

Statements of the Heads of International Organizations

Annex-IV

- [Message from the Secretary General of the United Nations](#), delivered on his behalf by Mr. Adrianus Mooy, Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
- [Statement of Carol Bellamy](#), Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund.
- [Statement by H.E. Mr. Herbert Behrstock](#), UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, Kazakhstan.
- [Message of H.E. Mr. Federico Mayor](#), (Director-General of UNESCO) by his representative.
- [Message of H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki](#), Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

Message from the Secretary General of the United Nations,

delivered on his behalf by Mr. Adrianus Mooy, Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

It gives me great pleasure to convey a message to the Heads of State and Government gathered in Almaty for the fifth annual Summit meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation. The ECO plays a useful role in spreading the benefits of economic and social development through trade, efforts towards regional integration and a variety of other ventures. These are also areas where the United Nations is active. This Summit thus offers an opportunity to strengthen the ties and contacts between our two organizations.

I am pleased that cooperation between the United Nations and the ECO already takes such ample and practical shape.

The UN Development Programme recently approved a capacity building project for the ECO Secretariat, to enhance its ability to manage the ECO's programmes and service the Member States. UNDP is also cooperating with the ECO and other partners – including the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Islamic Development Bank – in the finalization and implementation of the Transit Trade Agreement Framework. The ECO and UNICEF have held joint workshops on iodine deficiency disorder, immunization, breastfeeding and oral rehydration therapy. The UN Population Fund, UN International Drug Control Programme and UN specialized agencies are likewise active in the region.

And just six weeks ago, the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan signed the Tashkent Declaration, launching the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia. Two UN regional commissions – ESCAP and the Economic Commission for Europe – are supporting this programme, which is designed to accelerate the economic development of Central Asian countries and their integration into the economies of Europe and Asia. The priority areas for cooperation include transport, border-crossing and energy production and distribution.

In these and other endeavours, our byword must be partnership. Globalization has brought to the fore many associated phenomena, some beneficial, others less so. What is clear, however, is that today's problems and challenges are almost invariably beyond the capacity of single States acting alone. The interdependence of the modern world cries out for effective cooperation among States at various levels.

Even in 1945, when none of the regional organizations we know today were yet in existence, the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations were sufficiently aware of the importance of cooperation with "regional arrangements" that they devoted an entire chapter to the subject – Chapter VIII. This is as true of economic cooperation as it is of efforts to maintain international peace and security, the subject covered by Chapter VIII. Indeed, the founders of the United Nations envisaged regionalism and universalism working not at odds but together.

Regional organizations such as the ECO have a long history of involvement in UN activities and decision-making. The rich social and cultural heritage of ECO Member States; the far-reaching reforms and related measures you are putting in place; the ECO's observer status in the UN General Assembly; all these are assets on which we can build. I look forward to learning the outcome of your deliberations. Please accept my best wishes for a successful Summit.

[Top](#)

Statement of Carol Bellamy,

(Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund)

*Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,
Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;*

On behalf of the United Nations Children's Fund, let me say what a pleasure and a privilege it is to join you for this 5th Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation. I thank the host of the Conference, President Nazarbaev of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for his kind invitation to address this most important gathering.

Your presence here, and the Agenda you have just adopted, is a testament to the importance of regional development cooperation – including cooperation to ensure the survival, protection and full development of children.

For UNICEF, the Economic Cooperation Organisation has proved itself an indispensable partner in the work of promoting and protecting the rights of children and women. And I am gratified to note that all 10 of ECO's Member States have affirmed the strength of that partnership by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the historic document whose enduring principles guide and illuminate our work on behalf of children everywhere.

Mr. Chairman, no human rights treaty in history has been ratified as quickly, or by as many countries, as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, after a decade of the most painstaking negotiations, and its subsequent formal embrace by 193 countries is a shining example of the potential for global cooperation in the increasingly distant aftermath of the Cold War.

Everyday, we see evidence of the power of the Convention to make a difference in children's lives – and in the lives of women as well, for child rights cannot be assured unless the rights, role and well being of women are also assured.

Mr. Chairman, the Convention is making a difference because it begins with the recognition that child rights are indistinguishable from children's basic needs – and that the principles it sets forth are the birthright not just of the children who are most easily reached, but of all children.

Assuring that birthright is at the heart of our mission – a mission for which the continued support of every ECO Member State is vital, from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Iran to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Four years ago, the UNICEF-ECO partnership was reinforced with the signing of a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding. It was quickly followed up by a series of workshops on such topics as the Expanded Programme on Immunisation, the Baby-Friendly Movement, iodine deficiency disorders and the control of diarrhoeal diseases.

In addition, a number of ECO countries have now reaffirmed their ratification of the Convention by emphatically committing themselves to its principles while beginning the process of documenting national progress in implementing them.

The Government of Kyrgyzstan, for example, recently submitted its first country report on compliance with the Convention and Pakistan is just completing a comprehensive report of its own. At the same time, non-governmental organizations like Bobek in Kazakhstan, the Uzbek Children's Fund, and Meriim in Kyrgyzstan are becoming increasingly involved in monitoring the realization of child rights. And parliamentarians – including those who attended a recent workshop organized by the Turkmenistan Parliament – are focusing on concrete Convention issues that they themselves must address.

All of this constitutes a promising start. But there is more, much more, to do. The challenges for the Member States of ECO are especially daunting because of the extraordinarily rapid pace of change in the region – change that in the last four years alone has contributed to transformations within ECO itself.

Like it or not, we live in an age of increasing interdependency – an era when insecurity and suffering can spread across national borders like wildfire, and when the challenge of safeguarding the rights of children and women – and, indeed, of all human rights – has never been greater.

That is why the United Nations and its agencies have developed a combination of strategies, resources and actions aimed at promoting greater development cooperation – including cooperation to promote the survival, protection and full development of the world's children.

The United Nations, with its comprehensive, universal mandate, can provide a central forum to address sustainable human development, in all its aspects – and help build the consensus needed to achieve it. And it is the United Nations that has the operational potential to address the global imperatives that must be met – from development cooperation and

humanitarian relief to peace-building and peacekeeping.

Mr. Chairman,

on the eve of the 21st Century, children and their families face a wide range of persistent and fast-moving dangers. These dangers grow out of poverty, which is deepening in many parts of the world even as the global economy continues to expand; from inequalities of wealth and access to basic services, both within and among nations; and from the steady erosion of many societies' capacity to maintain social safety nets for the poorest and most disadvantaged.

UNICEF's updated agenda for the remaining years of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st will attack these dangers using a new, integrated battle plan. It draws heavily on lessons we have learned since the 1990 World Summit for Children – whose goals for children's health, maternal health, nutrition, education and water and sanitation remain the touchstone of our day-to-day work. And thanks to the Secretary-General's programme of UN reform – as well as UNICEF's own enhanced standards of performance and accountability – the UN's work on behalf of children is being performed with more efficiency, cost-effectiveness and collaborative spirit than ever before.

Collaboration is the key. It has become increasingly obvious that the grave problems confronting humankind on the eve of the millennium cannot be solved by any one country, but must be addressed collectively, by governments as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector. And that, Mr. Chairman, is why this meeting's emphasis on regional cooperation is so important.

The problems faced by ECO Member States in child and maternal health; the lack of access to quality basic education; and environmental perils ranging from nuclear waste to the scourge of anti-personnel mines – all of these can be effectively addressed through legislation, joint projects and regional cooperation.

ECO has already shown the way. Using undertakings in regional technology transfer and methodology sharing, some Member States are building capacity to deal with the economic transition as well as to confront regional threats – including natural disasters and those caused by human beings.

These include the serious environmental problems in the region that are having a direct and terrible effect on child health and development, such as the former Soviet nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk, whose radioactive contaminants are a source of enormous peril; and the ecological disaster area around the Aral Sea, which I recall vividly from my first visit there two years ago.

It is a source of great pride that UNICEF has been able to help launch a highly effective regional undertaking in the Aral Sea region: the ASPERA initiative, which is helping Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in such areas as primary care, education, and water and sanitation.

In some ECO countries, there has been significant progress toward reducing under-5

mortality rates and slowing the rate of maternal mortality; Iran, for example, has made important inroads in curbing maternal deaths from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. And in Afghanistan, despite serious constraints, UNICEF has been working with its partners to increase immunization rates, most recently with National Immunisation Days for polio.

It is particularly fitting, Mr. Chairman, that this city should be the site of ECO's Summit Meeting, for it was here – 20 years ago this year – that UNICEF and the World Health Organisation launched the International Conference on Primary Health Care – the watershed gathering that affirmed health as a fundamental human right and called for universal, community-based, affordable primary health care for all.

Yet two decades later, there is still an urgent need for joint action to combat common health and nutritional problems – problems that have led, for example, to high anaemia rates among women of child-bearing age and ailments caused by iodine deficiencies. There is also a need to better promote breast-feeding and Baby-Friendly practices in the home as well as in hospitals.

These are areas that need to be addressed in a variety of ways, including legislation – and regional cooperative action involving the UN and its agencies.

In Azerbaijan, for example, UNICEF and the World Bank are working together to help build and improve health and education systems at the community level. And in parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, UNICEF and the Bank are operating a joint data-monitoring project to provide early identification of social and economic problems, especially those affecting children and women.

In Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and other ECO countries, important initiatives are under way to improve children's access to basic education, especially for girls. These efforts are most evident where there is recognition that there is direct correlation between the nation's social and economic well-being and the status and health of women and girls.

In Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the other Central Asian Republics, recent figures on basic education show a high rate of enrolment of both girls and boys.

In Afghanistan, schooling for women and girls is limited, although we hope this will change to allow women and girls to fulfil their right to education.

Mr. Chairman,

education is an inalienable human right, fully recognized under Islam and guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It is also a critical element of safe motherhood – and of citizenship. Education helps ensure the right of women and girls to speak out about their needs and concerns; to make choices based on full information, free from coercion and violence; to demand accountability from service providers as well as from local and national governments; and to participate fully in social and economic development.

There can be no significant or sustainable transformation in societies unless girls as well

as boys receive the education they need to take their rightful place as equal partners in the life of their countries.

Mr. Chairman,

the problems of poverty, economic transition – and the civil strife that is endangering peace and stability in some areas – pose enormous challenges for ECO. They are challenges that demand commitments from every national leader.

But their solution will come far more quickly when national will is combined with regional cooperation and partnerships with all elements of society.

It is a vital undertaking – and UNICEF and the international community stand ready to help.

Thank you.

[Top](#)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Herbert Behrstock,
(UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, Kazakhstan)

*Honourable Presidents and Prime Ministers,
Distinguished Participants,*

(The spirit of international cooperation at this Fifth ECO Summit Meeting is blossoming like the flowers and trees of Almaty).

ECO's progress this past week and during ECO's recent history demonstrates three important characteristics of this era of globalization and interdependence: First, multilateral collaboration is an essential element in the global network, second; joint projects are a cost-effective way to solve common problems and to help each country; third, regional institutions are a practically necessity.

The Almaty Declaration now before you, and the Agreements which were signed two days ago by (Foreign) Ministers of the ECO member countries, represent important progress.

Therefore, I happily join with the other United Nations leaders who have come to Almaty to celebrate, to congratulate, and to strengthen the cooperation between the United Nations and the ECO – as referred to in the Message of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

[And, like them, I reiterate that] We in the UN Development System remain committed to be of service to ECO, to all ten of its governments, and to achieve the goal of sustainable human development for the women and men of this important region. My comments about this ECO-UN partnership are presented on behalf of my colleagues, the Representatives of the United Nations and the UN Development Programme who work in each of your ten countries. I also represent Mr. James Gustave Speth, the Administrator of UNDP (and, in addition, I have been requested by UNCTAD to speak for them at this meeting).

(In these precious few moments when I have the honour to speak,) Mr. President, I shall briefly mention four points which have contributed to the achievements of this meeting and will affect the implementation of your goals.

Point one: The UN, and particularly the UNDP, have supported the request of many regional organizations to assist their management capacities and their ability to respond to members' requests. Mr. Mooy mentioned the two Economic Commissions' recent support to create SPECA, the Special Economic Programme for Central Asia. Additionally, UNDP provided technical assistance to ASEAN in South East Asia, to the South Asian group, and to many other regional groups. Recently, ECO also sought help. The Message from the UN Secretary General referred to UNDP support for ECO. Let me simply point out what this represents for ECO and this Summit. (I am pleased to announce that) recently, UNDP granted \$ 1.3 million to support ECO's capacities and to help ensure that your goals and the decisions of your Summit meetings will be implemented. No other international partner has responded so directly nor so generously as this help from the United Nations.

Point two: Two of the principal achievements of this Fifth Summit have been facilitated by UN assistance, (at the request of ECO governments). (First, the Trade and Transit Framework Agreement which formed the basis for your ECO negotiations and which has been endorsed Saturday was initially elaborated and negotiated among the five Central Asian Governments (and then promoted with the neighbouring transit countries) including other ECO Members. The technical support was given by UNCTAD. Financing provided by UNDP. We congratulate ECO on the successful follow through. What should happen next? Speaking on behalf of (your collaborators in) UNCTAD and UNDP, we urge that your new Agreement will soon be ratified and effectively implemented. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, (consistent with United Nations resolutions about trade, transit and landlocked countries,) we believe the signatories and particularly the Central Asia governments should reactivate measures to extend these improvements and efficiencies to your other transport and trade routes. We therefore suggest that negotiations might proceed with interested transit countries including the Russian Federation, China, the Caucasian nations and other countries which link the ECO region with the European Union.

Point three: Another worthy achievement of your Summit is the agreement to strengthen programmes which control supply and demand of drugs. This ECO initiative has been supplemented by many national and regional projects financed by UN's Drug Control Programme. Recently, a new grant of \$ 300,000 was given to provide technical assistance to ECO regional project. We hope this special partnership will help each country and assist ECO's Drug Control Unit. In addition, Member States of ECO will hopefully participate in the special session of the UN which will be held in New York next month to focus on drug control.

Point four: Looking ahead, leaders of most ECO member governments have consulted (in recent months among themselves and also with UNDP) about revitalizing the Silk Road, which includes the ECO region and also links it in the very historic and very modern versions of globalization and economic cooperation. China and other countries along the Silk Road also take an interest. Priority needs will be supported with more than a million dollars of UNDP funding, complemented by resources from participating governments and other interested donor partners. The focus for regional action is now being finalized. (It might be not only on implementing trade agreements, but also strengthening infrastructure and resolving cross-border problems which would help ECO to fulfil its goals of sustained growth, expanded trade

and cooperation). We hope that before the next Summit meeting, this activity will be another foundation for our collaboration.

Mr. Chairman,

the purpose of these remarks to you and the distinguished leaders who join you here in Almaty is to emphasise that our global UN organizations relate and respond to ECO's regional objectives and to the needs of the people of all ten ECO member countries. We look forward to fruitful collaboration, and achieving tangible results.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak. I applaud ECO, its Secretariat and its member states on the spirit and the anticipated success of this Almaty meeting.

[Top](#)

Message of H.E. Mr. Federico Mayor,
(Director-General of UNESCO) by his representative

*Mr. President of the Republic,
Your Excellencies,
Mr. Secretary General,
ladies and gentlemen.*

As the representative of Federico Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO, it is a great honour and a privilege to address this distinguished gathering.

UNESCO is one of the UN agencies with formal working relations with ECO, a joint Memorandum of Cooperation having been signed in November 1995.

For us at UNESCO, ECO is an organisation whose members enjoy an infinite number of opportunities to expand activities in all their areas of common interest: trade, transport, communication, culture, energy, agriculture, health, environment and education. With their immense human and material resources, unique geographical position and priceless cultural heritage, ECO's members have been linked for centuries by the Silk Roads threading between East and West.

ECO is also the organisation whose members are all very active UNESCO Member States and whose founding members, having joined UNESCO between 1946 and 1949, are indeed very long-standing and faithful members of UNESCO. For its part, our Organisation is present in the area covered by ECO through its network of four Field Offices.

Thus, there are plenty of reasons to believe that UNESCO and ECO could further strengthen their ties. More concretely, UNESCO is interested in cooperating with ECO's three institutions, that is to say, the Cultural Institute, the Science Foundation and the Education Foundation. I understand that they are at different stages of formation and will soon begin functioning. UNESCO stands ready to cooperate in full with all these three ECO institutions. As a matter of fact, should ECO so wish, UNESCO could provide both technical and financial assistance to these bodies.

I shall not take up your time here with details of UNESCO programmes in which ECO might like to cooperate. Let me just say that the various activities being undertaken by UNESCO in some countries covered by ECO in the framework of our Central Asia Project are summarized in a booklet which I shall make available to you.

The importance UNESCO attaches to this area is further acknowledged by the recent decision of its Executive Board's to hold a solemn session on the theme of Culture of Peace and Non-Violence next November in Tashkent.

At this stage, however, let me please announce that UNESCO is interested in establishing, under the common auspices of ECO and UNESCO, an intergovernmental network for the preservation and conservation of the mountains and rivers of your vast region. Therefore, I wish to propose that ECO and UNESCO hold an inter-agency consultation meeting some time in the near future.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, to offer every good wish to the member countries of ECO for the success of this summit and for continuing fruitful cooperation in all the activities they undertake together.

Thank you.

[Top](#)

Message of H.E. Dr. Azeddine Laraki,
(Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference)

*Excellency Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies the Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies the Ministers,
Honourable Delegates and Guests,*

Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

Allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to you on the occasion of this Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) being held here at Almaty, the Capital City of Kazakhstan.

The convening of this meeting in Kazakhstan whose government has relentlessly endeavoured to strengthen regional as well as south-south cooperation is a proof of success.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference with a membership of 55 Member States, while pursuing the main objectives behind its very existence, has taken significant steps to strengthen Economic, Commercial, Scientific and Technological Cooperation among its Member States. Among these initiatives, we can mention the establishment of Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, subsidiary organs such as the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade and the Statistical, Economic Studies and Research Centre for Islamic Countries.

In these lines, the Third Islamic Summit adopted the first Plan of Action designed to

strengthen Economic, Commercial, Scientific and Technological Cooperation among Member States while also establishing Standing Committees chaired by Heads of State and responsible for coordinating OIC action in this field which is of crucial importance for the future of our peoples.

In this connection, let me hail the results achieved by the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation under the Chairmanship of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Turkey, and those of the Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation under the Chairmanship of His Excellency the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In accordance with the instructions of the Sixth Islamic Summit, the OIC prepared a new Plan of Action which was to take into consideration the changes which had taken place since the adoption of the first Plan of Action in 1981.

The new Plan of Action was approved by the 10th Session of COMCEC held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, in October 1994.

It lays stress on priority areas such as the development of transport instructures between Member States, trade and communication development, strengthening cooperation in other vital fields such as agriculture and food security, industry, energy, tourism and environment protection.

This plan also gives great priority to human resources development and strengthening the private sector within the framework of cooperation among Member States.

As can be seen, the objectives pursued by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) are absolutely the same. That is why, at the very start, our two institutions decided to strengthen their cooperation for the development of their Member States.

In September 1994, our two organizations concluded an agreement aimed at strengthening their cooperation in the fields of common interest. This agreement provides for strengthening concentration at the highest level, exchanging information, organizing joint seminars and expert meetings to examine various fields of possible cooperation.

The two organizations further decided to encourage the involvement of OIC institutions and subsidiary organs as well as that of the private sector in strengthening their cooperation.

The Eighth Islamic Summit held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, in December 1997, also stressed the important role that regional organizations such as ECO can play in strengthening the inter-Islamic cooperation and the step-by-step economic integration of our Member States.

That is why, the OIC will fully support the dynamic initiatives undertaken by ECO with a view to strengthening economic cooperation among its Member States.

I am pleased to note that the agenda items of this important meeting reflect the will of ECO leadership to further strengthen its action for the development of its Member States and

for ensuring the steady integration of their economies.

The OIC will spare no effort to strengthen its cooperation with the ECO in order to achieve these noble objectives as soon as possible for the benefit of our peoples.

I wish full success to your deliberations.

[Top](#)