

**The 9<sup>th</sup> Summit**  
**Baku Declaration 2006**  
( *Baku, 5 May, 2006* )

***Annex-V***

The Ninth Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, on May 05, 2006. The meeting, presided over by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, was attended by:

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

H.E. Dr. Mahmood Ahmadi Nejad  
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

H.E. Mr. Daniyal Akhmetov  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

H.E. Mr. Medetbek Kerimkulov  
First Vice Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic.

H.E. Mr. Shaukat Aziz  
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

H.E. Mr. Akil Akilov  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan.

H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey.

H.E. Mr. Khoshgeldy Kurbanovich Babaev  
Head of State Enterprise on Caspian Sea Issue under  
the President of Turkmenistan.

H.E. Mr. Erkin Khalilov,  
Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Heads of State / Government held, in a cordial and friendly atmosphere, in-depth exchange of views on important regional and global issues of common interest with a view to promoting the socio-economic well-being of the peoples of the ECO region. In this context, the Heads of State/Government:

**Reaffirming** the commitment of the Member States for the realization of the ECO goals and objectives envisaged in the Izmir Treaty and other basic documents as well as the declarations and communiqués of its previous meetings;

**Reiterating** strong political will of the Member States towards strengthening regional cooperation within the frame work of the Economic Cooperation organization;

**Taking note** with satisfaction of the considerable progress achieved in ECO activities during the recent years especially towards ratification and implementation of the ECO agreements in the priority areas;

**Welcoming** the imminent entry into force of the Transit Transport Framework Agreement, appointment of Board of Governors of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and finalization of annexures to ECOTA and appreciating the steps taken towards realization of these important initiatives which would contribute to making ECO an effective vehicle for regional economic integration;

**Observing** that the ECO has attained the required institutional capacity and drawn its medium and long term perspectives in the different areas as envisaged in the ECO Vision 2015 and other basic documents and noting

that the organization was entering into the implementation phase of its plans and projects which required more constructive regional cooperation;

**Resolving** to remove the existing bottlenecks at national and regional levels which hampered prompt accession and ratification of the approved agreements and reaffirming their commitment to expedite the implementation process of those agreements which have already entered into force;

**Expressing** sympathy with the people and the government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the loss of life and property in the devastating earthquake on 8th October 2005 and appreciating the assistance of the Member States and the ECO Secretariat extended to Pakistan in the hour of trial;

**Recommending** consideration of regional programmes and projects for early warning, preparedness and management of natural disasters and the need for strengthening collaboration within and beyond the region in this regard, and putting in place a permanent regional response mechanism dedicated to disaster preparedness, earthquake safety and drought management, etc.; emergency relief and rehabilitation to ensure immediate response and welcoming ECO's initiatives in that direction;

**Congratulating** the people and the Government of Afghanistan on the recent political and economic gains made by the country and expressing the hope that these positive developments would usher the country in to a new era of peace, progress and prosperity;

**Acknowledging** the strides that ECO has taken in the sphere of external relations and highlighting the need for strengthening ECO's relations with other international/regional organizations through the establishment of a mechanism for according observer status/dialogue partnership and through activation of ECO contact groups in the relevant international forums and also by preparing an action plan for the enhancement of ECO's external relations;

- i. Welcomed the adoption, by the 15th COM, of ECO Vision 2015 as the Organization's roadmap for the next decade; agreed that the document was an embodiment of their common aspirations to promote cooperation, mobilize resources and synchronize efforts for sustainable social and economic development of the region; urged Member States to work in close collaboration with the Secretariat to expedite implementing the strategies and projects outlined in the document. They commended the work of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and fully endorsed their Recommendations on the measures to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of ECO.
- ii. Expressed satisfaction over the organization of four ministerial meetings since the Eighth ECO Summit namely; 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Environment (Istanbul, Turkey, October 2004), 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (Antalya, Turkey, December 2004), 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Trade & Investment (Istanbul, Turkey, July 2005), 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Industry (Istanbul, Turkey, November 2005) and 6th Ministerial Meeting on Transport & Communications (Tehran, Iran, April 24-26, 2006) and desired that other Ministerial meetings take place on schedule as identified in the ECO Calendar of Events for 2006-07.
- iii. Welcomed the designation of coordinating countries to assist the ECO Secretariat in facilitating and expediting the implementation of agreements in Trade, Transport and Energy Sectors and requested member States to extend full cooperation to the lead countries in fulfillment of their task in accordance with the agreed terms of reference.
- iv. Reaffirmed their commitment to establish a free trade area in the ECO region by 2015 as a priority task, welcomed ratification of the ECO Trade Agreement by Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan and called on signatories that had not yet ratified the agreement to do so, and the non-signatories to expedite signing the agreement. They also encouraged concerned Member States to finalize at an early date, the Optional Protocol on Fast Track Approach to ECOTA. They welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to host the Fourth Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade in June 2006.
- v. Noted with satisfaction the entry into force of the Articles of Agreement on ECO Trade and Development Bank and asked the Board of Governors to take necessary steps to make the Bank operational in 2006. They advised the Governors from Member States to extend their full support

to the Board of Governors in carrying out its tasks to operationalize the Bank. They also urged the participating States to finalize the draft Agreement for the Establishment of ECO Reinsurance Company and sign it as soon as possible, so that the Company could become operational this year.

vi. Acknowledged the importance of transport and Communications as the cornerstone of ECO policy for greater regional integration, and in that respect:

a. Called for early establishment of the Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC) to ensure successful implementation of TTFA. They also urged the signatory Member States to ratify and the non-signatory ones to sign and ratify TTFA.

b. Reiterated the importance of early operationalization of regular container train to Istanbul-Tehran-Turkmenabab-Tashkent-Almaty route of Trans-Asian Railway Main Line and passenger train from Almaty on the same route and called on Member States, particularly those that fall on that route, to attach high priority to the project and facilitate its early implementation.

c. Underlined the importance of the Program of Action for ECO Decade of Transport and Communications (1998-2007) and asked Member States to expedite implementing relevant projects in their respective territories.

vii. Took note of the recent developments in the field of industry such as preparation of the Draft ECO Regional Strategy for industrial Cooperation, adoption of the ECO Regional Privatization Plan of Action and identification of specific project proposals in the selected sub-sectors open to the private sector and welcomed the preparation of the statute of the ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM), which will be finalized by the next Ministerial Meeting on Industry. They welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Industry in 2006 and called for full participation in it. They also appreciated the establishment of ECO Technology Transfer Center (ETT-Center) in Tehran and invited all the Member States to actively contribute to its activities.

viii. Noted with satisfaction the approval and signing of the Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment in the ECO region (APPI) during the ECO 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade and urged the signatory Member States to ratify and non-signatory Member States to sign/ratify the agreement for its early implementation. They welcomed the offer of the Republic of Turkey to host the second Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Economy in the second half of 2006.

ix. Noted with satisfaction the efforts of the ECO Secretariat to encourage participation of the private sector in its programmes and activities for enhancing the ECO intra-regional trade. In this regard, they appreciated the successful completion of the 1st phase of the Joint ECO/ITC Project on expanding intra-regional trade. They welcomed the allocation from the ECO Feasibility Study Fund (FSF) and the pledges made by the Turkish Government for financial and technical assistance and asked the Organization to undertake the 2nd Phase of the Joint ECO/ITC Project. They requested organization of business forums and trade fairs ECO wide regularly in order to promote trade and business relations in the region. They called upon the Member States to give a new impetus to the activities of the ECO-CCI by means of establishing a permanent secretariat and developing an action plan for it.

x. Took note of the progressive cooperation in the field of customs particularly the efforts for preparation of the Draft ECO Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters and finalization/approval of the Agreement on establishment and operation of ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank and called for early implementation of the Agreements.

xi. Expressed deep concern at the continued degradation of environment and underscored the implementation of the ECO Plan of Action in the field of Environment (2003-2007). They welcomed the offer of the Republic of Kazakhstan to host the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on

Environment in 2006 and called for active and high level participation in this meeting. They appreciated the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the establishment of the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters in Mashad in 2006. They also took note of the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran (as the ECO country coordinator for Drought Management) to host a Regional Information, Communication and Space Technology-Enabled Disaster Management Center affiliated to UNESCAP, and their request of support in this regard.

xii. Took note of the commencement of the feasibility study on interconnection of power systems of the ECO Member States by NESPAK of Pakistan together with sub-consultant the Kyrgyz Institute of Energy & Communication with financing by the Islamic Development Bank, as well as efforts for the initiation and promotion of regional trade in energy sector and called upon Member States to extend full support to the Consultant for completion of the study.

xiii. Reiterated the need for the use of new and renewable sources of energy by the Member States and reaffirmed their basic right and willingness to enhance cooperation for developing such kinds of energy sources including nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

xiv. Noted with satisfaction the finalization of ECO Regional Program for Food Security with the technical/financial assistance of UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and preparation of national and regional food security projects and appreciated the signing of ECO/FAO Technical Cooperation Program for strengthening Seed Supply in the ECO region.

xv. Resolved to attach due importance to the food security projects and extend financial support to the agriculture sector, invited international and regional donors particularly the UN agencies, the European Union (EU), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to extend assistance to ECO endeavors in the field of agriculture development and food security.

xvi. Stressed the importance of cooperation in the agricultural sector, particularly in cotton-growing and related fields, as cotton is one of the primary products produced and exported by almost all ECO Member States. In this regard, they underscored the necessity of creation of Forum/Association of Cotton Producers with participation of the interested ECO Member States.

xvii. Highlighted the importance of human resource and sustainable development as reflected in the ECO Vision 2015 and reiterated their commitment to pursuing the objectives of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), welcomed ECO's initiatives towards human resource and sustainable development issues including establishment of a new Directorate of Human Resource and sustainable Development, recommended to the Secretariat to approach relevant regional/international organizations for their contribution to implementation of ECO projects and plans in this regard.

xviii. Recognized the need for collaborative preparedness to address health emergencies, including prevention and control of pandemics e.g. Avian Flu, and emphasized the need to develop Regional Strategies on similar cases and strengthening collaboration within and beyond the region in this regard.

xix. Agreed that terrorism, narcotics and other trans-national crimes pose a serious challenge to regional security and development, and called on Member States to accelerate efforts to effectively address these issues through better coordination. They welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 1st Meeting of the ECO Interior Ministers. They expressed gratitude to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the European Union and other international organizations for their assistance in the implementation of the 1st and 2nd phases of Drug Control Coordination Unit (DCCU) and called upon the ECO to continue its efforts to benefit from relevant international organizations/donor agencies' resources and potentials. They took note of the subsequent merger of DCCU with the ECO Secretariat. They also called for a revision of the ECO Plan of Action on Drug Control and strengthening of DCCU's capacity, inter-alia by considering its possible transformation from a Unit to a Regional Center for combating transnational organized crimes.

- xx. Reiterated that unresolved conflicts 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 region on the basis of the principles of international law, in particular respect for territorial integrity.
- xxi. They took note of the recent activities of the ECO regional institutions/specialized agencies including the ECO College of Insurance and ECO Cultural Institute. They called on the Member States to support and enhance their activities and extend full cooperation in activating other ECO regional institutions, including ECO Science Foundation in Pakistan and ECO Educational Institute in Turkey. They also welcomed ECO Consultancy and Engineering Company (Pvt.) Limited (ECO-CEC) based in Pakistan into the family of ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions.
- xxii. Took note of Azerbaijan's proposal for the establishment of an ECO Research Centre, which would serve as the ECO think-tank and work out development strategies for the region, and instructed the CPR/RPC to further deliberate upon the idea.
- xxiii. Stressed the need to continue with reforms, including the restructuring of the ECO Secretariat aimed at transforming ECO into a modern, efficient and project-oriented Organization, better equipped to address the challenges of the twenty-first century and focus on the priority needs of the Member States. In this regard, they called upon the Member States to use more actively the available expert potential in order to enhance performance of the ECO Secretariat.
- xxiv. Noted the potential for cooperation in the field of information technology and agreed to examine ways and means to use this important tool to pool knowledge and share expertise; called on Member States to ensure full and meaningful participation in the High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to be held in Tehran in 2006, which would look into the possibility of furthering cooperation in the field of ICT, including the establishment of regional techno parks and preparation of the draft agreement on regulation of the cooperation in ICT field among the Member States.
- xxv. Welcomed implementation of Plan of Action on ECO's contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and the establishment of the ECO Fund for the reconstruction of Afghanistan with pledges announced by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Turkey and repeated their appeal to the Member States to contribute to the Special Fund for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan and to help this country in the field of capacity building. Also, taking note with satisfaction of the commencement of identified ECO projects in Afghanistan, appreciated the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for organizing ECO activities/events particularly the reactivation of the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) during its chairmanship.
- xxvi. Appreciated the significant contributions of the Secretary General, H.E. Askhat Orazbay to the implementation of ECO approved plans and projects and to restructuring of the ECO Secretariat as well as the expansion of its cooperative relations with other regional/international organizations/institutions thus ensuring the ECO a befitting stature in the international arena and extended their best wishes for his success in his future assignments.
- xxvii. Welcomed the appointment of H.E. Mr. Khurshid Anwar as the new ECO Secretary General and expressed confidence that he would effectively contribute to the enhancement and acceleration of regional cooperation, take appropriate initiatives to that end and promote projection of ECO's image and activities.
- xxviii. Expressed their profound thanks for the sagacious manner in which H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan led the deliberations of the 9th ECO Summit to a successful conclusion. They also expressed their sincere gratitude to the government and the people of Azerbaijan for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the

Summit.

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