

**Report of the Chairman of the
20th Council of Ministers Meeting to the 12th ECO Summit
(Baku, 16th October, 2012)**

**Honourable Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of State/Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my privilege to present to the 12th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization the Report of the 20th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held here in Baku on 15th October, 2012. The meeting discussed in a very positive and constructive manner the ways and means for strengthening cooperation among the Member States. I would like to present to this august Forum a brief account of the deliberations and decisions of the Ministerial meeting:

- The Council of Ministers discussed and reviewed ECO activities and initiatives in various areas including trade, transport and communications, energy, industry, agriculture, environment, health, drugs control, and tourism.
- The latest status of ECO agreements, projects and programmes, performance of specialized and affiliated agencies, and ECO cooperation with other regional and multilateral organizations also came up for discussion.
- Considerable progress has been made since the last meeting of the Council of Ministers was held in Istanbul in December, 2012. In trade, the contracting parties to the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) have agreed to operationalize the agreement with effect from 1st January, 2013. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan have signed the Articles of Agreement of ECO Trade and Development Bank.
- The work on two road transport corridors, one between Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul and the other between Iran-Afghanistan-Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan has commenced. The ECO-IRU joint project for Regular Monitoring of Trucks in the ECO region has been completed. ECO Science Foundation and ECO Educational Institute have been established after a lapse of nearly one and a half decade.
- The Council of Ministers extended full support to the establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO countries as an affiliated body of the Organization. The Council granted the Observer Status to the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States.
- The Council appreciated the work done by the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and authorized the CPR to consider the recommendations of the Group to

improve the efficiency, dynamism and visibility of the Organization. The Council approved the establishment of ECO Postal Staff College as an affiliated body of the Organization. Fresh proposals to enhance trade and investment cooperation among the Member States were also approved.

- During the meeting the Islamic Republic of Iran signed the Statute of ECO Veterinary Commission (ECOVECO) and deposited the Instrument of Ratification of the Statute of Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment and Metrology (RISCAM).
- The Council of Ministers reviewed the agenda of the 12th ECO Summit and the Baku Declaration, 2012. The Declaration re-affirms the commitment of the Member States to promote cooperation in various areas with a view to making ECO a more vibrant organization.
- Before, I conclude, I would like to register my appreciation of the participation the Ministers and Senior Officials from Member States and their sincere efforts and hard work for successful and fruitful outcome of this Summit.
- I thank Your Excellency.
