

Final Islamabad Declaration

Annex-VIII

The Heads of State/Government of the ECO Member States meeting in Islamabad on March 14-15, 1995:

- 1) **Recognized** their responsibility to promote sustainable socio-economic growth and to improve the quality of life of the 300 million people of ECO region.
- 2) **Noted** that the rapidly changing economic environment both at the regional and international level, presented opportunities as well as challenges. Regionally, there was a consensus on the free-market approach. Steps towards strengthening economic and commercial collaboration had already been initiated. The Member States were determined to accelerate that process in keeping with the emerging international economic trends. The challenge for the ECO countries was to further liberalize their own trade and economic policies as well as to gain access to the markets of economically significant regions of the world and to seize the opportunities presented by the conclusion of the Uruguay Round.
- 3) **Resolved** that in order to realize the aforementioned objectives, the ECO countries would take concrete measures to enhance ECO's role as an instrument of widening regional economic cooperation.
- 4) **Stressed** that the regional efforts for closer economic links and trade liberalization must aim at consolidating the economies of Member States.
- 5) **Expressed** the belief that ECO should become a vehicle for the economic integration of the economies of Member States with the rest of the world. This would contribute positively to the emergence of a stable and peaceful environment, regionally as well as globally.
- 6) **Expressed** the confidence that peace and prosperity in the ECO region, would foster greater solidarity and cooperation among the peoples of Member Countries. It would also lead to the renaissance of their rich shared heritage.
- 7) **Recalled** that the policy-framework approved at Quetta and Istanbul had placed high priority on the development of transport and communications infrastructure and welcomed the decision to commemorate the decade of Transport and Communications in the ECO region (1995-2004). An Outline Plan had since been adopted at Almaty to link the ECO Members with each other and with the outside world. A high-level experts group has been established to recommend ways and means for the implementation of the Outline Plan.
- 8) **Noted** with satisfaction that several agreements have been signed by a number of Member States in the fields of trade, air and sea transport, banking and reinsurance business, science and culture. These would promote regional cooperation improving and strengthening ECO's institutional framework.

- 9) **Expressed** appreciation for the development of mutually beneficial cooperative linkages between the ECO and International Organizations.
- 10) **Agreed** on the need to intensify cooperation among member countries in all sectors particularly in the following areas:
- i. development of infrastructural links (transport and communications);
 - ii. trade and investment facilitation;
 - iii. energy; and
 - iv. ecology and the protection of environment.
- 11) **Emphasized** the need for prompt and effective follow-up action and adherence to the time-frame for the implementation of the decisions of the Organization. They agreed to take necessary measures nationally for this purpose.
- 12) **Welcomed** the declaration by President S. Niyazov of Turkmenistan about his country's neutrality which is enshrined in Turkmenistan's constitution and expressed their readiness to give maximum support to the confirmation of Turkmenistan's status as a neutral state. They agreed that Ashgabat, because of its central location and logistic facilities be utilized as much as possible for meetings of the countries of the region to discuss matters of mutual interest.
- 13) **Welcomed** the establishment of a Group of Eminent Persons on enhancing the Effectiveness of ECO.
- 14) **Decided** that 28th November, the date of the Organization's expansion to its present strength be observed as the day to create in the Member States greater awareness of ECO and its activities.
- 15) **Reaffirmed** their commitment to strengthening ECO in the spirit of the Treaty of Izmir and the goals outlined in the Quetta Plan of Action and the Istanbul Declaration.
- 16) **Expressed** confidence that the Islamabad Summit will constitute another milestone in the process of consolidation of cooperation among Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization.