

**Speech of the Delegation of the Kyrgyz Republic  
at the extraordinary meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers  
of the Economic Cooperation Organization  
(23 September 2016, New York)**

**Dear Colleagues,**

Let me greet all the participants of this meeting and express my gratitude to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif for organizing this event.

Our meeting provides a good opportunity to discuss the prospects for the use of the existing potential of our countries for mutually beneficial regional cooperation within the ECO.

Truly, the ECO has great potential to become an effective instrument of regional integration in the modern world.

However, in assessing the organization's activities over the past period, and determining the prospects for the future, it should be noted that there has been no significant progress in the development of regional integration processes; and we need urgently to identify the cooperative priorities of the Member countries.

I hope that through the joint searching for new opportunities, taking into account modern challenges, that the ECO becomes a real mechanism for economic cooperation in the region and thus the Secretariat's activities will reach a new level.

In this vein, I would like to emphasize the importance of identifying priority areas of cooperation, new ways of effective cooperation, and in view of the new concept "ECO Prospects - 2025," we propose to identify the most important initiatives and projects.

I also would like to note that for Kyrgyzstan the developing of regional infrastructure is a prerequisite for effective intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation in all spheres of cooperation.

In this regard, I emphasize the importance of the functioning of the ECO Trade and Development Bank, as a financial institution, which has the potential to provide financial resources, projects and programs for Member countries.

**Dear participants,**

An important issue on today's agenda is the scale of contributions to the ECO budget. The Kyrgyz Republic regularly pays an annual contribution to the budget of the Organization and at this stage does not consider an increase necessary.

Concerning the personnel issues, the Kyrgyz side confirms its position in support of the candidacy of Mr. Kanan Nazarov from the Republic of Azerbaijan for the appointment as the ECO Deputy Secretary-General from February 2016. At the same time, as you know, the Council of Permanent Representatives

recommended to pass automatically the mentioned position on the Afghan expiration.

At large, there are no objections to this procedure from the Kyrgyz side. However, there are some questions as to the legal aspects of such objection to aforementioned Council decision.

In this context, the Kyrgyz Republic considers it appropriate to discontinue the future use of the terminology "founding members of ECO" and use, without discrimination to any of the ECO member countries, the term "a full-fledged member state of the Organization."

I would like to note that from the 65 members of the Secretariat there is only one staff member from Kyrgyzstan in the middle position and the representative of Kyrgyzstan was not elected to any of the higher positions.

In order that all countries, without exception, make a contribution to the further strengthening of mutual confidence, implementation of the initiatives of the Organization, the Kyrgyz Republic proposes a review of the basic documents of ECO with purpose of creating a clear legal framework and universal procedural rules for all member countries of the Organization.

**Dear participants,**

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that the ECO countries, having a high potential and being in the center of the Eurasian continent, are fully able to meet the challenges facing the Organization.

I am confident that this meeting will demonstrate our common desire to reach the concrete steps in mutually beneficial cooperation.

**Thank you for your attention!**