

The 1st Council of Ministers

Opening Statement of H.E. Mr. Isin Celebi, Minister of State, Rep. of Turkey

(Tehran, 22-23 May , 1991)

Annex-VI

DEVLET BAKANLARI SAYIN ISIN CELEBI' NIN ECO BAKANLAR KONSEYI TOPLANTISINDA YAPACAGI KONUSMA

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by expressing the Turkish. Delegation's warm thanks to the Iranian Government for the generous hospitality they have extended on the occasion of this Council meeting. I am sure that this meeting in Teheran will constitute important steps in our future efforts to intensify cooperation among our three brotherly countries. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the esteemed Secretariat for the valuable preparations it has accomplished.

Mr. Chairman,

We are very much pleased to note that the ECO organs have started functioning smoothly after an interval of three years. It has been most delightful to observe the revitalization of our organization since the conclusion of the Islamabad Protocol which I had the privilege to sign it. We are confident that our Organization will prove much more effective in the future, now that the legal difficulties we experienced in the past have been settled for good. On this occasion, I deem it useful to underline, once again, our full support to the aims and objectives of the ECO, contained in the amended Treaty of Izmir.

Mr. Chairman,

This Council meeting is taking place at a time of historic developments in our region. Furthermore, there have been dynamic changes in the world economy. In view of current regional and global circumstances, close cooperation in our countries has become all the more crucial. My Government attaches great importance to the further development of economic and trade relations with Pakistan and Iran, by taking into account the close historical ties as well as the advantages stemming from geographical proximity.

We believe that the Economic Cooperation Organization constitutes a promising framework of collaboration to bring about solutions to our region's pressing economic problems. With the success of the ECO, we can raise hopes not only for continued prosperity but also for lasting peace and stability in our region.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an imperative need to pursue new economic policies and approaches within ECO. The experiences of the 1970's and 1980's have proven the importance of

liberal trade policies for development. During the last decade, my country implemented comprehensive structural adjustment programs. We created conditions for the free play of market forces, adopted an exports led growth model 1, liberalized our trade regime, introduced realistic exchange rates and reduced the role of the public sector. Our economy went through a rather painful but highly successful and promising process.

In this respect, understandings reached by our Heads of States during their bilateral consultations on various recent occasions, call for special attention. As is known, our Heads of States had agreed upon the need for increased trade and circulation of services and capital in the ECO region. They had also highlighted the need for the encouragement of our private sectors for joint ventures. It is clear that we have to pay due respect o these understandings, if we want to enhance the performance of our organization in the future. We should also start putting these policy approaches into practice by establishing the necessary infrastructure for closer economic, trade and industrial relations.

The strong desire for close cooperation which prevailed during the recent meetings of the council of Deputies and Regional Planning Council has been very encouraging. These meetings ensured the preparation of realistic programmes for the future activities of our organization. In the course of our deliberations for the next two days, we shall be able to examine the recommendations contained in the reports of the Deputies and the Regional Planning council, and give our consent to them. Moreover, we shall also be in a position to adopt directives on certain specific issues. I am sure that the decisions which we shall take in this Council, will further contribute to the effectiveness of the ECO, in the period ahead.

In this connection, I also find it useful to bring to your kind attention the resolutions and the directives related to the working methods which were adopted at the Council meeting in 19988 in Ankara. We believe that these working methods need to be further improved by our Council by taking into account the prevailing new conditions and the expectations from the Organization.

In the past, we have experienced excessive increase in the number of activities and working groups in the Technical Committees. In our view, there is no place for such proliferation of activities and working groups in an efficient organization. We have to avoid the repetition of past mistakes by concentrating our future efforts only on realistic and feasible projects. We have to refrain from establishing new sub-groups, unless there is an absolute necessity. The technical committees should be given the task of becoming major driving force in the implementation of the projects among the three member countries.

We expect that according to the Calendar of Meetings/events, these committees would initiate measures to undertake effectively and expeditiously the tasks assigned to them in the fulfillment of ECO objectives. Given the necessary political will, cooperation among our three countries in the fields of finance, insurance, agriculture, shipping,

trade, energy, infrastructure, technology
culture etc. can be, increased manifold.

tourism and

Mr. Chairman,

Today, we embark upon the journey of strengthening mutual cooperation with renewed vigour. It is our earnest hope that the avoidable complexities of the past would not be repeated. The ECO already has a sound legal basis and organizational structure- to make it a truly effective vehicle for progress. Pakistan fully supports the view expressed by His Excellency President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran, during his recent visit to Turkey that the ECO is the right forum for economic cooperation among Islamic states. These views are happily shared by the leaders of Turkey and Pakistan. We are confident that ECO can play a dynamic role in meeting fresh challenges. It must

develop strategies for fruitful collaboration so that our peoples can grasp and exploit fully the opportunities that we encounter on the road ahead.

Mr. Chairman,

We meet at an important juncture in the life of ECO. The objectives we hope to achieve have a direct bearing, on the socioeconomic advancement of our three countries. The decisions we take at this meeting will be instrumental in determining the

In this respect, the work expected from the Secretariat will also be more demanding. It will need to be more efficient in the coordination of activities in the technical committees, and be more effective in the preparation and submission of reports on a timely basis. Furthermore, it will have to ensure full compliance with the resolutions and directives adopted by the councils. We are confident that under the able leadership of our distinguished Secretary General, the ECO Secretariat will fulfill its functions, to the best of its ability.

Last but not least, we attach great importance to the registration of the amended Treaty of Izmir with the United Nations, in order to render our organization a wider international personality. It is time for the Secretariat to initiate and complete the necessary proceedings in this area. We are prepared to cooperate with the Secretariat on this matter, if needed.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our confidence that our efforts in this Council meeting will constitute an important step in the establishment of a more effective ECO in the future. We are determined to conclude this Council with encouraging results and renewed spirit of cooperation.

Thank you

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