

*Annex-VI*

*Your Excellency,  
President Hojjatoleslam  
Akber Hashemi Rafsanjani,*

I deem it a great privilege to represent the Islamic Republic of Pakistan this First Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

It gives me special pleasure to convey to you my dear brother, Hojjatoleslam Akber Hashemi Rafsanjani, the distinguished President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, my warm and sincere felicitations on assuming the chairmanship of this historic Summit.

I am confident that under your inspiring leadership we would achieve our noble objectives. May I assure you Excellency of my delegation's fullest cooperation in the fulfillment of your important responsibilities.

It is our hope that this conference would transform the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) into a dynamic institution which would provide the needed impetus for our entry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as modern and progressive nations.

May I convey our deep appreciation and profound gratitude for the affectionate and heart-warming welcome extended to us by our brothers in the legendary norms of Iranian hospitality, in this beautiful city of Tehran which is steeped in history.

*Mr. Chairman,*

Your inaugural address was remarkable for its clarity of thought and breadth of vision and would be an invaluable source of guidance in our deliberations.

*Excellency,*

We warmly welcome amongst us the distinguished leaders of Central Asian States of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

These states, with which we all enjoy long-standing ties of shared history, common culture and glorious faith have imparted to our organization a new dimension and special significance.

We hope that our organization would soon include the other Central "Asian States". We also look forward to an early political settlement and peace in Afghanistan which would have paved the way for its inclusion in the ECO. Such an expansion would further strengthen our organization, making it a natural geographical and vibrant economic and cultural zone.

*Mr. Chairman,*

The last year has brought into focus a revolution in global affairs, a transformation

without precedent in this century. Dangerous tensions that had prevailed in many regions since the second world war have disappeared. East-West cold war has become a chapter in history. Cooperation and understanding is becoming the order of the epoch. Doctrines of confrontation have lost their relevance and new political and economic imperatives have emerged to alter the fundamentals of global relations.

As East-West confrontation ebbs away and the North-South divide widens, the world is moving in a direction in which many regional organizations are emerging as strong entities in the underpinning of the new International Order. There is a pronounced trend towards the strengthening and consolidation of the Major Economic Groupings in various regions of the world. There is also a heightened realization that regional cooperation can play an increasingly important role in the enhancement of the world economy.

I am convinced that the time was never more opportune and conditions never more conducive to infusing greater efficacy and substance to the ECO which offers limitless potential for cooperation among the governments and peoples of our region. We remain confident that this summit would take bold and far-reaching decisions to expand and deepen our collaboration and decide on ways and means of promoting socio-economic growth. Pakistan, for its part, is fully committed towards the realization of this lofty objective.

*Mr. Chairman,*

The Economic Cooperation Organization must focus on the common vision of our region. It must evolve a forward looking approach. It must develop strategies for meaningful collaboration so that the people of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, as well as the new Central Asian States, can benefit from the emerging opportunities.

The Government of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan have consistently endeavoured to institutionalize political, economic and cultural cooperation among themselves, an objective that is in accord with the wishes of our people. They desire the strengthening of ECO. The addition of new member states would undoubtedly provide greater depth and substance to our cooperation.

*Mr. Chairman,*

We envisage in the ECO the creation of a modern and efficient infrastructure linking not only the member states of the organisation but also providing them access to other areas of the world. The Economic Cooperation Organization would thus be able to forge stronger economic and commercial ties not only amongst the member states but also with the outside world, in a spirit of harmony and mutual benefit.

The ECO must bring about the progressive expansion and diversification of commercial exchanges, the optimum utilization of financial resources, the development of joint infrastructural projects and the promotion of technical cooperation. It must also coordinate, efforts to develop a more efficient and sustained pattern for the acquisition, assimilation, development and transfer of technology between member states. But more than anything else, it must tackle and tackle with urgency, the problems of poverty and underdevelopment. I say this in the firm belief that the success of ECO, Mr. Chairman, will be ultimately judged by the improvement in the quality of life of its people.

*Mr. Chairman,*

A new era of political enlightenment, democratic freedom and respect for human dignity is emerging in most parts of the world. We welcome the relaxation of international tension, the universal movement towards democracy, the upsurge of economic liberalization, the serious pursuit of arms control and renewed respect for the exercise of peoples' right to self-determination.

But in our own region, as the tragedy of Afghanistan subsides, a new and daring chapter of human-freedom and democratic struggle is being written in letters of gold, even in the face of unprecedented repression. The people of Indian-held Kashmir have aroused world's attention to their plight with a renewed struggle for self-determination, a right pledged to them by both Pakistan and India, a right enshrined in solemn resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. The fact that they have been denied this fundamental human right by one party, has not nullified Kashmiri's claim to self-determination, nor have long years of repression weakened the Kashmiri's resolve to continue to struggle for their inherent rights.

The new winds of change blowing across the globe today, have rekindled in them, an indomitable fire to forge their destiny. It is a movement entirely home-grown and spontaneous. What is happening in Kashmir has its roots deep in history, in the occupying powers repression and in arrogant violation of international commitments and pledges.

*Mr. Chairman,*

The recent attempt by the people of Azad Kashmir to cross the line of control in the face of obvious death and destruction, should open the eyes of the world to the determination of the Kashmiri people to regain their freedom. We did our painful duty to prevent the crossing. I must, however, admit that it will be difficult for us to do so again and again. The people of Kashmir cannot be insulted from the winds of change and the spirit of freedom and democracy that are blowing across the globe today. The problem of Kashmir must, therefore, be settled and settled immediately, in accordance with the wishes of people of Kashmir. As new chapters are added to the pain and agony of the Kashmiri people, they look to the free world for support in their just struggle for self-determination. We must not disappoint them.

*Mr. Chairman,*

The valiant Afghan people desire peace in their homeland. The return of peace in Afghanistan is vital to the peace, progress and stability of our entire region. Pakistan has consistently supported all efforts for an early political settlement in Afghanistan. In order to promote such a settlement Pakistan has extended its full support to the convening of an Afghan Assembly to decide on an interim government, adaptable to the Afghan people. We shall facilitate the convening of such a representative assembly and respect its outcome.

*Mr. Chairman,*

We in Pakistan value the new opportunities that the world offers today. These are opportunities that are challenging but extremely rewarding. They demand dynamic responses. They call for initiative and innovation. They promote enterprise. They encourage talent. In the fifteen months that we have been in office, we have done everything to promote free enterprise

in Pakistan. We have invested in infrastructure in roads and highways, in telecommunications and in power generation.

Our economic reforms have resulted in the creation of a more open and liberal economy, fully responsive to the competitive pressures and challenges of today's world. We would be delighted to share our experiences with the ECO member states as we would like to benefit from their achievements.

*Mr. Chairman,*

The Economic Cooperation Organization has embarked on the right course by according high priority to the liberalization of trade amongst member states and the reaction of financial institutions to facilitate economic growth in our region. While there has been some progress, much still remains to be done. Expansion of rail, road and telecommunication links in our region demands our immediate consideration. The development of an efficient communications infrastructure is fundamental to the strengthening of our economic and development that would improve the quality of life of people.

*Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies and  
Distinguished Guests,*

It is my belief that our region has a great future. We have the resources and the expertise. We have the skill and the manpower. All that we need is the will and the determination to succeed. And succeed we will-Insha-Allah.