari (**Iranian National**), Deputy Secretary General in-charge of Administration; Human Resource and Sustainable Development; Energy, Minerals and Environment; and Drugs and Organized Crime (Category 1, D-3) for one year until 29th January, 2018.

- (ii) **Extension of tenure of Director**

41. The Council approved the extension in tenure of Mr. Mohsen Esperi (**Iranian National**), Director for Transport and Communication (Category-I, D2) for one year until 3rd December, 2017.

- (iii) **Extension of tenure of Director**

42. The Council approved the extension in tenure of Mr. Ugur Kilicarslan (**Turkish National**), Director of Human Resources and sustainable Development (Category-I, D2) effective from 8th January 2017, until the nomination of another candidate for that position.

Agenda Item No.12

Annual Reports of ECO Special Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies

43. The Council reviewed the annual reports submitted by the ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies and appreciated the efforts made by these bodies in supporting the process of socio-economic development in the region. It expressed the hope that these Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies will play an active role in achieving the goal of regional economic cooperation and integration. The following ECO bodies made their statements and reports during the SOM Meeting.

- (i) **ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)**

44. The Representative of ECI informed that it is striving, in accordance with the mandate of ECO-CI, to preserve and promote the common cultural heritage of the region, which is not possible without proper contribution and collaboration of the ECO Member

States. The Council on the request of ECI instructed the Member States to actively participate in the cultural programmes/events organized by ECI.

(ii) ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO-TDB)

45. The Representative of the ECO-TDB requested the Member States, who have not joined the ECO-Bank to do so, which would facilitate in mobilization of resources available in the Region for their economic development.

(iii) ECO Science Foundation (ECO-SF)

46. The Representative of the ECO Science Foundation stated that so far five member states have ratified the Charter of ECOSF and requested other Member States to follow the suit. He said ECOSF is taking steps for promotion of Science and Technology. He further mentioned that Scientists, Researchers and Engineers are being supported through provision of travel grants.

47. The Council directed ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), on behalf of the COM, to consider establishing a CPR mechanism for the ECO Science Foundation for smooth functioning of the Institute.

(iv) ECO Postal Staff College

48. The Representative of the Postal Staff College made a report of the activities of the ECO Postal Staff College and informed that ECO-PSC has been imparting training courses for the ECO Member States. The PSC will continue to conduct the courses. He further informed that a course on postal technologies is offered in July 2017. The Council urged the Member States to avail this opportunity which is in line with the theme of the Summit 'connectivity'.

(v) ECO College of Insurance

49. Representative of the ECO College of Insurance in the statement highlighted the activities of the College and requested Member States for their cooperation in order to achieve its goals and objectives. The Council appreciated the activities of ECO College of Insurance and urged the ECO Member States to continue their cooperation with them.

(vi) ECO Coordination Center (ECO-RCC) for the Implementation of the Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS)

50. The Council on the request of the ECO-RCC urged the Member States to provide their project proposals on food security to ECO-RCC through Secretariat and directed the RCC to find financial support of international donors to commence projects under Regional Programme for food Security (RPFS). The Council also urged the Member States to attend the meetings in order to implement the programme in a successful manner.

Agenda Item No.13

ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions under the process of Establishment

51. The Council deliberated on Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies under process of establishment and urged the Member States and asked the Secretariat to consider establishment of new ECO Bodies based on willingness of at least 3 to 4 Member Countries and they need to be periodically reviewed for their utility and effectiveness.

52. The Council urged early completion of formalities for entry into force of ECO Reinsurance Company Agreement and encouraged other Member States to also join it.

Agenda Item No.14

Preparation for the 13th Summit

i. Draft Agenda

53. The Council deliberated upon and agreed to recommend the following draft agenda for the 13th ECO Summit Meeting to be held in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 1 March 2017:

Inaugural/Opening Ceremony

➤ Family Photograph

1. Welcome Remarks by the Chairman of the Previous (12th) ECO Summit
 - Election of the Chairman
 - Inaugural Statement by the Chairman of the 13th Summit
 - Statement by the Secretary General
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Report by the Chairman of 22nd COM Meeting
4. Statements by Heads of State/Government
5. Statement by Observers, as per Modalities *and* Statements by the Special Invitees (if any)
6. Adoption of the Islamabad Declaration
7. ECO Awards Ceremony
8. Any Other Business
9. Date and Venue of the next Summit
10. Vote of Thanks and Concluding address by the Chairman
11. Closing of the Meeting

Press Conference

ii. Draft Islamabad Declaration

54. The Council deliberated and agreed to submit the draft Islamabad Declaration 2017 to the 13th ECO Summit for adoption.

55. The Kyrgyz Republic refrained from supporting paras of political nature.

56. Due to neutral status, Turkmenistan refrained itself from adoption of Islamabad Declaration.

iii. ECO Awards 2017

57. The Council approved the names of winners of ECO Awards 2017 from Member States, comprising 8 nominees as recommended by the 218th and 219th CPR Meetings. The Council congratulated them on excellent performance in their respective fields. The names of the winners of ECO Awards 2017 are as follows:

No.	Name of Country	Name of Nominee	Field/Category
1.	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	Ms. Sima Rasuli	History, Culture, Literature & Fine Arts
2.	Republic of Azerbaijan	Mr. Pasha Karimov	Science and Technology
3.	Islamic Republic of Iran	Dr. Mohammad Mehdi NAJAFPOUR	Science & Technology
4.	Republic of Kazakhstan	Mr. Malik Burlibayev	Agriculture/Environment
5.	Kyrgyz Republic	Dr. Professor Anvarbek	History, Culture, Literature

		Mokeyev	d Fine Arts
6.	Islamic Republic of Pakistan	Mr. Syed Jamal Shah	History, Culture, Literature Fine Arts
7.	Republic of Tajikistan	Mr. Saidov Abdusattor Samadovich	Science & Technology
8.	Republic of Turkey	Mr. Hasan Celal Guzel	Education

Agenda Item No. 15

Any other business

58. No issue was discussed under this agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 16

Date and venue of the next Meeting

59. The proposal of the Secretariat to hold meetings of COM and the Summit in alphabetical order was agreed by the Council and Republic of Tajikistan (next Member State in alphabetical order) graciously agreed to host the next (23rd) COM Meeting in Tajikistan in 2018. The exact dates and venue of the meeting would also be coordinated with the ECO Secretariat.

Agenda Item No. 17

Adoption of Draft Report of the 22nd COM Meeting

60. The Council unanimously adopted the Report of the 22nd COM Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 18

Vote of Thanks and Closing of the Meeting

61. The Meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to H.E. Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for conducting the deliberations in a smooth and efficient manner, and to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to all delegations. The Council also appreciated the able Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Foreign Secretary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during the Senior Officials Meeting.

62. The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECO Secretary General and the Secretariat staff for preparing comprehensive documents and assisting the hosts in making the 22nd Council of Ministers Meeting a success.

STATEMENTS BY THE HEADS OF STATE/GOVERNMENT/DELEGATION **AT THE 13TH ECO SUMMIT (1 MARCH 2017)**

Statement by H.E. Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal,
Special Envoy of the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
at the 13th ECO Summit
(1 March 2017)

Mr. Chair, Hon. Prime Minister of Pakistan
Hon. Secretary General
Excellences Heads of States
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a distinct pleasure for me and my delegation to represent our leadership and our country at the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) here in Islamabad. I would like to express my gratitude and sincere appreciation to the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the excellent organization of this Summit and the warm hospitality extended to us.

Let me also take this opportunity and congratulate HE Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, for a successful completion of his tenure as ECO's Chairman and HE Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for his election as the Chairperson of ECO. I trust HE's wise leadership will lead ECO to new heights. On behalf of Afghanistan I assure our full support and cooperation. I also take this opportunity and thank the ECO Secretary General and his team for their hard work, preparing the required documents and proposals that have facilitated helpful discussion among the member states. I would also like to express my profound gratitude to all leaders who expressed here today their strong support to peace, stability and development in my war-devastated country.

Honorable Chair,

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is one of the oldest and most important regional forums, covering unique geo-strategic location that could link Europe to China, and Russia and Central Asia to South Asia and the Middle East.

ECO's core objectives to achieve collective economic prosperity and sustainable economic growth for all through regional connectivity and economic cooperation fall within Afghanistan's regional policies and endeavors. The Heart of Asia (the Istanbul Process) and RECCA are two Afghan-led initiatives, which are aimed to enhance regional connectivity and trust.

Honorable Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite ECO's unique position and our region's endowment with significant economic power, vast natural resources, dynamic work force and huge development potentials that

could have been harnessed in the interest of all our nations, our region still remains perhaps the least connected in the world. Without connectivity we cannot be bridges or gateways even within ourselves let alone to the rest of the world.

Less than 10 percent of the ECO member states' trade is intra-regional; compare that to 70% in Europe and about 50% in Asia as a whole. Tourism between us, that signifies people to people contact, is also at the lowest of any region. There is no wonder why our region's share in the global market continues to be insignificant, with poverty and vulnerability increasingly prevalent.

Many of our challenges are shared and require collective actions. In order to unlock our individual potential, we need to reshape our policies that promote peace, stability and trust as core objectives. In addition, they should be aimed at removing existing barriers to trade, transit and greater connectivity and develop our capacities and physical infrastructure. Within our region we are diverse with what we offer to each other: Some of us are resource and energy-rich while others are manufacturing, and technology-advanced, thus making connectivity and economic integration complementing to each other's economies.

Honorable Chair,

There is no shortage of ideas and potential projects. Regional projects that are relevant to my country alone run into a long list: TAPI, CASA, TUTAP, Railways, Highways, Motorways to name a few. There is no lack of understanding of the benefits from connectivity either; not just its benefits for development & economics but for peace and stability as well. There is also a consensus that regional economic interdependency is the hope for a durable peace and stability in this region. Yet progress towards our regional objectives is slow at best. Perhaps, because our national policies towards each other are not economic centric.

Moreover, regional projects, because they are potential and any major one is not yet actualized so that people are touched by them, they are not yet relevant in domestic politics and policies of our countries. To the extent that we push for regional connectivity and economic integration we put stability as a precondition, rather than presenting regional connectivity as a contributor to stability so that connectivity could get more prominence. Perhaps, it could also help if the current order in which: peace and stability objectives are pursued mostly bilaterally and connectivity multi-laterally within our region could be reversed.

Honorable Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan welcomes and endorses the ECO VISION 2025, its implementation plan as well as the ECO VISION FUND with its financing modalities. Realization of this vision, which if implemented will have a direct impact on the well-being of our people, will require more than what is decided upon today. It will require a revision in our respective national policies concerning our bilateral and regional relations. We cannot be for regional connectivity if at the same time we continue to implement barriers to trade and transit and movement of people between us.

The theme of this Summit "Connectivity for Regional Prosperity" could find more meaning if separate economics from politics and in fact give economics a chance to help some of our politics. We need to make regional connectivity and economic integration part and parcel of our domestic development agendas. We need to embark on embedding our security objectives in our economic agenda rather than the other way around. We

need to make good on delivering at least one major regional economic project so that people see the benefits for themselves and this way are encouraged to get involved in pushing their governments for regional economic connectivity and thus regional peace. We need to collectively encourage our international partners to invest in connectivity as part of their security and stability agenda for this region.

Honorable Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

In the spirit of today's summit: connectivity, regional economic integration, cooperation, greater movement of goods and people; and in the spirit of ECO Vision 2025 and the ECO Islamabad Declaration that will be adopted later today and will go down as this Summit's success stories, it will be the right message if Your Excellency instruct an immediate opening of our formal trade and transit routes between our two brotherly countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan. They have now been closed for about two weeks causing enormous hardship to ordinary people and a lot of damage to traders on both sides.

In conclusion, the Honorable Chair, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to reiterate Afghanistan's commitment to the realization of the goals and objectives of the ECO and once again, I wish to extend my warmest gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the warm hospitality and a very well-organized meeting.

Thank you

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev
the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
at the ECO Summit Meeting
1 March 2017, Islamabad, Pakistan**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to extend my gratitude to our hosts – the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the invitation to attend the Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization, hospitality extended to me and my delegation and the excellent organization of the Summit.

Azerbaijan and Pakistan share ties of friendship and brotherhood. Our relationship, based on mutual trust and support develops successfully. As a sign of brotherhood and solidarity Pakistan did not establish diplomatic relations with Armenia – the country which continues to occupy 20% of our territory. The people of Azerbaijan are very grateful for that.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the activity of the ECO. Since the start of our chairmanship in 2012 we have worked together with all member states to further strengthen this organization.

Maintaining security and stability is an important element in building regional cooperation. Unfortunately, stability and security in our region is becoming more fragile as new conflicts emerge. We witness more human tragedies with many lives lost and the millions forced to leave their homelands.

Azerbaijan fully understands this pain and suffering based on its own experience. As a result of the military aggression by Armenia, 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory – our historical land of Nagorno Karabakh and seven regions around it – are occupied, while these territories have been subjected to ethnic cleansing and over one million of our compatriots have become refugees and IDPs. All our historical monuments, mosques and cemeteries have been destroyed by Armenia on the occupied territories.

Armenia committed genocide against Azerbaijanis in 1992. As a result of the Khojaly Genocide 613 civilians were brutally killed; among them 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly. More than one thousand people went missing. Today over 10 countries have recognized the Khojaly Genocide. We are grateful to Pakistan that in 2012 the Pakistani Senate officially recognized the Khojaly Genocide.

The UN Security Council adopted four resolutions regarding the conflict that demand unconditional withdrawal of the Armenia's armed forces from the occupied territories. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, OSCE, European Parliament, PACE, Non-Alignment Movement, and other important international organizations have adopted similar decisions and resolutions. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation in its last Summit set up a Contact Group at the ministerial level in connection with the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Armenia's most recent aggression against Azerbaijan in April 2016. Armenia must implement these resolutions or be sanctioned. Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be restored.

Azerbaijan attaches a particular importance to the solidarity between Islamic countries. Azerbaijan declared 2017 as the year of Islamic Solidarity. Baku will host the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games in two months time.

Today, the Islamophobia is one of serious threats in the world. We strongly condemn this trend. It is a wrong and biased approach to link Islam with terror because it is the Muslim countries that suffer the most from terror. Therefore, we need to continue promoting the values of Islam which is a religion of peace, mercy, tolerance and justice.

We attach special importance to increasing economic cooperation between the member states. Boosting mutual trade and investments, expanding export capabilities and encouraging closer ties between the business communities will serve this goal. Involvement of international financing institutions is also crucial. In this regard, the ECO Trade and Development Bank requires support from our all countries to enable it to play more active role in financing the projects of regional importance.

Azerbaijan attaches big importance to the cooperation in the area of transportation. Implementation of strategic railroad connections between Europe and Asia through the territory of our country will reduce transit period from the current 30 days to 15 days. East-West transportation corridor is the restoration of the historic Silk Way. Another important transportation project is North-South railroad corridor. Azerbaijan is an active participant and investor of both strategic projects and we invite ECO members to use new infrastructure opportunities.

Construction of the biggest International Trade Sea Port in the Caspian in Azerbaijan is another contribution to transportation infrastructure.

Energy cooperation plays a significant role in the regional cooperation. Azerbaijan presented a new energy strategy and a new vision of energy cooperation. This vision transformed the region and brought prosperity. Azerbaijan became an essential partner in ensuring energy security for a wider region. We introduced diversified pipeline infrastructure by connecting Caspian, Black and Mediterranean Seas. Today, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines are symbols of regional cooperation.

Now our country together with its partners is implementing the South Gas Corridor project, which estimated cost is more than 40 billion USD. This is a project of energy cooperation, energy security and diversification.

Transportation and energy projects I mentioned create tens of thousands of jobs in the region. These projects will bring prosperity, and strengthen cooperation and friendship between countries.

Thank you.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the 13th ECO Summit (1 March 2017, Islamabad)

بسمه تعالی

متن سخنرانی

جناب آقای دکتر حسن روحانی، رئیس جمهور محترم جمهوری اسلامی ایران

در

سیزدهمین نشست سران کشورهای عضو سازمان همکاری اقتصادی (اگو)

۱۱ اسفند ۱۳۹۵

اسلام آباد، پاکستان

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

جناب آقای نواز شریف، نخست وزیر محترم پاکستان؛

سران محترم کشورها و دولت‌ها؛

جناب آقای دبیر کل؛

حضار محترم؛

شرکت در سیزدهمین اجلاس سران کشورهای عضو اکو در کشور برادر و دوست پاکستان مایه خوشوقتی است. لازم می‌دانم تا از جناب آقای نواز شریف به خاطر میهمان نوازی گرم دولت پاکستان و میزبانی شایسته این اجلاس سپاسگزاری کنم. همچنین از جمهوری آذربایجان که در دوره ریاست خود منشأ تأثیرات مثبتی در این سازمان بوده قدردانی می‌نمایم. اطمینان دارم با همفکری و تبادل نظر در این اجلاس و تفاهم بین سران کشورهای عضو خواهیم توانست گامهای بلندی در پیشبرد برنامه ها و فعالیتهایمان در سازمان همکاری اقتصادی برداریم.

عالیجنابان؛

قلب اقتصاد جهان از نیمه قرن حاضر به بعد در قاره آسیا خواهد تپید. اقتصادهای نوظهور آسیایی، جریان اقتصاد جهانی را از غرب به سوی شرق تغییر خواهد داد، و این تغییر قرن بیست و یکم را به دوران پیشتازی آسیا بدل خواهد کرد. برآوردهای اقتصادی نشان می‌دهد که با تغییر جایگاه اقتصادی برخی اعضای موثر اکو در دهه آینده، سازمان ما در آسیای آینده بار دیگر کلید تعامل شرق و غرب خواهد شد؛ آینده ای که از امروز آغاز میشود و به جهانیان نشان میدهد که نه تنها اکو فلسفه وجودی خود را از دست نداده، بلکه اهمیتی مضاعف در آینده منطقه خواهد داشت.

موقعیت بی نظیر کشورهای ما در حوزه‌های حمل و نقل، انرژی و تجارت، سازمان اکو را در وضعیتی ایده‌آل قرار داده است. اکو می‌تواند و باید در ساختن آینده اقتصاد منطقه نقش آفرینی کند. برای تحقق این امر، اکو نیاز به بازسازی دارد؛ بازسازی با نگاه به واقعیتهای جدید و فرصتهای تازه.

اشراف بر چند آبراه استراتژیک جهان و همسایگی با پنج دریای مهم، شرایط ژئوپولیتیک و سرزمینی یگانه‌ای را برای سازمان ما به وجود آورده است؛ هیچ مسیری از اروپا به آسیا برای تجارت و حمل و نقل با صرفه تر و کوتاه تر از منطقه اکو شناخته نمی‌شود. اکو همچنین از منظر تأمین و انتقال انرژی حائز اهمیت فراوانی برای جهان است. ما در سال ۲۰۱۳ تصمیم گرفتیم تا سال ۲۰۲۳ میلادی را به عنوان دهه بهبود و توسعه همکاری های انرژی اکو اعلام نماییم و امسال در میانه این راه قرار داریم؛ با این حال متأسفانه هنوز همکاری و تجارت درون منطقه ای ما در حوزه انرژی در سطح پائینی قرار دارد و لازم است تا از ظرفیت اکو برای رونق همکاری های کشورهای عضو در حوزه تولید و تجارت انرژی بیش از گذشته بهره ببریم. ما با پیوند دادن امکاناتمان، می‌توانیم رشد افزونتر و پرشتابتر را برای کشورهایمان سامان دهیم. پیوند اقتصادهای اکو در گرو پیوند نزدیکتر مردم کشورهای ماست؛ باید موانع ارتباطات مردمی، سفر و دیدار و همکاری مردمدان را از سر راه برداریم. مشترکات فرهنگی ما سرمایه بی بدیلی برای پیوند اقتصادی ما در اختیارمان گذاشته است. باید موانع روادید، موانع تعرفه ای، موانع حمل و نقل و موانع سرمایه گذاری را برداریم تا امکان پرواز مشترک به افقهای بلندتر برای بخش های خصوصی و فعالان اقتصادی کشورهایمان فراهم تر شود. پیام این اجلاس به کارآفرینان کشورهای عضو، باید افق بلندمدت تر، نگاه یکپارچه تر، و پیوند نزدیکتر باشد. پیوند جاده ای، پیوند راه آهن، پیوند شبکه های برق و پیوند شبکه های ارتباطی و مخابراتی، بهترین فرصتها را در اختیار کشورهای ما می‌گذارد تا منافع مشترک برای اقتصادهای مان تجلی یابد.

خانمها و آقایان؛

تا زمانی که امنیت در مخاطره باشد، چشم انداز روشنی برای توسعه و شکوفایی وجود نخواهد داشت. تروریسم و تفکرات تکفیری، تهدید مشترکی را فراروی جهانیان قرار داده و هماهنگی و

همکاری در مقابله با این پدیده شوم، به یک ضرورت تبدیل شده است. در افغانستان، عراق، سوریه و یمن صدها هزار نفر جان باخته و میلیون ها نفر آواره شده‌اند؛ نتیجه این رنج ها و دردها، آسیب پذیر شدن منطقه در برابر تنازع های داخلی و دخالت های خارجی است. غلبه بر این مشکلات در گرو دوری از برتری جویی و همیاری در ساختن منطقه ای قوی تر است. من عمیقاً بر این باورم که ما می توانیم از این وادی سخت به سلامت عبور کنیم، مشروط بر آن که به جای رقابت های ویرانگر، به توانایی خود در حل مشکلاتمان ایمان آورده و اراده هایمان را برای بازگشت به جایگاه تاریخی خود یعنی شاهراه تمدن، فرهنگ و تجارت بسیج کنیم. سازمان همکاری اقتصادی بستری مناسب برای ساختن منطقه ای ایمن تر برای ملت های ماست. در پرتو امنیت جمعی است که دیگران نیز با اذعان به ظرفیت های این منطقه در ساختن آینده شکوفای کشورهای ما مشارکت خواهند کرد.

عالیجنابان؛

جمهوری اسلامی ایران با داشتن مرز مشترک با شش کشور عضو اکو، عمیقاً منافع مشترک و پیوند با همسایگان را ارج می نهد. ما نه تنها هیچ مانعی را پیش روی تعمیق همکاری های خود با کشورهای عضو اکو نمی بینیم بلکه آماده ایم به مشارکت گسترده تر با سایر اعضا بپردازیم. تجربه موفق برجام که با رویکرد برد- برد حاصل شد، زمینه جهش در همکاری های منطقه ای با کشورهای اکو را با همین رویکرد پربار و امید بخش می سازد. پایان بحران ساختگی بر سر برنامه صلح آمیز هسته ای ایران و دستیابی به توافقی بین المللی که به تایید شورای امنیت سازمان ملل متحد رسیده است، دستاورد بزرگی نه فقط برای ایران و اکو بلکه برای همه جهان می باشد.

دولت من در این فضای جدید، از گسترش همکاری در حوزه های ترانزیت و حمل و نقل به ویژه مسیر ترانزیت جنوب - شمال از سرخس تا بندر عباس و اینکه برون تا چابهار و همچنین حوزه های مالی و بانکی، علم و فناوری، کشاورزی و امنیت غذایی، فرهنگی و گردشگری زیست محیطی و مقابله با بلایای طبیعی، استقبال می کند. ایران با داشتن بزرگترین ذخائر نفت و گاز جهان، نقطه کانونی ارتباطات منطقه ای، سرمایه انسانی جوان و متخصص، توانمندی علمی در حوزه های نوین دانش و فناوری، کارنامه پرشتاب رشد و اشتغالزائی، و ثبات اقتصادی آمادگی دارد

که به عنوان یکی از بنیانگذاران این سازمان، نقش خود را در تحکیم پیوند بین اعضاء و توانمندسازی اکو ایفاء نماید. خوشبختانه اکو نیز با تأسیس مؤسسات و نهادهای تخصصی که جمهوری اسلامی ایران نقش فعالی در پیشبرد آنها داشته، چارچوبهای مناسبی برای تحقق این اهداف فراهم کرده است.

رؤسای محترم کشورها و دولتهای عضو؛

آینده منطقه با تصمیمات امروز رقم می خورد و شکوفائی فردا در گرو پیوند امروز ماست. برای تقویت پیوندها بر نقاط مشترک تأکید کنیم ، و تفاوتها را با گفتگو به نقطه قوت تبدیل نمائیم.

باور کنیم که قدرت ما در پیوند ماست.

پیوندهایمان را پایدارتر کنیم.

والسلام علیکم و رحمه الله و برکاته

Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan,
H.E. Mr. A. Myrzakhmetov, at the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation
Organization (ECO)
(1 March 2017, Islamabad)

Your Excellences!

Esteemed Chairman, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan!

Ladies and Gentlemen, participants of the Summit!

I express my sincere gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization!

I am sure that the Chairmanship of Pakistan in the Organization will provide quality practical content of our comprehensive cooperation.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express special gratitude to the Republic of Azerbaijan as the outgoing Chairman of the ECO. With Azerbaijan, our organization went through an important stage in its development.

Dear participants of the Summit!

The development of comprehensive cooperation with the ECO Member States is one of the priorities of Kazakhstan's foreign policy.

Within 25 years, the ECO has become an important multilateral platform facilitating the development of our region and whose potential is not yet fully explored.

Despite the difficulties faced by ECO today, the region is attractive due to significant natural and human resources, as well as a favorable geopolitical location at the crossroads of major transport corridors North-South and East-West.

The development of regional integration processes within the organization is an important factor in easing the challenges of globalization and regional security by promoting economic growth.

To further strengthen its authority it is necessary **to adapt the ECO to the new realities** and streamline the activities of the Organization in the priority directions of our cooperation.

Firstly, we believe it is important to continue work on convergence of **infrastructure projects** in the framework of their national programs and strategies with major multilateral transit transport projects, such as "Economic Belt of the Silk Road." It is necessary to promote the joint establishment of multimodal transport, the creation of an extensive transport infrastructure network aimed at the full disclosure of the transit potential of our states.

Secondly, creation of favorable conditions for transport will encourage the development of **regional trade**, as well as open up wide opportunities of national products access to the world markets.

Kazakhstan is one of the world's major grain exporters and is ready to continue cooperation with the ECO countries in this direction, including through the mechanisms of the Islamic Organization for Food Security.

Third, Kazakhstan intends to continue to actively participate in solving problems of global **energy security**. We are grateful to the ECO countries for participation in International Specialized Exhibition "Astana EXPO-2017" with the topic of "Energy of the Future".

I take this opportunity to invite you to participate in **the first OIC Summit on Science and Technology**, also aimed at the convergence and strengthening of cooperation between our countries. The event is timed to the Expo and will begin its work on September 10.

Fourth, one of the main priorities of cooperation in the ECO should be a question of financial security of our initiatives. In 2018 the **International financial center in Astana**, which will operate on the basis of English law will be established. Participation of the ECO member states in the work of the financial center will further strengthen the economic ties between our countries.

Dear participants of the Summit!

Regional and global security is the top issue in the international agenda. We believe that the **situation in Afghanistan** is critical to the security and stability in the ECO region. Kazakhstan is investing more than 50 million USD in training of Afghan students, the construction of schools and hospitals and the provision of humanitarian assistance. 2 million USD are allocated to support the Afghan army.

We are ready to contribute to further **reintegration of Iran** into political and economic areas. Kazakhstan has contributed to the search for ways out of the impasse over Iran's program by supporting the constructive dialogue between stakeholders and conducted two rounds of multilateral negotiations. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018 years, we will continue working in this direction for the benefit of the ECO region.

I am confident that the traditional historical ties of good neighborliness and friendship of our states in the region will contribute to the further fruitful and constructive cooperation to ensure sustainable development in the ECO region.

Thank you for attention!

Statement by Prime Minister of Kyrgyz Republic
Sstatement by the Prime Minister of Kyrgyz Republic
at the Summit of the
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
(Islamabad, 1st March 2017)

**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure to welcome all participants of the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Taking this opportunity, I thank the Pakistani side for the good organization of the Summit, for the warm welcome and hospitality.

Today the chairmanship in the Organization passes to Pakistan, let me wish success to our Pakistani friends in their work.

I am convinced that during the chairmanship of Pakistan, the activities of the Organization will rise to a new qualitative level, meaningful work will begin in our cooperation and practical implementation of mutually beneficial regional projects.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you know, in 1992 seven countries joined the Organization, including the Kyrgyz Republic.

Our country has always been and continues to be committed to the principles of mutually beneficial regional economic cooperation within the framework of the ECO, and this was the main reason for the country's accession to the Organization in 1992.

We attach great importance to the activities of the ECO aimed at strengthening the cooperation of the participating countries in the trade and economic area: in particular, in trade, transport, energy, agriculture and so on.

One of the most priority areas of close cooperation and strengthening of trade and economic cooperation will be the practical implementation of such projects as the construction of railways. Kyrgyzstan is currently actively working to start the construction of the railway "China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan".

In this connection, we attach great importance to the implementation of the project for the construction of the railway "China - Kyrgyzstan - Tajikistan - Afghanistan - Iran", which will undoubtedly give a powerful impetus to the interaction.

Another important achievement of regional cooperation should be the practical implementation of the large energy project "CASA-1000", which also involves many countries of our Organization.

It is also important to note the importance of the ECO Trade and Development Bank as a financial institution that has the capacity to provide loans and grants for projects and programs of the Organization.

Our countries have all the necessary capabilities, including human resources, economic opportunities, huge natural resources, for the full achievement of the set goals and objectives of the Organization. And the cancellation of the sanctions policy against Iran, the Organization's capabilities are getting even greater.

In this regard, in our view, the time has come to develop and implement coordinated actions. Based on the principles of ECO, it is necessary to improve the efficiency and improve the activities of the Organization, as well as to move more actively towards the set goals, to expand the project work in priority areas.

The Kyrgyz side fully supports the intentions of the ECO states in reforming and enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization's activities and making it a reliable and mutually beneficial instrument for multilateral cooperation.

It is important to make efforts to translate into practice those thoughts and ideas that are laid down in the Islamabad Declaration and the "ECO Vision 2025".

Dear friends,

In order to preserve and further develop the rich historical and cultural heritage of nomadic peoples, by the initiative of Kyrgyzstan the Second World Nomadic Games successfully were held in 2016.

I express my gratitude to our partners for supporting this initiative and actively participating. We cherish the established relations of friendship and mutual understanding, and we are ready to make every effort to deepen and strengthen these relations.

Let me take this opportunity to invite members of the Organization to the World Snow Leopard Forum, which will be held this year in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In conclusion I am expressing confidence that the ECO countries, possessing great potential and being in the center of the Eurasian continent, with goodwill, are fully capable of realizing the goals and objectives of the Organization so that our region would be stable, economically developed, competitive and attractive for investment and tourism.

I express the hope that by joint search for new opportunities our Organization will become a real mechanism for economic cooperation in the region and ECO activities will reach a qualitatively new level.

Thank you for attention.

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SPEECH
by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan,
Leader of the Nation, H.E. Mr Emomali Rahmon

13th Economic Cooperation Organization Summit
(Islamabad, March 01, 2017)

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Friends!

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Government and the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Mr Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, and to the people of fraternal Pakistan for the warm hospitality and favorable working environment.

The Summit arrangement at high level apparently shows the continuous attention paid by the Leadership of Pakistan to regional cooperation enhancement and expansion.

It is very symbolic that this Meeting of the Heads of ECO member states is taking place on the eve of the 40th anniversary of the Izmir Treaty, which laid foundation for the future operation of this institution.

I have to emphasize another point that this year it will be 25 years since the Central Asian countries, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan joined this Organization.

Geographical expansion of ECO through accession of these countries doubled its capacity and geostrategic importance in three integral parts of the continent – Central, Western and South Asia.

It is obvious that over the past period, we made certain achievements in development of our multilateral cooperation.

Our joint efforts made it possible to establish legal framework of the Parties' cooperation in priority areas and created a favorable environment for expansion of trade, movement of people and transit operations between our countries. Alongside with this, we implemented a number of important infrastructure programs and expanded humanitarian and cultural cooperation between our countries.

Development and expansion of multifaceted cooperation with the ECO member states is one of the important dimensions of Tajikistan's foreign policy.

Currently, the share of ECO member states in Tajikistan's foreign trade accounts for **over 36 %**.

Disregard of all these achievements, the ECO member states still have a great untapped potential for mutually beneficial cooperation. This is the reason today's Meeting is of particular importance.

This Meeting gives us an opportunity to discuss the issues of our cooperation enhancement and identify the main aspects of the Organization's future activities by taking into account the reality.

It is our common task to find out the means and framework of effective cooperation meeting the interests and desires of our peoples and ensure their implementation.

Promotion of **further wider integration, activation of mutual support, expansion of trade and investment** as key elements of regional cooperation are among the areas, which we need to acknowledge as strategic objectives.

Formulation of an adequate transport and transit system is an influential tool for promotion of trade development in the current context.

Alongside with this, **effective use of energy resources and establishment of energy grid system** remains among the important aspects of our cooperation.

In this regard, at present and in the nearest future, we need to double our attention to implementation of joint infrastructure projects on connection of the ECO member states' transport and energy networks.

We also need to attach a particular importance to ensure the Organization's project operations to promote its member countries' socio-economic development, poverty reduction and improvement of peoples' living standards.

Within the Organization, we can apply our own potential to connect our landline and sea routes through the establishment of transport corridors and thereby strengthen our economic growth and address social issues.

We also hope that the ECO member states will further contribute to implementation of projects on **connection and establishment of regional energy networks and creation of energy market**.

In this regard, implementation of **CASA-1000** high-voltage electricity transmission line Project, which is acknowledged to be the first power bridge between South and Central Asia regions, is a timely initiative.

I would like to recall that we officially launched the construction activities within this Project in Dushanbe in May of the last year with participation of the Heads of State and Government of this Project country participants, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

We hope that this strategically important project will make it possible to connect the energy networks of the region's countries and promote the achievement of SDG Goal No 7 – ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Hydropower plants make the core of the energy sector in Tajikistan, which generate 98% of power in our country with the use of renewable energy sources.

Tajikistan is among the top six countries of the world in terms of **«green energy»** generation and it is ranked as one of the countries with huge hydropower resources.

These resources can generate 527bn kw/hours of environment friendly electricity. We use only five percent of this capacity currently, while the ECO wider region's energy market demand to energy is continuously growing.

With a view to ensuring power generation and consumption, the Government of Tajikistan continuously undertakes measures on rehabilitation of existing power assets, construction of new energy facilities, wider use of other renewable energy sources and introduction of the latest methods of energy saving.

These initiatives, alongside with ensuring energy security at the national level, are also of regional importance as they are aimed at meeting the ever growing demand of our far and close neighbours in energy.

There are **two more important aspects** in the set of water issues, which deserve the ECO member states' attention.

First, growing population in the region and everyday growing need in water resources due to necessity of food security, which gives us new tasks. In this context, wider introduction of integrated water resources management and effective water use should be another aspect of our cooperation.

Second, the climate change has been accelerating due to the global warming. Our countries are unfortunately hit by the negative impact of this process and consequences of water born natural disasters.

For instance, natural disasters annually cause huge economic losses and casualties.

Extensive rains and floods, mudflows and landslides, high level of snowfall and avalanches cause huge losses to our economy and create obstacles for sustainable socio-economic development.

Our view is that it is high time to develop and implement a proper partnership program on natural disaster risk reduction and mutual emergency support within the Organization.

Another promising area of our cooperation is **tourism**, on which I would like to elaborate some thoughts.

Tajikistan has a favorable climate, beautiful nature with unique landscapes and many historical and civilization sites attracting tourists.

Given these opportunities, the Government of Tajikistan has been developing and implementing specific public programs on tourism development.

Within these programs we envisage a number of privileges and benefits in the tourism sector, including for import of equipment and other materials for development of tourism infrastructure.

There is no doubt that expansion of cooperation between the ECO member states in this area would serve as another influential factor for sustainable development of our countries and as effective tool for strengthening of our peoples' ties.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regional cooperation is still one of the important objectives **for establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan** and the entire Region.

In this regard, Tajikistan welcomes the involvement of its close neighbor – Afghanistan into the regional integration process.

Therefore, we welcome the activities of ECOSpecial Fund for the Reconstruction of Afghanistan and implementation of the Action Plan on Rehabilitation of Social Facilities in this country.

Afghanistan is located at the Eurasian crossroad and can serve as a transit hub for expansion of trade between the countries of Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Human resources development in Afghanistan and training of professionals on the needed civil specialties is one of the important priorities in the Tajik-Afghan Cooperation Program. Hundreds of Afghan students study in Tajikistan currently. Alongside with this, we decided to allocate up to 1000 educational scholarships for Afghan citizens until 2025.

It is wellknown that lately the world community has been actively developing and adopting a number of globally important documents defining the aspects of sustainable development to 2030.

The new UN Sustainable Development Agenda will play an important role for the desires and hope of our peoples to decent and fair future to come true.

This Program clearly defines sustainable development goals and objectives in three important priority areas—economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

In this context, we welcome **the development of new ECOdocument –Vision 2025**, the main objective of which is to ensure adequate and timely achievement of SDGs in the ECO region. This document defined the main directions of our mutual cooperation in the near future.

We hope that this “Roadmap” will substantively facilitate the achievement of our objectives in this area and enhancement of trade and economic ties as well as solidarity and integration between our countries.

We are of positive view on this key document, and believe that its effective implementation will further improve the Organization’s reputation at the international stage.

Distinguished Friends,

Last year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted its Resolution entitled **“International Decade for Action“Water for Sustainable Development” (2018-2028)** by the initiative of Tajikistan and proactive support of ECO member states. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all ECO member states for supporting this initiative, which was approved unanimously.

I believe ECO will proactively participate in implementation of the new Decade plans and will also substantively contribute to implementation of water related objectives and targets.

The Government of Tajikistan is keen to have civilized relations and wide range real cooperation with all friendly countries as well as regional and international organizations.

This is the core of our foreign policy, which is based on the acknowledged and imperishable principles of sustainable friendship, equal rights and mutual trust and respect.

Accordingly, we stand ready to expand our partnership with all ECO member states in the areas of mutual interest.

At the conclusion, I would like to wish success to the 13th Meeting of the Heads of ECO member states.

I hope that this Summit's outcomes will serve as another decisive factor for further enhancement of mutually rewarding economic cooperation between our countries.

Thank you for your attention!

**SPEECH BY H.E. MR. RECEP TAYYIP ERDOĞAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF TURKEY,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 13th SUMMIT OF THE ECONOMIC
COOPERATION ORGANISATION (ECO)
(ISLAMABAD, 1 MARCH 2017)**

Distinguished Heads of State, Government and Delegations,

Honourable Ministers,

Mr. Secretary General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to greet you wholeheartedly and respectfully.

I am glad to be here together with you on the occasion of the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO).

I would like to entreat to Allah Almighty to make the Summit, which is held in a critical period, serve to benefit our countries, region and humanity.

I extend my gratitude in your presence to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and our host, Prime Minister Mr. Navaz Şerif, for organizing the Summit and their traditional hospitality.

I would like to thank the Islamic Republic of Iran, which hosts the ECO Secretariat and hands over the ECO Term Presidency to Pakistan, as well as to Mr. President Ruhani for their contributions and works.

I also would like to congratulate the Secretary General Mr. Halil İbrahim Akça and his team for performing their duty in the Secretariat with success.

My dear brothers and sisters...

The Economic Cooperation Organisation embodies a population of more than 400 million people in an area of approximately 8 million square meters.

We are proud of being a member to the ECO which represents our shared values, deep-rooted history and fraternity, as well.

The Summit Meeting is an important opportunity for us to look at the overall picture of the Organisation, to make assessment, to see our deficiencies and to strengthen our vision from this standpoint.

The current numbers clearly reveals that we could not mobilize our potential sufficiently. Although the share of the ECO region in the world population was 6.2% in 2015, its share in the world economy was only 2%.

First of all, we have to take the steps that will increase intraregional trade.

For this reason, it is vital to put the Economic Cooperation Organisation Trade Agreement (ECOTA) into force.

I call upon the related member countries to meet the conditions required for making this project active.

Likewise, we should enhance the quality of airway, highway and railway connections with a view to increasing trade and contacts among our countries, as well.

That the main theme of the Summit was determined as “connecting the lines of transportation, communications and trade for regional prosperity” is a manifestation of our need in that regard.

Effective implementation of the Transit Trade Framework Agreement will contribute to creating transportation corridors across the region.

At this point, Turkey has put many great projects into effect in recent years.

We completed and brought into service the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, Marmaray and the Eurasia Tunnel, which connect Asia and Europe.

By means of the Osmangazi Bridge, we overpassed the Sea of Marmara in north-south direction.

We attach utmost importance to the Edirne-Kars High Speed Railway, which is still under construction, as well as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway Project and the Çanakkale 1915 Bridge to be constructed over the Dardanelles.

In fact, these investments constitute the parts of the modern version of the Historical Silk Road.

I believe that ‘One Belt, One Road’ project which is the new Silk Road project of China is highly important in this respect.

Also, the 3rd Airport in İstanbul that we built as the biggest airport of the world, will have important contributions to our region.

We realize all of these projects not only for ourselves but also for more than 400 million brothers and sisters of us living in the geography of the Organisation.

My dear friends...

If we desire to further strengthen the ECO, one of the fields to which we have to attach importance is ENERGY.

Turkey will contribute to every initiative that will make this issue one of the important elements of our cooperation.

Of course, we should use the platforms of the Organisation more efficiently also in the fields such as agriculture, environment and tourism.

We attach great importance to the ECO Vision 2025.

We believe that this vision will direct our cooperation efforts in an effective manner during the forthcoming decade.

To implement the Vision document, we consider the establishment of the Vision Implementation Fund important.

The establishment of the Fund within ECOBANK will be appropriate for efficient and fruitful operation.

We need to strengthen ECOBANK, which has critical importance for project and trade financing, and to diversify its activities.

My dear brothers and sisters,

Considering the Organisation's activity schedule today, we observe that we hold a great number of meetings each year on many issues, but we cannot set up or carry out sufficient number of concrete projects.

We also have some problems with embracing the Organisation as Member States.

Undoubtedly, the most important manifestation of embracing is to fulfil our budget responsibilities.

I believe we will overcome the difficulties we have at this point.

I wish for a successful completion of the Reform Process initiated to strengthen the competence and human capacity of the Secretariat.

Strengthening our economic and commercial relations is only possible by eliminating threats to our security and stability.

I would like to focus especially on the following: Even though this is an Economic Cooperation Organisation Summit, it is politics and political approach which establish the actual framework today. Therefore, it is not possible to leave politics aside especially when taking steps for this community of brothers and sisters. Our solidarity with each

other is really essential in this political struggle. Many countries have difficulties here; both Afghanistan and Azerbaijan have been experiencing hardship for years... In particular, we cannot ignore the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. These negotiations, which have lasted more than 20 years, have not reached a conclusion, in fact the Minsk Trio has not been able to solve this issue. Therefore, we have to take matters into our own hands together.

We need to resolutely take these steps in solidarity both as ECO and as Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. We must express the occupying attitude of Armenia in all kinds of international meetings. We should consistently follow this issue both as ECO and as Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. And I believe that if we continue together, it will be easier to get results as well.

The same goes for Afghanistan; Afghanistan will not be able to get rid of terrorism either if we leave Afghanistan all alone.

We need to improve our solidarity and cooperation against all types of terrorism.

Today, Turkey is carrying out intensive fight against blood-minded terrorist networks like DAESH, FETO, PKK, and PYD.

We must extirpate the herds of killers who brutally murder innocent people and do not recognize any principle, morality and value from our region.

We can never allow these terrorist organisations to incriminate all the Muslims because of their inhuman killings.

We should also be careful about the formations that try to lead our region into conflict, competition and chaos on ethnic and denominational basis.

We cannot risk our future for the interests of foreign elements in the region.

Our major priority is to stop the flowing blood and put out the fire of fitnah in brotherly countries like Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya.

Turkey will continue to work for the peace, tranquillity and security of its 400 million brothers and sisters living in the member countries of the Organisation as well as its own citizens.

Furthermore, we need to increase our solidarity with our brothers in the TRNC, which is subjected to an unjustified isolation.

In this regard, it would be beneficial for us to make the TRNC's temporary observer status in the ECO permanent and encourage some ECO activities to be organized in the TRNC.

I wish the Summit will be successful and would like to extend my greetings and respect to you.

STATEMENTS BY ECO OBSERVERS

**TEXT OF THE STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. MUSTAFA AKINCI
PRESIDENT OF THE
TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS
13TH SUMMIT OF THE
ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANISATION (ECO)
(ISLAMABAD, 1 MARCH 2017)**

MR. CHAIRMAN,
MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL,
EXCELLENCIES,

IT IS A DISTINCT HONOUR FOR ME TO ADDRESS THE 13TH SUMMIT OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANISATION (ECO). I EXTEND TO YOU ALL THE HEARTFELT GREETINGS OF THE TURKISH CYPRIOT PEOPLE.

I WOULD LIKE TO, AT THE OUTSET, THANK H.E. MR MAMNOON HUSSAIN, PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN, AND THE BROTHERLY PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN FOR THE WARM HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO ME AND MY DELEGATION SINCE OUR ARRIVAL IN ISLAMABAD.

I ALSO WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE TO H.E. MR. HALIL IBRAHIM AKÇA, SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND THE ABLE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION, FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO AND COOPERATION WITH THE TURKISH CYPRIOT PEOPLE.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

I AM PLEASED TO WITNESS THAT THROUGH THE CONTINUED COOPERATION AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TURKISH CYPRIOT STATE AND ECO, AS WELL AS ITS MEMBER STATES, WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONS. YET, I BELIEVE THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR PROGRESS. SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FROM ECO AND ITS MEMBER STATES IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE IN FURTHERING AND DEEPENING THE ALREADY EXISTING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION, ITS MEMBER STATES, AND THE TRNC.

THE TURKISH CYPRIOT STATE WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE MORE EFFECTIVELY TO THE ORGANIZATION'S WORK, DEVELOP CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MEMBER STATES, AND FOSTER COOPERATION IN FIELDS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. WE WOULD DEFINITELY LIKE TO SEE OUR PEOPLE ENGAGED IN MORE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TURKISH CYPRIOT STATE AND ECO CAN BE FURTHER DEVELOPED THROUGH RECIPROCAL VISITS, AND WE WOULD BE HONORED TO HOST DELEGATIONS IN ORDER TO TAKE UP AND DISCUSS MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

EXCELLENCIES,

IN THE PAST, THE TRNC HAS SHOWN THAT IT HAS THE CAPACITY TO SUCCESSFULLY HOST ECO EVENTS SUCH AS THE WORKSHOP ON "TOURISM" IN 2015, ECO 1ST UNIVERSITY SPORT GAMES IN 2013, AND THE WORKSHOP ON "MANAGEMENT OF WASTEWATER AND CLEANSING TECHNOLOGY" IN 2004. NOW, WE ARE WILLING TO HOST MORE EVENTS IN THE UPCOMING YEARS. IN FACT, WE HAVE OFFERED TO CO-HOST EVENTS WITH TURKEY IN 2017, NAMELY THE "EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON ECO-TOURISM", "MEETING ON PROTECTED AREAS", "MEETING ON ECOSYSTEM SERVICES" AND "SECOND WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND BEST PRACTICES ON BIODIVERSITY ISSUES". I HOPE AND TRUST THAT ECO WILL RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF HOSTING MEETINGS IN NORTH CYPRUS.

MR. CHAIRMAN,
EXCELLENCIES,

HOW CAN THE TRNC CONTRIBUTE TO AND BENEFIT MORE EFFECTIVELY FROM THE ORGANIZATION'S WORK? HOW CAN THIS LEAD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLOSER RELATIONSHIPS AND COOPERATION IN THE FIELDS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WITH BROTHERLY MEMBER STATES AND THEIR PEOPLE? HOW CAN WE BRING OUR PEOPLE CLOSER TO EACH OTHER? LET ME ELABORATE ON THESE QUESTIONS.

AS YOU ARE ALL AWARE, CURRENTLY, THE TRNC IS UNDER ECONOMIC ISOLATION. THERE ARE NO DIRECT FLIGHTS OR TRADE, EXCEPT FROM TURKEY, AND WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS. UNDER THESE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, WE ARE WORKING HARD TO FIND LASTING PEACE IN CYPRUS. SINCE I TOOK OFFICE IN APRIL 2015, 22 MONTHS AGO, I HAVE BEEN GIVING MY UTMOST EFFORT TO FIND A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION: SO FAR, WE'VE COME A LONG WAY. WE HAVE SHOWN SERIOUS PROGRESS ON 5 OF THE 6 NEGOTIATING CHAPTERS OF GOVERNANCE AND POWER SHARING, EU RELATIONS, ECONOMY, PROPERTY, AND TERRITORY. WE EVEN STARTED DISCUSSING SECURITY AND GUARANTEES CHAPTERS AT A FIVE-PARTY-CONFERENCE WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE ISLAND'S THREE GUARANTOR COUNTRIES, TURKEY, GREECE, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM. WE ARE TRYING TO ESTABLISH A BI-COMMUNAL, BI-ZONAL, FEDERATION BASED ON TWO POLITICALLY EQUAL CONSTITUENT STATES, AND WE ARE IN THE LAST ROUND OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH MY COUNTERPART, GREEK CYPRIOT LEADER MR. ANASTASIADES.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE NEGOTIATIONS CAME TO A HALT LAST WEEK AFTER A VOTE IN THE GREEK CYPRIOT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DECIDED THAT THE 1950 PLEBISCITE ON ENOSIS - UNION WITH GREECE - SHOULD BE

COMMEMORATED IN GREEK CYPRIOT PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE DECISION ON EDUCATION WAS BROUGHT TO THE HOUSE'S AGENDA BY THE FASCIST AND RACIST BLACK SHIRTS OF ELAM AND LIKEMINDED DEPUTIES, AND WAS PASSED AFTER DEPUTIES FROM MY COUNTERPART'S OWN RULING PARTY ABSTAINED. ENOSIS WAS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION AND PEACE, SINCE THE PLEBISCITE OF ENOSIS IGNORED THE EXISTENCE OF TURKISH CYPRIOTS. IT WAS BECAUSE OF ENOSIS AND ASPIRATIONS TO UNITE THE ISLAND WITH GREECE THAT THE 1960 REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS COLLAPSED IN 1963. FOLLOWING THE GREEK JUNTA BACKED MILITARY COUP WHICH AIMED ENOSIS ONCE AGAIN, THE ISLAND WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO IN 1974. TURKISH CYPRIOTS ARE EXPECTING TO SEE THAT MR. ANASTASIADES WILL PUT FORWARD THE EFFORTS NECESSARY TO REVERSE THE DECISION. ONLY THEN CAN WE RESUME OUR TALKS TO FIND A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION. WE HAVE SHOWN DETERMINATION AND POLITICAL WILL FOR THE SETTLEMENT. WHAT IS NEEDED IS TO SEE THE SAME ATTITUDE FROM THE GREEK CYPRIOT LEADERSHIP.

IF WE CAN ACHIEVE THE SOLUTION, IN THE FUTURE, CYPRUS AS A WHOLE WILL BE A FULL MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. AS A MEMBER OF THE EU AS A BIZONAL BICOMMUNAL FEDERATION, A UNITED FEDERAL CYPRUS WILL BE THE CENTER OF STABILITY AND PROSPERITY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. WE WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A VIBRANT ECONOMY THAT UTILIZES ITS COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE, BY DEVELOPING ITS EXISTING SERVICE SECTORS. BUT, AS I STATED EARLIER, FOR THAT TO HAPPEN WE NEED A REAL COOPERATION FROM THE SOUTH CYPRUS AS WELL.

LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WITH THE SOLUTION, IN THE UNITED FEDERAL CYPRUS, THERE WILL BE TWO CONSTITUENT STATES. BOTH CONSTITUENT STATES WILL BE ABLE TO SIGN BI-LATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREAS OF TRADE, TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORTS. MOREOVER, THESE AGREEMENTS WILL ALSO COVER THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL. THUS, WITH OR WITHOUT A SOLUTION, SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FROM ECO AND ITS MEMBER STATES ARE OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE IN FURTHERING AND DEEPENING THE ALREADY EXISTING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS AND PEOPLE OF THE TEN MEMBER STATES OF ECO, ECONOMICALLY, SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY.

MR. CHAIRMAN,
MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL,
EXCELLENCIES,

HAVING SAID THAT, UNTIL WE FIND A SOLUTION, IN ADDITION TO TURKEY'S BACKING, WE ARE COUNTING ON THE BROTHERLY MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR SUPPORT IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE OUR ECONOMY AND OUR CITIZENS' WELL-BEING. IN PARTICULAR, I SEE GREAT POTENTIAL AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TWO AREAS, NAMELY HIGHER EDUCATION AND TOURISM.

IN HIGHER EDUCATION, THERE ARE CURRENTLY 90 THOUSAND STUDENTS ATTENDING UNIVERSITIES IN THE TRNC. 83% OF THOSE STUDENTS ARE FROM ABROAD, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, AROUNDFOUR-THOUSAND STUDENTS ARE FROM ECO MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IS GENERATING ALMOST 38% OF THE TRNC'S TOTAL INCOME. NORTH CYPRUS HAS ONE OF THE LOWEST CRIME RATES AROUND THE WORLD. UNIVERSITIES' TUITION FEES ARE AFFORDABLE AND LIVING EXPENSES ARE MODERATE. INDEED, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE STUDENTS ARRIVING FROM BROTHERLY MEMBER STATES; AND WE OFFER ATTRACTIVE SCHOLARSHIPS TO STUDENTS FROM ECO MEMBER COUNTRIES. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ORGANIZATION'S WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY BY SHARING THE SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT THAT IS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE RESEARCH CENTERS AT OUR UNIVERSITIES. WE ARE READY AND CAPABLE OF CONTRIBUTING PROJECTS, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE AREAS OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, STATISTICS, HUMAN RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

NORTH CYPRUS IS BLESSED WITH OUTSTANDING WEATHER, MILD WINTERS AND SUNSHINE YEAR-ROUND. IT IS FAMED FOR ITS WARMTH, THE HOSPITALITY OF ITS PEOPLE, AND ITS EXCELLENT CUISINE. BECAUSE OF ITS LOCATION IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN - AT THE CROSSROADS OF CIVILIZATIONS, NORTH CYPRUS ALSO HAS AN ABUNDANCE OF HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS SUCH AS ANCIENT VILLAGES, ARCHAIC RUINS, MEDIEVAL CASTLES, MOSQUES AND DERVISH LODGES. NORTH CYPRUS IS AN IDEAL PLACE TO GO HIKING, WITH AN INCREDIBLE WEALTH OF UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA. LAST YEAR 1.5 MILLION TOURISTS VISITED NORTH CYPRUS, BUT SADLYNOT MANY OF THEM WERE FROM THE ECO COUNTRIES. WE WOULD BE DELIGHTED AND HONORED TO HAVE MORE VISITORS FROM BROTHERLY MEMBER STATES.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

WE SHARE THE VISION OF A PROSPEROUS ECO REGION AS A FREE TRADE BLOC WHICH PROMOTES ECONOMIC GROWTH, GLOBAL PEACE, AND STABILITY. TO THIS END, WE WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE OUR TRADE AS WELL AS CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONS WITH BROTHERLY MEMBER COUNTRIES.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK, ONCE AGAIN, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE ECO SECRETARIAT FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN MAKING THIS MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS.

I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR MOST KIND ATTENTION.

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Cooperation
Council of Turkic Speaking States at the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation
Organization
(Islamabad, 1 March 2017)**

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of States,
Excellencies,

Allow me to express my gratitude for the opportunity to address the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). I would like also thank the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for excellent arrangement of the events and Summit.

I highlighted, during the Council of Ministers Meeting, the indispensability of security and stability for the economic development of our region.

When the security and stability are in place, then we can successfully implement the projects contributing to the connectivity among our countries and thus increase the prosperity and welfare of our nations.

With this in mind, as the Turkic Council under the current Chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan, we attach utmost importance to transport projects in the Central Corridor and Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor. These corridors will link our brotherly countries and constitute a direct bridge between China and Europe.

We have already made significant achievements in the Central Corridor route since past year in terms of cost and speed. For example, high port charges in Aktau and Baku Ports were reduced to reasonable levels and faster operation time has been achieved. As a result, ferries that used to carry 500 trucks increased this amount to 7.000 between January - October 2016. This means 1.300% of increase. The sister ports MoU signed among the Ports of Baku, Aktau and Samsun brought an important dimension in the efforts in this field.

We have produced a number of other initiatives during the successful meetings on transport and customs to streamline the flow of goods through our borders. We are committed and ready to join hands in each and every endeavor to increase the connectivity and prosperity of our peoples.

Along with the projects in transport and customs, we are also successfully carrying out various projects in other fields.

Let me just briefly mention some of these:

“The Modern Silk Road Tour Package Project”

“The Common History, Geography and Literature Textbooks Projects”

“Training Programs, seminars and workshops to the benefit of the experts and potential employees in the private sector”

“Facilitating the transfer of the successful practices regarding public-private partnership”

To conclude, we are ready, as the Turkic Council, to cooperate in all of the initiatives of mutual concern.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**Short Statement on behalf of the Energy Charter Secretary General,
H.E. Ambassador Urban delivered by Dr Marat Terterov,
Principal Coordinator of the Energy Charter Knowledge Centre
at Islamabad ECO Summit March 1 2017**

Your Esteemed Excellency Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; Secretary General Halil Ibrahim Akca, Distinguished leaders of ECO countries, Dear Summit Participants;

I am delighted to be here in Islamabad on the occasion of the 13th Economic Cooperation Organisation Summit taking place today and the 22nd Council of Ministers meetings which I was pleased to attend yesterday. I am here addressing you with a short intervention on behalf of the Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, H.E. Ambassador Urban Rusnák;

Conceived in the early 1990s, and coming into full legal force in 1998, the Energy Charter Treaty has established itself as the leading – and I dare say, only – multilateral treaty providing legal security for investments in the energy sector. We are based in Brussels, the capital of the European Union, but represent an ever growing constituency of more than 80 countries from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas.

But I did not come to Islamabad to promote my organization. I came here to express my sincere gratitude to the ECO governing bodies for granting observer status to the Energy Charter Conference, initially at the 217th ECO Council of Permanent Representatives Meetings in Tehran on 23 January 2017, and through formal approval at yesterday's Council of Ministers.

International Energy Charter observer-ship of ECO follows the granting of reciprocal observer status to ECO, which was approved by our constituency under the Japanese Chairmanship at the 27th Energy Charter Conference in Tokyo on November 26-27 of last year.

International Energy Charter-ECO reciprocal observer status formal approvals come as a result of mutually beneficial and practical cooperation initiatives that have been developed by the Secretariats of both organisations during 2016.

In particular, I refer to a jointly organized high level seminar on the topic of '*Stimulating energy investments in an era of low oil prices and de-carbonisation*', which took place under the auspices of the 23rd World Energy Congress in Istanbul in October 2016.

This event addressed important regional initiatives on developing new strategies for countries embracing ambitious, long term energy policy solutions seeking to meet growing energy demand. This applied particularly to regional cooperation initiatives in the electrical energy sector, following requests from some key stakeholders in the ECO region.

And indeed, supporting all strands of regional cooperation in the energy sector, lies at the very core of the mission of the International Energy Charter. As a leading, treaty-based

international organization working on energy security matters, the Energy Charter promotes regional cooperation by:

- Providing legal security for energy investments right across its constituency
- Promoting cross border investment projects....
-and thereby stimulating a prosperous, cross border energy trade
- Helping its members and stakeholders secure unhindered transit of energy resources
- Providing a balanced approach towards energy security, which takes into account the needs of energy producing, consuming and transiting states.

This is, of course, a very small sample of our work.

Throughout its soon-to-be three decades of existence, the Energy Charter project has sought to provide a legal basis for the rules setting out the governing principles of behavior between state and market actors in the international energy sector.

Clear and transparent 'rules of the game', based on sound rule of law, are vital if much needed investments are to take place in order to meet rising energy demand. Such investments also help us travel further down the road towards more widespread energy access, as we all work together towards sustainable development more broadly. Few of us tend to challenge the idea that these are all goals well worth striving for, both in the ECO region and across the planet.

Ladies and gentlemen;

There is much potential for energy cooperation in the ECO region. These vast swathes of the Eurasian landmass lie at the heart of the historic trading routes between Asia and Europe.

Today, there is both potential and great need for the states of the ECO region to strengthen energy supply routes, build new energy infrastructure and promote grids/electricity networks at a cross border level.

There is a need to attract foreign and cross border investment into the energy sector in the region, the need to bolster the energy economies here and to ensure that energy continues to provide a fuel for sustainable growth.

Energy cooperation between the states of the region, working in unison with international organisations such as ECO and the International Energy Charter, will go a long way in helping you realise these laudable goals.

The Energy Charter stands ready to cooperate with you in the sphere of developing practical projects developing energy connectivity in the ECO region. I am ready to commence discussions on such cooperation with you right now and during the entirety of my current Mission to Islamabad.

The people of your region deserve no less than our collective and undeterred commitment.

To conclude, the International Energy Charter should be seen as both friend and natural ally of ECO in helping you get there, moving further down the road of energy connectivity.

Eight of the ECO states are already full members of the Energy Charter by having ratified the Energy Charter Treaty. While the two remaining ECO states, Iran, and our hosts, Pakistan, are not members of the Energy Charter Treaty, both are full observers, having signed the International Energy Charter Political Declaration which has now been adopted by more than 80 countries.

The Energy Charter Treaty remains open to their accession. Indeed, accession to the Energy Charter Treaty by Iran and Pakistan will send an extremely powerful message to the international investment community to the effect that their assets and capital will benefit from the highest standards of legal protection in these countries.

Having spent a large part of my life in our region, I wholeheartedly share your desire – as reflected in many of the interventions heard during the last two days – to see the ECO states working together to transform further into a prosperous trading bloc, particularly in the energy sector, for the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity for all who live here.

The International Energy Charter will always be there with you. We will be stronger together

May God bless you. And may God bless the countries and peoples of the ECO region

STATEMENTS BY SPECIAL INVITEES

Statement by
H.E. Mr. Zhang Yesui, Executive Vice Foreign Minister and Special
Representative of the Government of the People's Republic of China

I am very pleased to represent the Chinese Government to attend this very important Conference at invitation. I would like to express the warmest congratulations on the holding of the Summit!

ECO is an important multilateral cooperation mechanism in this region. For many years, ECO has been committed to increasing regional connectivity, trade, investment and energy cooperation, thereby playing an important role to promote economic and social development of its Member States and increasing the trade and economic ties among all countries.

At present, the international situation is facing growing uncertainties. Our region of Asia has on the whole maintained stability and development, yet we also face more risks and challenges. Against such a backdrop, it is of vital importance that countries in this region should step up strategic communication and multilateral coordination. The ECO Summit has taken the theme of connectivity for regional prosperity, which meets the trend of our times and the development needs of all countries and will give new impetus to regional cooperation.

ECO Member States are all China's friendly countries in the neighborhood and China's partners for cooperation. In history, the ancient silk road has linked all of us, and contributed to the cultural interaction and common prosperity of all countries.

In 213 President Xi Jinping put forth the initiative of together building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st century maritime silk road, which has received positive response and participation of countries along the Belt and Road routes, including member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

In the past 3 years and more, the Belt and Road International cooperation has been making smooth progress. A string of big cooperation projects have been put in place and delivered initial benefits. The further alignment of The Belt and Road Initiative with development strategies of countries along the routes and international organizations have created wide consensus and presented a bright development prospect.

In May this year, China will host the Belt and Road Forum for international cooperation. The Forum consists of opening ceremony, roundtable summit and high-level conference. It centers on the theme of stepping up international cooperation, together building the belt and road to achieve win-win development. Its main lines include policy communication, infrastructural connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and

people-to-people bonds, pull together the wisdom and consensus on cooperation and push ahead practical cooperation in priority fields.

The Belt and Road development is committed to the principles of planning together, building together and benefiting together. It is not a solo performance but a symphony performance jointly participated by all countries. The holding of this summit forum will surely go a long way to boost the Belt and Road international cooperation, promote regional integration process and benefit all countries in the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the host country of Pakistan for inviting China to be a special guest at today's summit. In recent years, the government and people of Pakistan have united and worked hard, overcome difficulties and made remarkable achievements in economic development, maintaining security and stability and pushing international cooperation. As a lead project under the Belt and Road cooperation, CPEC, the China-Pakistan economic corridor development is making rapid progress, not only benefiting China and Pakistan, but will also strongly boost regional common development. We are confident that Pakistan will, based on hosting of this Summit and Chairman Economic Cooperation Organization, make even greater contribution to regional stability and development.

In conclusion, I wish this Summit a full success. Thank you.

Statement to the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization
by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for
Afghanistan,
Mr. Tadamichi Yamamoto
(Islamabad, 1st March 2017)

Excellencies, distinguished guests,

It is a great honour to address you at today's Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Summit. I have the pleasure of bringing you warm greetings from the United Nations Secretary-General, who attaches great importance to the relationship between the ECO and the United Nations (UN). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Government of Pakistan for hosting the summit.

Since its establishment in 1985, ECO has served as an important example of a common platform for strengthening regional cooperation, policy coherence, as well as facilitating knowledge sharing and mutual learning, all of which are essential to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Cooperation and connectivity among neighbors and countries situated in the same region within the framework of regional mechanisms such as ECO, is a key to the economic development and prosperity for the region.

The United Nations has been working with ECO members on many core issues in support of development, peace and human rights, some of which have been referred to by member states. At the end of last year on 21 November 2016, a special resolution on cooperation between the UN and ECO was adopted by the consensus at the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Excellencies, distinguished guests,

The ECO has completed the 32 years of its existence has been able to expand regional and international cooperation with the focus on economic and non-economic transactions among its Member States. In this context the Summit's focus on connectivity is timely and important.

It will be important for the ECO region to build on the progress already made in developing modern transportation networks and open communication systems. The first United Nation Global Sustainable Transport Conference in Ashgabat last November demonstrated the power of policy and partnerships in this regard.

As it was underlined by ECO Secretary General during the conference in Ashkhabad, ECO has a proven record in facilitating regional and international transport and the removal of unsustainable transport practices. As the sustainable transport is of prime importance and high relevance to ECO. We noted thereference to the corridor-based

arrangements of ECO to promote development of its member countries through smooth and seamless road and railway transit system in the region.

It is essential for the ECO region to strengthen its technological skills and capacity in order to increase economic growth. Since the success in financing sustainable development will rely primarily on action at the national level, ECO Member States should develop effective strategies to mobilize resources. Beyond trade and infrastructure, ECO countries can strengthen their mutual learning platforms on issues related to social development and institutional-building capacity.

The United Nations – across all its pillars and offices – stands ready to support you across the global agenda including those in the areas from development to counter-terrorism. The United Nations welcomes the continued active engagement of the ECO and its member states in our work.
