

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Council of Ministers

Opening Statement of H.E. Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister of Foreign Affairs

( Tehran, 22-23 May , 1991 )

*Annex-IV*

### In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

*Your Excellency Mr. Ishin Chelbi,  
State Minister of Economic Affairs of Turkey,  
Your Excellency Mr. Akram Zeki,  
Secretary General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan,  
Your Excellency Mr. Salari,  
Secretary General of ECO,  
Distinguished Guests,*

It is my great pleasure to welcome once again distinguished and dear guests to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Islamic Republic of Iran is honoured to hold the first ministerial council after the completion of legal formalities of amending the Izmir Treaty in the capital city of Iran, which geographically is the seat of ECO and the center of this fraternal cooperation.

At a time when regional and international cooperation has become unavoidable, ECO has been recognized as good example of the will for the enhancement of cooperation in this sensitive part of the world. In 1985, Pakistan and Turkey welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to revive this organization in a new form. During the past six years our three countries worked together in order to remove all obstacles and create a new arrangement in regional cooperation away from the influence of foreign powers. Following the meeting in Islamabad last year during which the Izmir Treaty was amended, ECO appeared in a new framework, proportion to the expectations of our Muslim nations. Now I have the honour to announce that this ministerial council in Tehran between Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey will prepare the groundwork for extensive cooperation in different fields including agriculture, trade and economic cooperation, telecommunication, transport, energy, science, education, cultural exchanges, industrial and technical collaboration as well as in infrastructural and general areas of cooperation.

The main pillar of such extensive cooperation is the solidarity of Muslim people of the three countries that relies upon spiritual, cultural, religious and historical values.

With this positive background, we are duty bound to use all our energy to provide welfare prosperity and progress of Muslim people in this region.

During the past six years the High Council, the Regional Planning Council, and Council of Deputies each held five meetings. Technical committee in their meetings examined the areas of cooperation. In this past years, positive steps were also taken to serve these objectives, e.g. the establishment of an Insurance Center in Karachi, Reinsurance Pool in Istanbul, a common Chamber of Commerce, custom preferential tariffs

arrangements, south and West Asia as Postal Union (SWAPU) well as the proposal for the establishment of a development bank for ECO and performing studies for the implementation of joint industrial projects. Hence, I deem it necessary to express our thanks to the efforts of the authorities of the three countries, especially those of Mr. Salari, distinguished Secretary General of ECO, whose persistent effort, have given a new shape to the activities of these organizations.

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,*

Although as a result of these efforts new horizons have been appeared for the expansion of regional cooperation, appeared for the expansion of regional cooperation, regarding the recent changes in the world and the need for further cooperation among the Third World countries particularly the Muslim nations, we believe that these developments are not sufficient enough, while we appreciate the endeavors that have been made so far. With an area of about 3,225,000, square kilometers, and a population of 220,00,000 million countries of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey constitute a great power in the region, whose borders face Europe in the west, China in the east, the Persian Gulf in the south and Central Asia in the north. Climatic diversity in this vast region is unique, and more important are the historical, cultural, and religious bonds that link our three countries. Under such a condition, we believe that the activities that have been conducted so far within the framework of ECO are considered a prelude to this beginning. This organization enjoys both the capability to grow in our countries and the potential to provide the groundwork for an all out cooperation in the regional Islamic countries, thus leading to the formation of a common Islamic market.

Following the recent development at international and regional levels, the need for the affinity and self-reliance among the Third World countries especially Islamic ones is felt more than ever. In this regard, ECO can be a center for more amity and self-sufficiency among the Muslim countries.

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests*

Recent international development showed that from now on, adopting policies such as negative balance, positive symmetry, encores to desirable strategic position of blocks can no more be effective for the Third World Countries as they were in the past. Internationally powerful and rich countries through compromises, either real or tactical, are trying to impose new colonialism on the world. Introducing issues such as understanding instead of confrontation, new world order and so forth are directed only towards the benefits of the superpowers and powerful countries of the world, and their final objective is more political, economic, and cultural domination on the world, especially on the Third World and Islamic countries.

Under these circumstances, the need for affinity and cooperation among the third world countries, especially Islamic states is felt more than ever, The Islamic Republic of Iran, based on the principles of its foreign policy for amity with neighboring, Islamic, and the

Third World countries is prepared to expand its cooperation with the regional Islamic countries in the context of ECO, and is confident that it will enjoy the support of the friendly and brotherly countries of Pakistan and Turkey to this end.

*Excellencies,  
dear guests,*

Promotion of the High Council of ECO to Ministerial Council that the Islamic Republic of Iran has the honour to be the host of its first session, is indicative of the will of the three countries for further expansion of ECO activities. I am sure that with the cooperation and collaboration of Pakistani and Turkish colleagues, this session will end in success. Iranian and Turkish heads of state in their recent meeting in Ankara, considering the rapid international and regional developments, emphasized on ECO's more dynamism.

They had useful exchange do views in this connection from which Pakistani officials were duly informed. In the view of aforesaid talks and the satisfaction expressed and the atmosphere of good understanding existing among the three member states, the Islamic Republic of Iran proposes that in present session the grounds for holding ECO summit be discussed for submitting an especial proposal.

At the end, once more I welcome Turkish and Pakistani brothers and pray to the Almighty God for the success, good health and happiness of the Muslim people of Pakistan and Turkey.