



ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (ECO)
SECRETARIAT
(TEHRAN)

Tehran Declaration 2009

(Adopted by the 10th ECO Summit, Tehran, 11th March, 2009)

The 10th ECO Summit
Tehran Declaration
(Tehran, 11 March 2009)

The Tenth Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran, on 11th March, 2009. It was presided over by H.E. Dr. Mahmood Ahmadi Nejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and attended by:

H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai,
President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev,
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

H.E. Mr. Karim Massimov
Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

H.E. Mr. Omurbek Babanov,
First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic.

H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Zardari,
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon,
President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gul,
President of the Republic of Turkey.

H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov,
President of Turkmenistan.

H.E. Mr. Ilgizar Sobirov
Speaker of Senate of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Heads of State/Government held in-depth discussion on important regional and international issues, including the global economic crisis. They reviewed the performance of the organization, the progress made since the previous Summit, the challenges and opportunities lying ahead and gave directions to pace up progress in various sectors. The Heads of State and Government:

Acknowledging the significance of regional cooperation as an essential mechanism to accelerate economic and social progress, development and stability in the region;

Reaffirming their commitment to ECO's goals and objectives envisaged in the Izmir Treaty, the ECO Vision 2015 and other basic documents as well as the declarations of the previous Summit meetings;

Appreciating the steps taken to realize important initiatives which would further strengthen ECO as an effective mechanism for regional economic cooperation;

Taking note of the progress made towards signing, ratification and implementation of the key ECO agreements, including the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) and the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), and operationalization of ECO Trade and Development Bank;

Acknowledging that the Global Financial Crisis was the result of weak standards, excessive use of resources, unsound risk management practices, excessive leverage, lack of transparency, inadequacy of international financial institutions, and unbalanced international trade regime, which required closer cooperation and consultation among the Member States;

Having discussed, in their retreat meeting, the current Global Financial Crisis and its implications for the economies of the ECO Member States, and considering the abundant natural resources, growing educated labor as well as the strong will and desire of the ECO Member States to contribute towards resolving the existing world economic crisis;

Appreciating the cooperation of the member states to expedite accession to ECO agreements, and to accelerate implementation of the agreements which had already taken effect:

- i. Reaffirmed their determination to move towards establishment of a Free Trade Area in the ECO region by 2015 as a priority task and called upon the Contracting Parties to ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) to expedite completing necessary formalities to implement tariff concessions at the earliest.
- ii. Welcomed the operationalization of the ECO Trade, ECO Projects and Development Bank as a milestone toward facilitation of trade in the region, called the other member states for joining the Bank and also called for early completion of remaining measures to set up the ECO Reinsurance Company.
- iii. Noted that the Agreements on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI) and on the Establishment of ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank had already been signed by the requisite number of member states and called for their early ratification and implementation.
- iv. Welcomed the finalization of the Draft ECO Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, and Additional Protocol on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen and Transit Drivers.
- v. Took note of the new initiatives being taken, including draft Agreements on Prevention of Corruption and Money Laundering, Mutual Recognition of Standards and Joint Trade Promotional Activities, and urged member states to help finalize them as early as possible.

- vi. Called for further strengthening of the private sector cooperation for closer trade and business relations by organizing, on regular basis, Trade Fairs, Exhibitions and Business Forums and other such events, particularly in the Central Asian member states.
- vii. Acknowledged the activities of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO CCI) that focus on two pillars - effective coordination and improvement of private sector initiatives in the ECO region;
- viii. Reaffirmed their determination to continue cooperation and develop a common approach to mitigate the gravity of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and to take necessary steps to turn the crisis into an opportunity for the region, using all possible means, facilitating business, and harmonizing rules and regulations. In this regard, welcomed the suggestion made by H.E. Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad, the Honorable President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the decision taken by the Third ECO Finance Minister's Meeting to establish a working group comprising senior experts from the Member States to study the impacts of the crisis for the ECO region and prepare recommendations for regional cooperation to cope with the situation.
- ix. Noted that the working group may examine the ideas and proposals suggested in the Retreat Meeting, inter alia, increasing "use of other reliable foreign currencies in their internal transactions", "to exchange their foreign financial resources to the reliable currencies", development of the off set trade within the region", " establishment of the ECO Monetary Fund" and make necessary recommendations to the relevant ECO decision making bodies.
- x. Took note with appreciation the proposal of H. E. Mr. Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the creation of a common world currency for stabilizing financial and economic systems, and recommended to use, as a first step towards that end, the currencies of the Member States of the ECO, in their bilateral/ multilateral economic trade off as an efficient, expeditious and trustful financial tool and also mandated the working group mentioned in the Para ix to thoroughly examine a feasible mechanism for the implementation of the issue.
- xi. Noted, with satisfaction, progress on the implementation of the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) and the establishment of the ECO Fund for Implementation of TTFA, and invited member states to voluntarily contribute to the fund. It also welcomed completion of the Multimodal Transport Project and enforcement of the ECO Motor Vehicle Third Party Liability Insurance Scheme (ECO White Card).
- xii. Underlined the significance of transit transport infrastructure in the region and called for early implementation of regionally important railway projects, namely construction of railway around Van Lake in

Turkey, the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project and construction of Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran) – Astara (Azerbaijan) railway, rehabilitation of Quetta-Taftan railway in Pakistan, construction of Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway, and capacity enhancement of Sarakhs Stations in Iran and Turkmenistan, construction of Railways from Khairaton and Shair-Khan to Mazar-e-Sharif-Heart, construction of Railways of Sheer-Khan-Bandar-Panjpayan-Dushanbe-Saretash-China, as well as Quetta-Chamman-Spin Boldak-Kandhar-Herat and early inception of the feasibility study of all lines in the territory of Afghanistan.

- xiii. Appreciated the headway made towards regularizing the ECO Container and passenger Train on Istanbul-Almaty route; welcomed the extension of the route to the Chinese railways at Urumchi and called for enhanced cooperation between ECO and China in implementing transport projects, in particular revitalizing the China-Middle East-Europe Corridor, so called the Silk Route and welcomed construction of Railway from China to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and also the proposal to connect the interested member states to the said routes.
- xiv. Reaffirmed its support to the planned ECO Container Train on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul route, and appreciated Iran for constructing 540 Km railway between Kerman- Zahidan which would link up railways from Pakistan to Europe via Iran and Turkey.
- xv. Welcomed the proposal of organizing Bandar Abbas-Almaty regular train container as a priority project.
- xvi. Noted the significance of road transport in the development of trade among member states; called for efforts aimed at alleviating the obstacles and impediments hampering international road transport activities in the region.
- xvii. Noted with satisfaction the establishment of the ECO Logistic Providers Associations' Federation (ECOLPAF) for facilitating greater involvement of the private sector in regional transport.
- xviii. Reiterated the importance of maritime cooperation to address the special needs of the landlocked member states and appreciated, in this regard, the initiative of Iran to offer facilities, discounts and special arrangements to the landlocked member states in its main ports in the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea.
- xix. Appreciated the decision taken at the 4th Meeting of the Heads of Postal Authorities of ECO to issue a common stamp on the occasion of the 10th Summit and welcomed the unveiling of the special stamp issued on this occasion by the Islamic Republic of Iran and other member states.

- xx. Underlined the significance of technical cooperation in postal services and telecommunications, called for expert exchanges between member states in this regard.
- xxi. Took into account the possibility of enhancing interconnection of power systems of the member states for regional power trade and power management, and called for active support and cooperation of all member states to that end.
- xxii. Reiterated their determination to pursue and encourage cooperation in energy sector as a priority through reinforcing the ECO Energy Cooperation Strategy, emphasizing inter alia on policies and plans to support diversification of energy sources and markets, providing suitable environment for investment in energy sector projects, improving energy security, considering energy subsidizing policies in member states and making better use of new and renewable energy sources, particularly hydropower and in this regard, welcomed the offer of Tajikistan to host the 2nd Energy/Petroleum Ministers Meeting in 2009 to review and enhance ECO Energy Cooperation.
- xxiii. Welcomed the efforts aimed at operationalization of the ECO Science Foundation and the ECO Educational Institute as well as the establishment of other ECO institutions, and urged those Member States, which haven't done so, to sign/ratify ECO Science Foundation, ECO Cultural Institute and ECO Educational Institute charters.
- xxiv. Welcomed the approval of establishment of the ECO Nanotechnology Network in Iran and called on member states and the Secretariat for expeditious measures to implement it.
- xxv. Welcomed the establishment the ECO Representative Office for Development of Science and New Technologies in Almaty in the light of recommendation of the COM.
- xxvi. Appreciated the adoption of the Statute of the ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM) and the Roadmap for its Provisional Implementation and called on member states to sign/ratify the Statute and take steps for its early implementation.
- xxvii. Underlined the significance of the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) and progress on the ECO-FAO Technical Cooperation Programme for Strengthening Seed Supply in the ECO region, and welcomed the establishment of the ECO Seed Association in Turkey.
- xxviii. Noted with appreciation the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between the ECO and UN/ISDR, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU).

- xxix. Welcomed the signing of the tripartite Agreement between the ECO, IDB and UNESCAP on Transport Development, and the MOU with the European Commission on the Fight Against Illicit Drug Trafficking and with IOM on Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration as well as the proposal to establish necessary coordination between ECO and other relevant international organizations/programme including CARE, TRACECA and SPECA.
- xxx. Noted ECO's role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan, appreciated the contributions of Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey to the ECO special Fund for reconstruction of Afghanistan and called for more contributions by member states and cooperation between ECO and relevant National Agencies of the member states to further speed up and increase the efficiency of the reconstruction process.
- xxxi. Expressed sympathy and solidarity with the defenseless people of the Gaza Strip in Palestine, strongly urged the international community to provide access and humanitarian aid to the war-torn people of the Strip to avert a humanitarian catastrophe and bring the life to normal condition and agreed to continue exemplary efforts to this end, in this regard, welcomed the initiative of the ECO Secretariat to provide Gaza people with food and medicine.
- xxxii. Reiterated that unresolved conflict impede the development of cooperation, inter alia in economic sphere, on regional as well as broader plane, stressed the importance of early resolution of outstanding conflicts in the ECO region on the basis of international law, in particular in respect for territorial integrity.
- xxxiii. Acknowledged the region's potential in the field of health; appreciated the expansion of cooperation in this area, and welcomed the proposal of the Republic of Azerbaijan to host the 1st ECO Health Ministers' meeting in the second half of 2009.
- xxxiv. Underlined the need for regional cooperation in management of natural disasters, welcomed the establishment of a Regional Centre for that purpose in Mashhad, Iran, and called for effective programmes and projects for immediate response, emergency relief and rehabilitation.
- xxxv. Acknowledged that security and stability were fundamental to economic progress and development, and stressed the need for continued cooperation in countering terrorism, narcotics and transnational organized crimes.
- xxxvi. Reiterated the outlook enshrined in ECO Vision 2015 that ECO was the most suitable platform to play a vital role on behalf of its Member States in all relevant regional and international fora in order to project ECO's common views and interests.

- xxxvii. Envisioned the possibility of closer cooperation between ECO and other development partners through establishing appropriate mechanism as envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir in order to benefit from their technical, financial and other means of assistance for the realization of ECO's objectives and in this regard, welcomed the growing relationship between ECO and other regional and international organizations.
- xxxviii. Appreciated the contributions of the Secretary General, Mr. Khurshid Anwar, to the promotion of ECO's aims and objectives, and the expansion of the ECO relations with other regional peers and international organizations, welcomed the appointment of H.E. Mr. Mohammad Yahya Maroofi, as the ECO Secretary General for the next term, and expressed, the confidence that he would take appropriate initiatives to promote ECO's image and activities.
- xxxix. Also welcomed the participation of H.E. the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifeh Al Thani, H.E. Mr. Jalal Talebani, the President of Iraq, H.E. Mr. Farouk Al-Shara'a, Vice President of the Syrian Arab Republic, H.E. Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the Secretary General of OIC and H.E. Mr. Migel Deskoto, the President of United Nations General Assembly, as the Special Guests in the 10th Summit at the invitation of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
- xl. Welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 11th ECO Summit in 2010.

The Heads of State and Government expressed profound thanks to His Excellency Dr. Mahmood Ahmadi Nejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for leading the deliberations of the 10th ECO Summit most wisely to a successful conclusion, and sincerely appreciated the warm hospitality of the Government and the people of Iran, and the immaculate arrangements made for the Summit.