



## **216<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

# **Report**

*26<sup>th</sup> December, 2016  
ECO Secretariat - Tehran*

## Report

The 216<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting was held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States except Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The ECO Secretary General along with concerned officials of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. The list of participants is enclosed as *Annex-I*.

### **Agenda Item No.1**

#### Adoption of the Agenda

2. The Council adopted the following agenda of 216<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting for deliberations:

#### Agenda

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 216<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 215<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
3. Submission of 27<sup>th</sup> RPC report, Work Programme 2017 and Calender of Events 2017 to the COM for approval.
4. Preparations for 22<sup>nd</sup> COM Meeting and 13<sup>th</sup> Summit:
  - i. Final dates for the COM and the Summit
  - ii. Establishment of the Working Group on Reforms
  - iii. Establishment of the Working Group on Scale of Assessments
  - iv. Establishment of the Working Group on Vision Fund
  - v. Establishment of Working Group for coordination and holding of 22<sup>nd</sup> COM and 13<sup>th</sup> Summit
5. Consideration of recommendations of the Working Group on revision of modalities for Utilization of SSF
6. Permission for starting negotiations for signing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with TEPAV and SESRIC for collaboration on Economic Research and Statistics.
7. Secretariat's budget proposal for the financial year 2017
8. Administrative matters:
  - (a) Recommendations of the Selection Panel
9. Any other business
10. Date of the next CPR Meeting

### **Agenda Item No.2**

#### Adoption of the Draft Report of 215<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

3. The Council adopted the Draft Report of the 215<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting contained in the document ECO/CPR/215/2 (11<sup>th</sup> December 2016) which was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No.CFU/CPR/215 Meeting/2016/1446 dated 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.

### **Agenda Item No:3**

#### Submission of 27<sup>th</sup> RPC Report, Work Programme 2017 and Calender of Events 2017 to the COM for approval.

4. 27<sup>th</sup> Reginal Planning Council (RPC) meeting was held in the ECO Secretariat on 5-8 December, 2016. The Draft Report of 27<sup>th</sup> RPC, Work Programme 2017 and Calender of Events 2017 were shared with the ECO Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No.CFU/27<sup>th</sup> RPC/2016/1461 dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

5. On the query of the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Deputy Secretary General (TC, PERS & CFU) explained about the changed format of the Work Programme 2017 stating that internal meetings are being held in the Secretariat and as per the new format of the Work Programme, the Secretariat is planning to add more columns i.e. "Actions" and "Performances" in the new format of the Work Programme. He said that presently there are only decisions mentioned in the Work Programme and as it advances, the new format will be brought to the notice of CPR aimed at monitoring the performance of the Work Programme.

6. The Council, after deliberations, approved the 27<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme-2017 for its formal approval by COM. However, the Council decided to defer the consideration of Calendar of Events 2017 for deliberations and finalization in the next CPR Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

##### **Preparation for 22<sup>nd</sup> COM Meeting and 13<sup>th</sup> Summit**

7. The ECO Secretariat has been informed by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan that the 22<sup>nd</sup> COM and 13<sup>th</sup> Summit is scheduled to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> February – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 in Islamabad, Pakistan vide Embassy's Note Verbale No. ECO-7/1/2016/31 dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016. The ECO Secretariat has already circulated the said information among the Member States vide its Note Verbale No. CFU/13<sup>th</sup> Summit/2016/1471 dated 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.

8. The Secretary General briefed the Council stating that as the exact dates have been communicated which have already been circulated among the Member States, the Secretariat has started preparations in this regard. In order to discuss road map in detail for the upcoming COM/Summit Meetings, the Secretary General suggested establishment of the following Committees:

##### **Preparatory Committee (PREPCOM) and its Sub-Committees**

For effective preparation of COM and Summit meetings, the CPR may establish the Preparatory Committee (PREPCOM) which will be co-chaired by the current Chair (*Iran*) and the future Chair (*Pakistan*). The PREPCOM will develop draft final outcomes/decisions of the COM/Summit meetings and will be assisted by sub-committees as per following arrangements:

- (i) **PREPCOM**: will work on draft Summit Declaration, ECO Vision Implementation Framework, status of agreements among the Member States, ECO Regional Agencies and Affiliated Bodies, ECO external relations and potential milestones for COM/Summit.
- (ii) **Sub-Committee on Reforms** will develop the draft reform document as Annex to the ECO Vision-2025 document.
- (iii) **Sub-Committee on Vision Fund** will develop the Vision Fund Mechanism envisaged in the draft ECO Vision-2025.
- (iv) **Sub-Committee on Scale of Assessments** will develop the new Scale of Assessments.

*The outcomes of sub-committees will be submitted to PRECOM. The final outcome of PREPCOM will be submitted to CPR well before SOM.*

9. The Secretary General also informed the Council that the ECO Secretariat has already issued Draft Agendas for SOM, COM and Summit and will appreciate receiving early response/comments on these agendas. He also raised a query with the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan that earlier the ECO Secretariat was verbally informed that the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) will be held on 26-27 February

2017, as usually two days are reserved for SOM Meeting in order to complete all the formalities for COM and Summit Meetings. However, in the formal communication received from the Embassy of Pakistan, it mentions only 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017 as the date for SOM meeting.

10. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed that clarification regarding date(s) for holding of SOM meeting will be sought from the capital and the Secretariat will be informed accordingly.

11. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed that due to paucity of time instead of establishing three Committees, one Committee may be established which will cover all the important issues relating to upcoming COM and Summit meetings in Islamabad.

12. The Representatives of Azerbaijan, Kyrgyz Republic and Pakistan supported the idea of establishment of one Committee as all the matters to be discussed for the upcoming COM/Summit meetings are inter-related and can be discussed by one Committee.

13. After deliberations, the Council decided to establish a “Committee” to be co-chaired by the existing Chair (*Iran*) and the future Chair (*Pakistan*) (*names of the Chairmen will be communicated by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan*) to discuss all the issues relating to upcoming COM and Summit meetings in Islamabad. The Council also decided that the first session of the Committee will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 10:00 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. The CPR Chairman requested for active participation by all the Member States in the Committee’s meeting.

#### ECO Awards 2017

14. Under this agenda item, the Representative of the ECO Secretariat briefed the Council about ECO Award 2017 stating that as per the modalities of ECO Awards, approved by the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in May 1998 in Almaty, the ECO Awards are awarded to the Eminent Persons biennially on the occasion of ECO Summit Meetings. He said that the last ECO Awards were granted in 2012 on the occasion of 12<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit. He said that as per the previous record, 7 Member States (except Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan) sent their nominations for ECO Awards 2014 and these can be considered for the upcoming Summit in Islamabad. The Representative said that in case the Member States wish to review, new nominations may be provided by them to the Secretariat by 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017. The Member States were also requested to nominate experts for meeting of the Selection Committee who will give recommendations to the CPR for selection.

15. The ECO Representative also requested the CPR’s approval for grant of \$5000 with a Medallion and Certificate to the winners to be awarded with an additional amount of US\$1000 as cost of boarding and lodging etc. He also sought CPR’s approval for utilization of the budget allocated for the purpose in 2016 to be utilized in the year 2017 for awarding the ECO Awards 2017. An intervention along with all the nominations received from the Member States by the Secretariat were distributed among the delegates attending the CPR meeting.

16. The Council appreciated the briefing and approved the budget of ECO Awards already allocated in the year 2016 to be utilized in the year 2017 for awarding the ECO Awards 2017. The Council also decided 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017, as the deadline for receiving the final nominations for the ECO Awards 2017.

## **Agenda Item No. 5**

### Consideration of Revised Modalities for Utilization of SSF

17. The proposed revised “Modalities for the Utilization of the ECO Special Support Fund” was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat’s Note Verbale No. ADM/EPG/2016/194 dated 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 for the kind consideration of the Member States. The Secretariat did not receive any viewpoints/comments from the Member States. Upon the request of the Iranian delegation during the 213<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting, the revised “Modalities for the Utilization of the ECO Special Support Fund (SSF)” was submitted before the Council in its 214<sup>th</sup> Meeting for deliberation and possible decision. The 214<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting established a Working Group or Special Committee comprising representatives of all ECO Member States to thoroughly discuss the revised “Modalities for the Utilization of the ECO Special Support Fund (SSF)” and come up with a concrete report for its approval in the next CPR Meeting.

18. The established Working Group held three sessions on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> November and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to consider the proposed revised “Modalities for the Utilization of the ECO Special Support Fund (SSF)”.

19. The Council was informed that the Working Group will submit its report regarding “Modalities for the Utilization of the ECO Special Support Fund (SSF)” in the next CPR meeting.

## **Agenda Item No. 6**

### Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with TEPAV and SESRIC for Capacity Building Activities on Economic Research and Statistics through utilizing of available facilities of both Organizations

20. Meeting with the Representatives of TEPAV and SESRIC were held on the margins of Sixth Session of OIC Statistical Commission (5-6 November 2016 in Konya, Turkey), with the consideration to utilize the expertise of the two organizations specialized in Economic Research and policy and taking into consideration that ECO is embarking upon the new Vision-2025 in which economic research in priority areas like trade, transport, energy etc, would be of high importance. Both the Organizations i.e. TEPAV and SESRIC are interested in joint economic research programmes with ECO and have shown willingness to extend collaboration in multiple forms and areas through signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). As per the modalities, the ECO Secretariat has already circulated the Background Papers on both the above mentioned Organizations to the Member States vide its Note Verbale No. PERS/SESRIC&TEPAV/2016/1429 dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

21. Deputy Secretary (TC, PERS & CFU) briefly informed the Council about the above mentioned two Organizations i.e. TEPAV and SESRIC stating that the main expertise of these organizations is in policy based researches. He said that as per modalities, the Secretariat has already circulated the information about the two organizations to the Member States and requested the CPR’s authorization for starting formal negotiations in order to sign MoUs with both the Organizations. On the query by the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Deputy Secretariat General said that while attending the SESRIC Statistical Committee meeting in Konya, sidelines discussions were held with the representatives of these organizations who have shown their willingness to cooperate with ECO Secretariat.

22. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed that the matter has been taken-up with the relevant focal point in Iran and as soon as consultations are finalized in this regard, the Secretariat will be informed accordingly. He further enquired

whether the Secretariat has received any formal communications from these two Organizations for cooperation with the ECO Secretariat.

23. At this juncture, the Secretary General taking the floor said that SESRIC, which is an OIC Organization, has shown its readiness several times to do some research for ECO and suggested that TEPAV and SESRIC can be treated separately. As far as TEPAV is concerned, the Secretary General informed that the President of the Turkish Chamber of Commerce also supported the idea of cooperation between TEPAV and ECO. He further informed that the President of TOBB also shown interest to finance some of the research projects of the ECO from TOBB's reservoirs.

24. The Council deferred the agenda item as some more time was required by the Iranian side for consultation with the focal point and will be taken up in the next CPR meeting.

#### **Agenda Item No. 7**

##### Secretariat's Budget Proposal for the Financial Year 2017

25. The Secretariat has prepared budget proposal for the financial year 2017, which was circulated to the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ACC/Budget/2016/1140 dated 18<sup>th</sup> September 2016 for consideration. The budget proposal for the year 2017 was discussed during the 215<sup>th</sup> CPR. However, on the recommendations of the member countries, it was decided that the Budget Proposal 2017 maybe discussed in a Working Group's meeting before its submission to the next CPR meeting.

26. The Chairman of Working Group informed the Council that the meeting was held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 at the Secretariat to discuss the proposed ECO Budget Proposal 2017 and with consensus of all the delegates who attended the meeting, agreed the Budget proposal for the year 2017, with the increase.

27. Deputy Secretary General (Admn) of ECO Secretariat also informed the Council that after the Working Group's meeting, a Note was received from Tajikistan on the budget and also some clarification about figures which has been responded by the Secretariat accordingly.

28. After deliberations, the Council approved the proposed ECO Secretariat Budget for 2017. The CPR Chairman mentioned that the report of the CPR meeting will be issued and the Member States, who have not attended the CPR and Working Group's meetings, may make their reactions, if any.

#### **Agenda Item No. 8**

##### Administrative Matters

29. On the recommendation of the Selection Panel held on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2016, the Council approved the extension of Mr. Ugur Kilicarslan, (Turkish National), Director for Human Resources & Sustainable Development (Category-I, D2) of the ECO Secretariat effective from 8<sup>th</sup> January 2017 until the nomination of another candidate for the position.

30. As per Article 6.4 of ECO Staff Regulations "*The term of appointment in Category-I shall be 3-years renewable by another term of 3-years with the approval of the Council of Ministers*", the Council asked the ECO Secretariat that, as per practice, it may seek the COM approval through circulation. In case of no objection by any honorable Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States by 7<sup>th</sup> January 2017, the extension will be considered as approved by COM. However, the formal approval will be sought as and when COM Meeting is held

**Agenda Item No. 9**

Any Other Business

31. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed that based on the practice ECO Member States receive reports regarding the events which have been held and attended by the Secretariat. In this regard he said that for the last one year no report about the events attended by the Secretariat has been received. He urged the Secretariat for provision of the same.

32. The Representative of the Transport Directorate of the ECO Secretariat informed about the railway corridor connecting Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI). It was informed that several meetings of the Tripartite Coordination Committee established for construction works as well as other technical issues to operate the route have been held. In the last Committee's meeting, for facilitation, ECO Secretariat provided air tickets to the delegates from the funds of the Project on Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty. It was informed that the Secretariat came up with the initiative to commercialize the route and besides sharing project concept with the enroute countries, IDB Headquarters was also approached for provision of financial resources.

33. To start the project, meeting of KTI Heads of Railways has been scheduled on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at the ECO Secretariat. The Representative requested CPR's approval for allocation of US\$30,000 for the project to facilitate participation of the enroute countries.

34. The Council considered the request of the ECO Secretariat and approved allocation of US\$30,000 from the General Feasibility Purpose Fund.

35. The Secretary General congratulated the authorities of Iran for the establishment of RISCAM Centre and its inauguration last week where with other high level dignitaries he also participated. The Secretary General said that the Centre will help very much in Trade as the Centre will be busy in standardization and other quality issues. He hoped that the Member States will support the Centre.

**Agenda Item No.10**

Date of the next CPR meeting

36. The Council decided to convene its next (217<sup>th</sup>) Meeting on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2017 at 1000 hours at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran.

37. While concluding the meeting, the CPR Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to the distinguished Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States for their participation and valuable contribution in the Meeting.

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:**

- H.E. Dr. Nasser Ahmad Noor, Ambassador
- Mr. Ahmad Haroon Najmpoor, Minister-Counsellor
- Mr. Mohammad Rahim Sarwari, First Secretary
- Dr. Zekria Iakoubi, First Secretary
- Ms. Zahra Badaghi, Administrative Assistant

**The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- Mr. Javid Musayev, First Secretary

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:**

- H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General
- Mr. Abulfazl Mohammad Alikhani, Director of ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Ahmad Saffari, Deputy Director, ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Ahmad Reza Asghari, Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Mansour Salehfard, Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Shahrokh Edrisabadi, Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

**The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:**

- Mr. Aziz Kurumbaev, Counsellor, Charge d'Affaires a.i.
- Mr. Kochorbaev Musa, First Secretary

**The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:**

- Mr. Imran Haider, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Ghulam Hussain, Second Secretary

**Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:**

- Ms. Manizha Rahimi, Third Secretary
- Mr. Saidali Shosaidov, Embassy officer

**The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:**

- Mr. Baris Saygin, Counsellor
- Ms. Sinem Gokce, Third Secretary

**The ECO Secretariat:**

- H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akça, Secretary General
- Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Ahsan Ali Mangi, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Bahodur Rahmonov, Assistant Director (CFU)
- Mr. Muhammad Muqheet Asim Shah, Assistant Director (IR)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Farhad Najafzadeh, Chief Accountant
- Ms. Zukhra Abisheva, Programme Officer (T&C)
- Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Nurgul Duissenova, Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, Persian Interpreter/Translator

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