

The Informal COM Meeting

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Nasrullah Kamyab, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN

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Annex-VIII

*Your Excellency the Chairman
Excellencies,*

It is great pleasure for me to be here in the Informal meeting of ECO Council of Ministers and to share views and ideas on our cooperation within the framework of Economic Cooperation Organization. Let me seize this opportunity to thank the Government of Kyrgyzstan for arranging and hosting this important gathering.

I would like to welcome the H.E. Ambassador Narbayev the new Secretary General of ECO and wish him every success in realization of the goals and objectives of our organization. I am sure that our deliberation here will lead in each part fruitful and useful results in fostering and enhancing our cooperation in ECO.

Mr. Chairman,

Since our last meeting in New York the world has experienced many changes and deep developments thus accelerating new trends in international relations. Like any other region the ECO region has also been affected seriously by these developments during the last year.

Considering the situation of international economy and challenges facing developing countries and countries with economies in transition and also with regard to the importance of regional arrangements for progressive and appropriate integration in the international economy the role of regional organizations is increasing. These organizations have a decisive role in creation and institutionalization of the international trade regimes that are effecting on the process of globalization. Considering that different interests and positions of developed countries on one hand and those of the developing countries on other, it is obvious that latter can benefit from regional organizations which is an effective instruments to address to their common interests during the complicated process of globalization.

It seems that ECO as a regional economic organization is in the position to take coordinated stance in international economy. Should ECO play a desired role in international arena the organization is required to becoming more efficient in streamlining its activities. It is necessary to explore proper mechanism for such an objective. Fortunately, approval of the establishment of EPG in the 13th meeting of Council of Ministers has been a timely decision in this regard. We expect EPG to hold its meetings at the earliest possible and come up with good and constructive proposals. We think there is an urgent need for having a continued supervision on the activities of ECO in order to keep pace with international economic trend.

The first decade of ECO was the decade of institutionalization during which the basic documents and foundation for cooperation were laid down. We expect that during the second decade the approved documents and decisions come into force for further realization of the objectives and goals stipulated in the Treaty of Izmir. I think we have enough material and it is now high time for implementation of our much desired plans for cooperation among the ECO member states. Expansion of intra and inter-regional trade is a considerable challenge for our organization to achieve a desired share of international trade. Taking proper measures and mechanisms are essential in this regard.

Expansion of trade required necessary infrastructure for free movement of capital, goods and services in the ECO region. Signing of ECOTA by five member states during Second Meeting of the Commerce Ministers is an important and appropriate step in this line. We may ask remaining countries to accede to this Agreement. It is expected that this important Agreement would enter into force as soon as possible.

Transit is another important issue in the ECO region. Exploring the bottlenecks and solving the custom related hindrance of the transit in ECO region is a very important issue. Different rates of transit fees and lack of implementation of the Agreements on Facilitation of Transit in ECO region is a problem which needs serious attention and proper solution. Today assessment of development programme based on environmental concern is viewed as a vital task that should be pursued persistently through harmonious regional efforts. The adoption of the Plan of Action regarding the environment degradation in the First meeting of ECO Ministers of Environment, held in Tehran is considered as a timely response to the on-going challenges in our region.

Introduction of an integrated approach to curb the drug trafficking, empowerment of women, aiming to promote women's participation in the economic activities of ECO, lack of implementation of Islamabad Declaration on Agriculture Cooperation are issues of great importance that should be seriously followed by the organization.

Finally, Mr. Chairman! I hope that through serious efforts of the new ECO Secretary General and your good offices we can achieve success in materialization and goals of our organization for the welfare of the people of our region.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.