

Statements of the Heads of International Organizations

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Message of H.E. Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali,
(*Secretary General of the United Nations*)

*Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I bring you the greetings and the best wishes of the Secretary General of the United Nations. Although the Secretary General cannot be with us today, he asks me to convey to the distinguished participants at this meeting the following message:

“This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Much has been accomplished in these ten years. The Organization, which started as a trilateral regional organization comprising Iran, Pakistan and Turkey has now been enlarged, and includes ten States, representing a strong organization, active in regional as well as in international affairs.

It is in recognition of the greatly expanded international role of the Economic Cooperation Organization, and its concomitant growth as a force for development in the region, that the General Assembly of the United Nations granted it observer status in 1993. Already, the Economic Cooperation Organization has shown that it can be an active participant in multilateral work. I look forward to expanding the cooperation between the Economic Cooperation Organization and the United Nations.

At the regional level, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific have signed a memorandum of understanding, providing for cooperation in the development of the region, particularly in transport and communications. Presently, the Economic Cooperation Organization and ESCAP are cooperating in the preparation of a study on the economies of ECO countries, in order to evolve an overall strategy to develop resources of ECO countries. Cooperation is also proceeding in two related areas: investment promotion in the mining industry and minerals trade in the ECO countries, and the project formulation framework for the development of a draft transit treaty for the ECO region.

At the level of the United Nations system, programmes of cooperation between ECO, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDCP, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNCTAD and FAO bear witness to the extensive possibilities for mutually beneficial relations between the United Nations and the ECO. In this context, I am particularly pleased to note that ECO and UNDP, and ECO and UNDCP have finalized a Memoranda of Understanding on cooperative activities. This agreement is due to be signed here, at Islamabad, and will result in extensive cooperation on sustainable development activities and drug control programmes.

The Tenth Anniversary of the Economic Cooperation Organization coincides with the

Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. These anniversaries should be occasions to celebrate the initiative of States to come together, to cooperate for peace and development.

The anniversaries of multilateral organizations, regional and global, should also be opportunities for reflection on the future. The world is changing rapidly, new challenges are emerging which were not known to the founders of our Organizations. We have the responsibility towards future generation, to adapt to these changes, to prepare our Organizations for the next century. This year is, therefore, particularly important for the Economic Cooperation Organization and the United Nations. The future of our Organizations depends on the result of our deliberations this year, and on the imagination and flexibility we can muster to meet the challenges of the future.

In the space of ten years, the Economic Cooperation Organization has emerged as an important player on the international scene. As Secretary General of the United Nations, I welcome all cooperation and coordination measures with regional organizations. I am, therefore, pleased to extend my best wishes for a fruitful meeting and positive deliberations”.

Thank you.

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Statement by H.E. Dr. Hamid Algabid,
(*Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference*)

Bismillahir Rahman Arrahim

*Your Excellency
Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto,
Your Excellency, the Secretary General of the
Economic Cooperation Organization
Excellencies the Heads of State and Government
Of ECO Member States,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen*

It gives me immense pleasure to address this important Summit Conference of the Economic Cooperation Organization, which is being held in Islamabad under the able and dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

I would, at the outset, like to pay a warm tribute to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, her Government and the people of Pakistan for their steadfast commitment to the cause of international peace and development and to the strengthening of Islamic solidarity.

Pakistan has always played a pivotal role in channeling the tremendous potential of the Islamic countries and peoples, particularly the states of the region for forging close mutually beneficial cooperation, both under the auspices of OIC and the ECO.

I would also like to thank the Government and the people of Pakistan for the warm hospitality extended to my delegation and for the excellent arrangements which have been

made for this Conference.

I have no doubt that this Summit will succeed in charting fresh perspectives for consolidating and intensifying regional cooperation for development.

Madam Chairperson,

The Organization of the Islamic Conference, at present, comprises 52 member states. Our Organization was particularly strengthened by the accession to membership by most of the newly independent Republics of Central Asia. The participation of these States in the activities and programmes of our two Organizations have opened up new vistas of cooperation.

The economic and social advancement of the peoples of the Ummah and the widening of the base of inter-Islamic cooperation are essential aspects of the endeavours of our Organization.

Taking into account the changes which have taken place in the world, the OIC, under the directives of the Islamic Ummah, has drawn up a new Plan of Action which encompasses vital fields of economic, social and cultural cooperation as well as the fields of science and technology.

In this context, I would like to pay a special tribute to Their Excellencies the President of Turkey, Senegal and Pakistan, who have so ably guided the activities of the OIC specialized Standing Committees in these fields.

Both OIC and ECO have shared objectives in economic cooperation. This naturally prompts the two organizations to strengthen their cooperation for development of Member States. Our two Organizations signed an agreement in September 1994 with a view to strengthening their cooperation in areas of common interest.

Permit me, at this stage, to pay a tribute to our brother His Excellency Shamshad Ahmad, Secretary General of ECO for his devoted and determined efforts, which he has undertaken to achieve the noble goals of this prestigious Organization.

Madam Chairperson,

We are conscious that cooperation and the well being of the countries and the people of this important region can only be fully realized and flourish in an environment of peace, security and stability for all. We are, therefore, concerned over the situation in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kashmir and Chechenya as well as the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan.

Despite numerous efforts and appeals for ceasefire made by the OIC and the United Nations, fratricidal conflict in Afghanistan, continues unabated. I urge, once again, our Afghan brothers to respond positively to these appeals and cooperate with all peace efforts especially those of the OIC and the United Nations. I remain personally available for taking any action conducive to restoring peace and promoting national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

We note with appreciation the commendable efforts made by the United Nations and the

regional states, particularly the Governments of Pakistan and Iran, for promoting peace in Tajikistan.

The situation in Kashmir continues to give rise to serious concern. The international community, particularly the United Nations must take due cognizance of the deteriorating situation in Indian occupied Kashmir. India must be persuaded to end its repression in Kashmir and create conditions conducive to a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. It is imperative that the fundamental rights of the Kashmiri people, including their right of self-determination, as provided for in the United Nations resolutions, must be fully respected.

The continuing Armenian aggression against the Azerbaijan Republic and the occupation of the Azeri territory are also matters of grave concern to our Organization. While endeavouring to assist over one million Azeri refugees and displaced persons, the OIC has repeatedly called for the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the territory of Azerbaijan and for a peaceful settlement of the problem consistent with respect for the principles of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of states and the inviolability of recognized international frontiers.

The scale and the intensity of the conflict in the Republic of Chechenya is also a cause of deep anguish and anxiety. We join the international community in appealing once again, to the Russian Federation to cease all military operations and to find a peaceful settlement to the crisis in Chechenya.

Other tragedies continue to affect the peoples of the Ummah. These include the sufferings daily inflicted on the valiant people of Palestine by the Israeli occupation authorities, who continue to put obstacles to the process of peace in the Middle East. Also brutal Serbian aggression against the Bosnian people which continues still today, so sadly exposing the inability of international community to end this gross injustice. Finally, they also relate to the fratricidal conflict which continues to tear Somalia apart.

Madam Chairperson,

At this crucial stage, in contemporary history, it is imperative that every effort be made to strengthen international and regional cooperation.

The OIC will spare no effort to strengthen its cooperation with ECO in order to achieve our noble objectives, in favour of our peoples and mankind as a whole.

Thank you.

Wassalamu Alaykum wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Rahmatuh.

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