

# The 4<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers

## Report

( Tehran, 25-26 January , 1994 )

No. COM-4/94/Rpt. (Adopted)

The Fourth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the ECO was held in Tehran on 25-26 January 1994. The meeting was attended by:

- H.E. Mr. Hedayat Amin Arsala, Foreign Minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan,
- H.E. Mr. Hassan Hassanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
- H.E. Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran,
- H.E. Mr. Tuletay Suleymenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
- H.E. Mr. E. Omuraliev, Vice Premier of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan,
- H.E. Mr. Sardar Aseff Ahmad Ali, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan,
- H.E. Mr. Rashid Alimov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan,
- H.E. Mr. Hikmet Cetin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey,
- H.E. Mr. Boris Orazovich Shikhmuradov, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Turkmenistan,
- H.E. Mr. Saidkasimov Saidmukhtar Saidgazievich, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and
- H.E. Mr. Shamshad Ahmad Secretary General of ECO.

The high ranking officials of UN bodies and Regional/International Organizations:

- H.E. Mr. Hamid Al-Gabid, Secretary General of OIC,
- H.E. Mr. James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF,
- H.E. Mr. Mauricio de Maria y Campos, Director General of UNIDO,
- H.E. Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmad, Executive Secretary of ESCAP,
- H.E. Dr. Ahmad Muhammad Ali, President of IDB attended the inaugural session as special guests,
- H.E. Dr. Hussain A. Gezairy, Regional Director of World Health Organization for Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office,
- H.E. Mr. Kamel Morjane, Director for South-West Asia, North Africa & Middle East of UNHCR

also participated in the Opening Session of the Meeting. The list of participants is at *Annex-I*.

### INAUGURATION OF THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM NO. 1):

2. The meeting was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr. Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A copy of his Inaugural Address is attached as

Annex-II. The address of the President was unanimously adopted as the official document of the Fourth Meeting of the Council of Ministers.

#### ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN (AGENDA ITEM No. 2):

3. His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Meeting.

#### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AGENDA ITEM NO. 3)

4. The Council adopted the Agenda which is attached as Annex-III.

#### OPENING STATEMENTS BY THE LEADERS OF THE DELEGATIONS (AGENDA ITEM NO. 4):

5. The Meeting was addressed by the leaders of the participating delegations. Statements provided to the Secretariat are attached as Annex-IV.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (STATEMENT BY ECO SECRETARY GENERAL AND BY REPRESENTATIVES OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS) (AGENDA ITEM NO. 5):

6. The Secretary General of ECO made a statement reviewing the status of ECO's relationship with Regional and the International Organizations. A message by H.E. Mr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations was read to the Council by his representative H.E. Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmad, Executive Secretary of ESCAP. The following high officials of UN Bodies and Regional and International Organizations also made statements:

- OIC, H.E. Mr. Hamid Al-Gabid, Secretary General,
- UNICEF, H.E. Mr. James P. Grant, Executive Director,
- UNIDO, H.E. Mr. Mauricio de Maria y Campos, Director General,
- ESCAP, H.E. Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmad, Executive Secretary,
- IDB, H.E. Dr. Ahmad Muhammad Ali, President,
- WHO, H.E. Dr. Hussain A. Gezairy, Regional Director of World Health Organization for Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office,
- UNHCR, H.E. Mr. Kamel Morjane, Director for South-West Asia, North Africa & Middle East.

Copies of the message and the above statements, which are to be considered as official documents, are attached as Annex-V.

#### APPOINTMENT OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE (AGENDA ITEM NO.6):

7. The Council appointed an open ended Drafting Committee to prepare a report of the Meeting.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON ECO ACTIVITIES (AGENDA ITEM NO.7):

8. The Secretary General presented a report to the Council of Ministers on ECO activities. The Report is a summary of the work done by various ECO organs during the preceding year, and proposals for enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization. A copy of the Report is at Annex-VI.

9. The Ministers recognized that after its expansion from a trilateral entity into a ten member organization, ECO had become a major grouping with a new role in the socio-economic development of its region. In order to enable it to function as an effective international organization, the Ministers agreed on the urgent need to reinforce the ECO Secretariat by providing it with the requisite technical expertise, professionally qualified and experienced personnel and other appropriate resources. In this connection, they also agreed that possibilities be explored for obtaining the services of experts for the Secretariat from other international organizations and/or financing institutions.

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORTS OF THE COUNCIL OF DEPUTIES (AGENDA ITEM No.8):

10. The Council adopted the reports of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the Council of Deputies for the year 1993-1994, except Para 6 of Annex VII and last Para of page 2 of Annexure II of Annex VII of the Report of the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Deputies.

ADOPTION OF THE ECO BUDGET FOR 1994-95 (AGENDA ITEM NO. 9):

11. The Council approved the annual ECO budget for 1994-95 amounting to US\$ 865,255.00 as recommended by the Council of Deputies at its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

12. Regarding the contributions from the new Members, it was decided that they should be exempted from the payment of contributions to the ECO Budget 1994-95. However, it was further decided, that in case any of the new members wishes to make any contribution to the budget during the year 1994-95, such contribution shall be transferred to general reserve fund at the end of the financial year. In this regard, while Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan announced token contribution of US\$ 10,000, US\$ 30,000, US\$ 8,600 and US\$ 8,600 respectively, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan informed that they would let the Secretariat know about their contribution within two weeks.

ADOPTION OF THE AUDIT REPORT FOR 1992-93 (AGENDA ITEM NO. 10):

13. The Council approved the Audit Report for the year 1992-93 together with the recommendation made by the Council of Deputies. While appreciating the work carried out by the Auditors, the Council noted that the paragraphs 4 and 5 of their report was not in conformity with their function stated in the ECO Financial Regulations.

#### REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF RPC (AGENDA ITEM NO. 11):

14. The Council adopted the report of the fourth meeting of the Regional Planning Council held in Tehran on 15-18 January 1994, with the following amendments/decisions:

- a) The Council agreed that during 1994 only one meeting of the Committee on Preferential Tariff Arrangements shall be held. Thereafter the Committee shall meet according to the requirements of the Protocol.
- b) Regarding the Establishment of ECO Trade & Development Bank and the ECO Reinsurance Company, it was agreed that the issue shall be dealt with under Agenda Item No. 12.
- c) The Council approved the draft Terms of Reference for the three Experts to be provided by the Islamic Development Bank in the Transport and Communications Sectors.
- d) The Council agreed to change the number of EGMs from three to five under the CESCC vide para-72 of the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Planning Council.
- e) The Council considered the draft Calendar of Events for 1994-95 as recommended by the Regional Planning Council and, after making some amendments/modifications, approved it which is placed at Annex-VII.
- g) The delegation of Afghanistan desired to put on record with reference to paragraphs 61-62 of the Report of the Fourth Meeting of the RPC concerning the Committee for Agricultural Cooperation, their reservation regarding joining the Buffer Zones project. According to the Afghan delegation this project would be disadvantageous for their traditional exports to ECO Member States and would amount to restricting free trade.
- h) The Council approved the proposal made by the Committee for Transport and Communications Cooperation that 1994-2004 should be declared as "The Decade for Transport and Communications for ECO Region". The Council directed that necessary steps be taken in this regard.

#### REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ECO INSTITUTIONS (AGENDA ITEM NO. 12):

##### A) ECO TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BANK

15. The Council approved the Articles of Agreement of the ECO Trade & Development Bank to be established in Istanbul. The Council decided that a techno-

economic study on the Bank be conducted by independent Consultants to be appointed by common accord. The Consultant would produce a report on the viability of the project by July 31, 1994. The Council further decided that the Articles of Agreement would be amended, if it is deemed necessary, in the light of the study conducted by the Consultants and will be signed by the relevant Governments thereafter.

B) ECO SHIPPING COMPANY

16. The Council noted that this subject has been dealt with by the RPC the report of which has been adopted under Agenda Item No.11.

C) ECO REINSURANCE COMPANY

17. The Council of Ministers reviewed the progress on the establishment of the ECO Reinsurance Company in Karachi. The Council decided to wait for clarification from the Turkish side regarding their participation in the project. The Turkish side agreed to give their response to the Secretariat by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1994. The Islamic Republic of Iran have reserved its right to response the same. Thereafter, the implementation of the project would be conditional on the outcome of a new techno-economic feasibility study to be undertaken by experts nominated by the Member States.

D) ECO AIRLINES

18. The Council noted that this subject has been dealt with by the RPC the report of which has been adopted under Agenda Item No. 11.

E) ANY OTHER INSTITUTIONS

19. The Council noted that no other project proposal for new ECO Institutions has evolved to the extent of consideration by the Council of Ministers at this stage.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
(AGENDA ITEM NO. 13):

20. The Ministers appreciated Secretary General's efforts in establishing relations with international organizations and expressed satisfaction at the conclusion of Agreements for cooperation with various agencies and organizations. In this connection, they urged the Secretary General to continue his efforts to further develop cooperation with international organizations, agencies and institutions with a view to benefiting from their sources of information, experience as well as for projecting ECO as a prestigious, forward looking and dynamic international organization.

21. The Council expressed satisfaction over the progress made in establishing cooperative relationship with regional and international organizations. The Council, while noting with appreciation the efforts being made by the Secretariat in this regard,

desired that the pace of expanding ECO's relationship with other organizations should be steady and gradual.

22. The Council also welcomed a detailed briefing by the Secretary General reviewing the status of ECO's relationship with regional and international organizations during the year 1993. A copy of the report of the Secretary General is at Annex-VIII. The Council further desired that the possibility of establishing relationship with ADB and EBRD may also be explored by the Secretariat.

#### ADOPTION OF THE REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF (AGENDA ITEM NO. 14)

a) Meeting of the Transport Ministers in Almaty:

23. The Council while adopting the Outline Plan for the Development of Transport Sector prepared by the Transport Ministers of the ECO Member countries on 25-27 October, 1993 in Almaty, Kazakhstan and the amendments proposed by the Committee for Cooperation in the Field of Transport and Communications for incorporation in the Outline Plan, agreed to also add the route of Astra (Azerbaijan Republic) – Astra (Islamic Republic of Iran) – Rasht – Qazvin in para 4.2.3 of the Outline Plan.

b) Meeting of ECO Health Ministers in Tehran

24. The Council reviewed and adopted the report of the ECO/UNICEF/WHO Health Ministers Meeting which was held in Tehran on 22-24 January 1994.

25. The Council agreed that the governments of the member states issue the necessary directives to the concerned national authorities for follow up action on the "ECO GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD CHILDREN SUMMIT GOALS" and the "CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD".

26. With reference to paragraph 12 of the ECO guidelines for implementing World Children Summit Goals and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Council agreed to undertake the provision of safe corridors for children affected by war and civil strife in and outside the ECO region.

27. With reference to paragraph 15 of the guidelines document, the Council observed that in view of their decision to create a new Committee under the title of "Committee for Cooperation in the Field of Environment and Health", the follow up action be taken by this Committee.

28. The Council took note of the "ECO PLAN OF ACTION FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN TOWARDS THE YEAR 2000" and recommended that the plan be taken into consideration by the member states while preparing and implementing their National Plans of Action in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

29. The Council welcomed the document titled "FRAMEWORK FOR ECO COOPERATION IN HEALTH SECTOR" and adopted the report of the Consultative Meeting of the ECO Health Ministers also held in Tehran on 23 January 1994.

30. The Council decided that starting in 1994, cooperation in health sector with priority to child protection and health be included in ECO's main areas of cooperation, ways and means of cooperation be explored in line with the Framework Document and the matter be dealt with by the "Committee for Environment and Health" which is to be created as per the decision of the Council of Ministers.

31. The Council unanimously agreed to the proposal of the Executive Director of UNICEF to refer the report of the ECO/UNICEF/WHO Health Ministers meeting to the forthcoming ECO Summit for endorsement.

32. The Council also accepted with appreciation a proposal from UNICEF to hold ECO/UNICEF/WHO Seminars/Workshops on:

- i) Iodization of Salt IDD in Turkmenistan,
- ii) Oral Rehydration Therapy in Turkey,
- iii) Immunization in Uzbekistan,
- iv) Breastfeeding in Pakistan,

and directed the ECO Secretariat to include them in 1994 Calendar of Events and work out the necessary arrangements with the host countries, member states and sponsoring international agencies.

#### ECO AWARD (AGENDA ITEM NO. 15):

33. The Council noted that the Council of Deputies had deliberated on the modalities of the ECO Award in their several meetings held during the year and directed the Council of Deputies that these deliberations be completed during a reasonable time.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 16):

34. The Council decided that for future meetings, with duration of each opening statement should not be more than 15 minutes.

35. With reference to Para 6 of Quetta Plan of Action and Para 20 of the Report of the Third Meeting of the Council of Ministers held in Quetta, the Council decided that whereas the principle established by the Ministers on requiring participation of minimum four Member States to launch new ECO projects, stands valid, this restriction be disregarded for the ECO Trade and Development Bank, ECO Reinsurance Company, ECO Airline and ECO Shipping Company.

36. The Council observed that in order to generate more public interest in ECO activities in the new Member States, some of the ECO meetings and events may also

be held in these States. Appreciating the financial and logistical difficulties of holding such events in the new Member States, the Secretariat suggested that they may acquire conference equipment like portable SIS equipment etc. for loan to these states for holding such meetings. The Council recommended that the Council of Deputies may examine the matter in detail and submit their recommendations to the Council of Ministers.

37. The Council decided that the proposals contained in the statements of the leaders of the delegations of the Council of Ministers and also the heads and representatives of the international/regional organizations be considered by the Council of Deputies in its next meeting.

38. The Council decided that the following topics be transferred from the area of responsibility of the Committee for Cooperation in the Field of Infrastructure and Public Works:

- Rural Development – to be transferred to CAC,
- Conservation and Regeneration of Historic Cities – to be transferred to CESSC

and the name of the Committee be modified as the “Committee for Cooperation in the Field of Environment and Health”.

39. Accordingly, this Committee would take follow up action on the outcome of the ECO Health Ministers Meeting, as well as the remaining subjects in the scope of work of CCIPW, i.e. Environment and Urban Development.

40. The Council of Ministers noted the recommendation of the Pakistan delegation that according to Article XXIX of the Treaty of Izmir the ECO Budget should be centralized and payment of salaries etc., of the Secretariat staff should be made from a centralized fund. The Council agreed that this matter which pertained to the functioning of the Secretariat should be referred for further study by the Council of Deputies.

#### DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM NO. 17):

41. The Council decided to hold its Fifth Meeting in Turkmenistan on 21-23 January, 1995.

#### ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (AGENDA ITEM NO. 18):

42. The Council of Ministers unanimously adopted the Report of its Fourth Meeting.

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO THE CHAIR (AGENDA ITEM NO. 19):

43. The Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.



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