

*Annex-VIII*In the Name of God

*Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

At the close of the Summit, it is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to thank the honorable heads of state and the delegates for accepting our invitation to attend the Sixth Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Undoubtedly, attaining the goals and priorities of ECO as stated in its charter and earlier resolutions requires the active attendance of all and every member and their political will to implement ECO Projects.

I am confident that this Summit, at all levels of the esteemed heads of state, ministers and senior experts, will send an important message to the people of the region and the international community. It will proffer concrete solutions for many of the economic and political issues facing the organization. Besides, the Summit Resolution, entitled the Tehran Declaration, contains measures which, once put into effect, will make a significant contribution to the expansion of relations in the ECO region.

The Economic Cooperation Organization, as one of the oldest and potentially strongest regional entities, has set a number of goals aimed at the elimination of tariffs and promotion of regional commerce with the intention to meet the phenomenon of globalization and to initiate a course of gradual integration into the international trade network in general.

As the most important and oldest regional economic organization in this part of the world, ECO offers the most appropriate context, compatible with the rules of WTO, for the emergence of a three- Hundred-million strong regional market with most important areas

Members of ECO, concentrating on the economic issues in the region and matters relating to ECO would prove a highly significant and effective step in the direction of offering solutions for the members' economic and political problems, and will inject greater dynamism into the activities of this organization.

This Summit is held at a time when, more than ever before, the member countries have demonstrated their determination for cooperation and partnership. Today, the people of the region, having acquired greater cultural and political understanding and, being inspired by their historical heritage, are demanding a more appropriate place in the global system, and are calling for a much wider scope for participation in its social and economic processes. Their historical and

Rich cultural background, alongside their immense human and material resources, gives greater urgency to this call for participation. Therefore, backed by such exceptional wealth of history, culture and human and material resources, we are fully prepared to contribute to the solution of implementational problems and participate in a global dialogue, free from all forms of domination.

It should not be forgotten that ECO has already found its own place in the world scene and has entered into cooperation with several regional and international entities. Considering that regional organizations are usually intent on ensuring durable peace and security in their respective areas and on preparing the grounds for the progress of their member countries through enforcement of joint

Economic measures, we should perhaps note that our practical initiatives and measures should, in the first instance, concentrate on the economic and humanitarian aspects of effective and fruitful economic cooperation, for which purpose, implementation of ECO decisions and utilization of our existing resources are of the highest priority for us. In view of the fact that our agenda today included a discussion of the mechanisms for constructive cooperation among the members, as summarized in the Tehran Declaration, it can be said that our future -collaboration at the regional and international levels in the context of the Declaration is going to satisfy the interests of all member states. I believe that the Declaration sets forth the overall strategies for economic cooperation among members. It also lays the foundations for further joint efforts among the neighboring countries in the region and beyond. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a founding member of the Economic Cooperation Organization, has at all times devoted its unflinching efforts to place it on a proper course. Now that the post of the Secretary General of ECO has been assigned to Iran at a critical stage in history, we should double our efforts. I take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Secretary General, His Excellency Onder Ozar, and his colleagues for their devotion and hard work in promoting and expanding the activities of ECO; and to congratulate Dr. Gavahi on his appointment to the post. I hope that he will muster all his determination and efforts to bring the members closer together and extend the scope of the international activities of the organization.

It is my pleasure, also, to thank all our dear guests and distinguished participants, in particular, the honorable Presidents and heads of delegations, for having accepted our invitation to come to the Islamic Republic of Iran and take part in this important regional Summit.

With sincere hopes for a just peace for all humanity, and progress and prosperity for members of the Economic Cooperation Organization, I conclude this ECO Summit.

God bless you all.
