

**The 9<sup>th</sup> Summit**  
**16<sup>th</sup> COM Chairman Report**  
*( Baku, 5 May, 2006 )*

*Annex-III*

*Honourable Presidents,  
Heads of Delegations,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is an honour and privilege for me to briefly report on the deliberations of the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held on May 4, 2006, to this august body, the Heads of State/Government/Delegation of ECO member states. The meeting in an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation discussed in detail the issues on its agenda.

Within the scope of its agenda, the meeting reviewed ECO reports; approved and adopted some documents and gave decisions on important activities of ECO.

The 16<sup>th</sup> COM, inter alia, approved the Reports of the eight CPR Meetings held since last 15<sup>th</sup> COM meeting, ECO's Budget for 2006, ECO Secretariat's Audit Report for 2005, the recommendations of the CPR for ECO Awards 2006 winners from member states, the report of 15<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting along with the ECO's Annual Calendar of Events for 2006-2007 and Work Program of the Secretariat for 2006, as well as the reports of the ministerial meetings held after 15<sup>th</sup> COM in the field of Industry and Transport & Communications.

The 16<sup>th</sup> COM also considered Secretariat's papers on the Implementation of Projects for which some member states have been designated coordinators, follow-up of the implementation of the decisions of 15<sup>th</sup> COM meeting, the status of signing, ratification and accession of agreements as well as their implementation, implementation of the decisions of the previous Sectoral Ministerial meetings.

While reviewing the status of the implementation of important projects, the Council asked the member states to make efforts to implement all important agreements, particularly Trade & Development Bank, Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) and ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA). The Council also urged the member states that had not yet been ratified the basic agreements of the Organization such as Treaty of Izmir to do so at the earliest.

An important decision of the 16<sup>th</sup> COM was the adoption of the Outline Plan of Action for strengthening the external relations and cooperation of ECO with other international and regional organizations.

As the present Secretary General will complete his term in August 2006, the 16<sup>th</sup> COM appointed His Excellency Mr. Khurshid Anwar, presently Additional Foreign Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, in-charge of ECO Region, as the new Secretary General of ECO, for a term of three years.

The Council also appointed two Deputy Secretaries General from Turkey and Kazakhstan respectively as well as extended the tenure of the Deputy Secretary General from Iran for another year as well appointed the new President of the ECO Culture Institute for three years.

The Council extensively discussed the draft Baku Declaration in the light of the views of the member states and finalized it for submission to the 9<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit meeting of Heads of State/Government/Delegation. The said Declaration will be released after its adoption by the Summit.

*Excellencies,*

Now, I would like to avail of this opportunity to express my gratitude for the cooperation, hard work and valuable contribution of my colleagues in the Council of Ministers meeting. I also welcome His Excellency Mr. Sepanta, the new Foreign Minister of Afghanistan in the ECO family. Also, I would like to express my appreciation of the assistance given by the ECO Secretariat under the guidance of the Secretary General for facilitating the conduct of the 16<sup>th</sup> COM meeting.

*Thank you.*