

## **The Informal COM Meeting**

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Ravan Farhadi, Permanent Representative of the Islamic State of Afghanistan to the UN

( UN - New York, 02 October, 2003 )

*Annex-VI*

*Excellencies,*

We have broadened our relations with our neighbours, including Iran and Pakistan and now our economic relations are being broadened.

In addition to that Afghanistan is having assistance of friendly countries and also neighborly countries and also the assistance of some other countries. Road building is very important for Afghanistan because as you know it is the missing link between the north and south and east and west and in both cases. It is very fortunate that we have the assistance of so many countries.

So road from Kabul to Kandahar and Herat is being built. I hope it will be over by the end of year. Road to Sala'ang is also actively being rebuilt. Sala'ang is a link not only between north and south of Afghanistan but also north and south of Asia because it will play a great role in the transit trade. Afghanistan which was only a land locked country, now is becoming a transit country because it will provide transit facilities to Central Asia towards Pakistan and Iran. Therefore, the historical role of Afghanistan will be re-established in the near future, hopefully.

I am thankful to the Ambassador Kazekhanov of Kazakhstan to mention the Almaty Declaration. This Declaration I hope that every body will read it because it is taking into consideration because it is really reflecting many ideas which were existing in the mind of the ECO members and it is now being put in text and that text is very valuable. It is much better than all the earlier texts which existed and to be very helpful for all of us.

As far as the assistance to Afghanistan is concerned of course there are so many institutions which are taking care of that. World Bank and the Government of the United States and also Government of Japan are also helping; but, what is important for us is the role of our neighbours and ECO. With ECO our future is linked. I hope that quorum will be completed and there will be a decision.

On the other hand I am sure that all what is being done in case of Afghanistan will be parallel and will be integrated to what is done from elsewhere for Afghanistan and I hope that Afghanistan of tomorrow, the coming years, will be a better element of ECO than it was upto now because of the tragedy we have been encountered.

Thank you very much.