

Annex-I

*The Honourable Heads of State of the ECO Member States,
Prime Ministers,
Speakers of the Parliaments,
Foreign Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,*

I would like to start my address by expressing the great pleasure I feel in welcoming Your Excellencies to Turkey on the occasion of the Second Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization, ECO.

*Your Excellencies,
The Presidents,*

Prior to the establishment of ECO, RCD contributed to regional cooperation for many years. Later, our organization was given its present name. Meanwhile the three founding members, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan were trying to restructure ECO more effectively, the world order went through a substantial change. The Soviet Union collapsed, and many new Republics were born most of which have special historical ties with the three founding members of the ECO.

While these developments were unfolding, world economic stagnation caused various regional cooperation organizations to opt for greater self-containment and measures of protection.

Looking at the ECO region, we see to the West there is the common market, and to the East, the ASEAN and China's presence as one of the greatest economies of the world as well as Japan. In this context, the eastern part of our region is a candidate to become the world's richest economy in the 2000's. The Gulf Cooperation Council is in a process of rapid development. Meanwhile, "NAFTA" is shaping in the American continent.

The brotherly countries gathered around this table, are in the midst of these developments. In fact, it has often been said that, the RCD by its old name and the ECO by its new name, is an organization that has failed to accomplish outstanding results. As such, does the presence of the new ECO members at the Istanbul Summit hold a meaningful significance. It is my conviction that our meeting highlights the aspirations of our people that could partially be met within the framework of a new ECO. These aspirations generate momentum and shape the political will of the Governments.

Our people will follow closely the accomplishments of the ECO in the near future. Rapid developments throughout the world, and the arising demands of the member countries urge us to take measures rapidly and effectively. Should we fail to embark immediately on these measures, the organization will gradually wither away and lose an historical opportunity.

Today our organization has expanded and grown. In the aftermath of its expansion, it is

now high time to give a profound meaning to our activities by fostering and reinforcing cooperation and institutional structure.

Naturally, we have long term goals which bring about the happiness and welfare of the 300 million inhabitants of our 10 Member Countries. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to establish the required infrastructure and to build a network of telecommunications and express ways, air routes, sea routes and rail roads. To this end, we must create a legal framework and a physical infrastructure which would allow for the free movement of peoples, goods and services among the member countries. It is also necessary to cooperate in setting-up the free market economy system and helping the private sector to serve as the engines of our development. Our historical, cultural and religious ties create an environment conducive to this goal. Naturally, we cannot attain these goals overnight. This is what our people should come to understand. But while doing so, we should also be able to take measures that indicate our determination to attain our goals. We should implement the Plan of Action and the declarations we have adopted.

As Member Countries of the region, we cannot fulfill this task by building protective barriers and by remaining in isolation. This would not be right. We should be in close contact with the regional cooperation organizations and neighbouring countries around us and benefit from their experiences. Our cooperation should not be inward oriented, it should be open to the outside and be oriented towards integration with world economy. ECO should not compete with other regional organizations but be complementary. As Turkey, we owe our development to outward orientation. Turkey is a member of GATT. We have an association agreement with the European Community. We have signed agreements with the member countries of the European Free Trade Zone. We are ready to share our experiences with our brothers, the ECO countries. We are also engaged in such activities within the framework of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

*Excellencies,
The Presidents,*

If we build ECO on solid foundations and build its essential framework, our cooperation will soon have contents. On the one hand, the membership of new countries has brought new dynamism to ECO. We must take advantage of this momentum. On the other hand, as the free market economy gets settled and the private sector develops, trade among our countries will flourish and along with these developments, the creation of infrastructure will have a positive effect. Our trade with other countries will develop, foreign investments in our countries will increase and our development will multiply and accelerate.

The ECO region has all the essential elements to become one of the most prosperous regions of the world with its rich natural resources, trained manpower, deep-rooted culture and tradition. As the leaders of the countries of the region, it is our duty to mobilize our forces to make optimum use of these opportunities. To this end, it is necessary that we clearly explain our expectations from ECO to our people and show them our determination to advance rapidly along this road.

Excellencies, Presidents,

As I have already stated, further development of trade among us is of vital importance

for closer relations. I sincerely believe that it is important for us to indulge urgently into the necessary legal arrangements.

As concrete steps within this framework the first ones that come to mind are promotion and protection of investments, agreements for prevention of double taxation, transit and transport agreements for express ways and railroads, uniform border-crossing formalities and elimination of the unnecessary ones, visa exemptions for businessmen and tourists or facilitating visa procedures.

One issue that I would like to especially stress in this context is the non-tariff barriers on trade. There may be some reasons which appear to be reasonable for the continuation of the present barriers to trade. But we must succeed is not paying attention to these in view of our long term interests. Thus, Turkey has been able to integrate her economy with the world economy. The European Community, incorporating the world's most prosperous peoples, is a concrete example of the virtues of free trade.

Distinguished Presidents,

At the beginning of my address, I said that the private sector is an important dimension of our cooperation.

Our experience with ECO and earlier RCD had, indeed, shown that significant ground could not be covered through economic cooperation and joint ventures with public enterprises. I sincerely believe that preparing the conducive environment for the private sector's creativity, which does not recognize any borders, will give ECO significant dynamism.

In fact, this should be one of the main functions of ECO. The organisation should consider lifting of the its principal tasks in order to develop the private sector and achieve cooperation. With your approval, we could indicate the importance we attach to this subject in one of the documents we will adopt at the end of this meeting and task the Secretariat to prepare a study.

Another point which I would like to, especially, dwell on is energy. Utilization of the rich energy potential of the region in a manner whereby the needs of all the countries of the region are satisfied and extension to international markets become possible is an issue of special importance which leads to the establishment of lasting ties.

I am satisfied that due importance is given to transport in the documents we are going to approve. I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for an initiative taken by the Kazakhstan Government. It has been decided that a meeting of the Ministers of Transport be held in Almaty in October of this year. I would like to bring to your attention that I think it is worthwhile to accelerate the preparations for Almaty in order to allow member countries to formulate their views as soon as possible.

Turkey strongly supports this meeting which is in line with the principle of the Quetta Plan of Action and is ready to do everything she can for success of the meeting.

Now I want to discuss Turkey's position vis-à-vis some important international problems.

The people of Bosnia-Herzegovina who have been living in peace for centuries, are now at war due to extreme nationalist elements. Since the beginning of this war Turkey has objected to the indifference of the international community to the massacre in this Republic. Turkey considers independent, sovereign Bosnia-Herzegovina which is a member of United Nations and possesses territorial integrity as an essential element of stability in the region.

The people of Bosnia Herzegovina who are under attack and are deprived of the right to defend themselves should be helped and the arms embargo should be lifted immediately. This is the first step to be taken to stop the tragedy which is going on in the middle of Europe.

Turkey gives great importance to the continuity of peace and stability in the Caucasus. We deem the preservation of peace in this region as our responsibility. For this purpose Turkey is doing everything possible in order to find solutions through negotiation to the existing problems.

The atmosphere of ambiguity and enmity which has been dominant in our region after the Gulf war must end as soon as possible.

In this context, our neighbour Iraq must be able to resume its position in the international community and the suffering of the friendly people of Iraq must end as soon as possible. For this purpose Iraq must comply with the Resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations. The preservation of the territorial integrity of Iraq is of primary importance to the establishment of continuous peace and stability in our region.

We have followed the confusion and bloodshed in brotherly Tajikistan with great sorrow. We hope that all the disputes including the question of immigrants, will be resolved on the basis of territorial integrity and the principle of the inviolability of borders of this country, as soon as possible. We believe that it will be possible to find a solution based on understanding, tolerance and reconciliation which will encompass the entire Tajik nation. We support the initiatives, present and future, of the Tajik Government in this direction.

We all shared the pride and joy of the heroic Afghan people who regained the freedom of their country. It is our sincere hope that this brotherly member country will be able to establish peace and internal stability as soon as possible. And assert national consensus with the contribution and participation of all the different sections of Afghan community.

Thus, it will be possible for the Afghan people to divert their energies to the reconstruction and development of the country in a spirit of unity and integrity we will continue to support their efforts in this direction.

It is with great sorrow that we witness the suffering of the people of Kashmir. The Kashmir problem should be resolved through peaceful negotiations the establishment of an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation between Pakistan and India is an integral reflection of common sense and realism. We appreciate and support the efforts of brotherly Pakistan in this direction.

The search for a solution to the Cyprus issue is going on. We believe it is possible to find a realist and continuous solution to this problem through free negotiations between the two communities under equal conditions. Turkey supports the cause of the Turkish people of

Cyprus in their struggle for their rights and for justice. We hope that the brotherly Member Countries of ECO will continue to give their support to the Turkish Cypriot community which is an integral part of our region due to their history, culture and geography.

*Your Excellencies,
The Presidents,*

I would like to draw your attention to the importance of regional cooperation and to the mutual interaction of peace and stability and to the role that ECO can play in this context.

I do not see any nation around this table who have serious and irreconcilable differences between them. This is a major advantage for us. I believe that our cooperation will not only strengthen peace and friendship between us but will also contribute to the stability of our region.

This historical Summit may be a turning point in the future activities of ECO. I have great hopes for the future. I sincerely believe that we will be able to create a region equipped with the most modern network of technology, inter linked with railroads, oil and gas pipelines where people live in freedom and prosperity I believe that we will gain the support of our people if we can start to implement the resolutions adopted in this Summit as well as the previous resolutions as soon as possible. For this reason I give all necessary support this organization and I believe you will do the same.

Thank you.

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