

Statements made by the Heads of delegation of:

- 1) The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (*English version*)
- 2) The Republic of Azerbaijan (*Russian version*)
- 3) The Islamic Republic of Iran (*English version*)
- 4) The Republic of Kazakhstan (*English version*)
- 5) The Kyrgyz Republic (*Russian version*)
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**Statement by Honorable Noorullah Delawari, Advisor to the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and CEO of the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency at the ECO 20<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council Meeting  
Antalya, February 16-18, 2010**

**Excellency Chairman,  
Honourable Secretary General, Mohammad Yahya Maroofi,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to head the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the ECO 20<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council Meeting, hosted by the Government of the Republic of Turkey in the beautiful city of Antalya.

Please allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for their warm hospitality extended to us and for the excellent arrangements made with the cooperation of the Economic Cooperation Organization Secretariat.

Let me also congratulate you Mr. Chairman for your election as the chairman of the 20<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council Meeting.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Just less than twenty days back on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2010, We witnessed the holding of a significant international gathering in London entitled “*Afghan Leadership, Regional Cooperation, International Partnership*”, an opportunity through which the government of Afghanistan shared with the international community the policies and objectives outlined in H.E. President Karzai’s inaugural speech dated November 19, 2009 along with concrete plans and recommendations on five interdependent areas of security, reconciliation and reintegration, good governance, economic development and regional cooperation.

In the conference, among our top demands, we emphasized the need for working more effectively towards greater regional engagement in addressing the regional needs and challenges, an issue which was earlier outlined by the participants of the Regional Summit Meeting held in Istanbul on January 26, 2010.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Our region, plagued with numerous challenges, including terrorism, extremism, narcotics and organized crimes, is in dire need of effective regional cooperation to address these challenges as well as to provide growth and development opportunities for our countries in the region.

Afghanistan on its part, while striving to restore its historic role as a land-bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and East Asia through increased trade and transit of goods, services and peoples, is committed to share the benefits its centrality with countries in the region. Three meetings of the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) in Kabul (2005), New Delhi (2006) and Islamabad (2009) have identified some effective and beneficial areas of regional cooperation with the centrality of Afghanistan. The next meeting of the RECCA which is scheduled to take place in Turkey this year, will further help us move forward to this end.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We attach special significance to our membership in the Economic Cooperation Organization and believe that given the huge resources and economic potential existed in the region, the organization can play a significant role in addressing the challenges and needs of our region as well as in helping Afghanistan benefit from regional cooperation opportunities in different areas of trade, transport, infrastructure, energy, agriculture, health, counter-narcotics, human resource development etc.

In this connection, enhancement of regional trade through liberalization and integration of economies is of utmost importance in providing economic opportunities for our region. The Government of Afghanistan is committed to pursue trade liberalization and expansion, and believes that the implementation of the ECO Trade Agreement helps us move forward towards establishing a Free Trade Area in the region.

Strengthening the role of private sector in regional projects and promoting investment opportunities in the region need to be pursued more effectively. The Government of Afghanistan is striving to provide opportunities for private sector development and is exploring ways to expand the scope of public private partnerships particularly to address infrastructure constraints.

We believe that the Economic Cooperation Organization's activities in the areas of trade promotion and facilitation, investment promotion and private sector development need to be further intensified and Afghanistan on its part, is trying to have greater engagement in the Organization's activities in the said areas.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to host the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade in April / MAY this year. The Meeting will be a good opportunity to discuss a variety of issues pertaining to trade promotion and facilitation in our region.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The creation of regional infrastructure for energy and transportation is another critical factor to the sustainable economic growth in the region. As we have long argued, Afghanistan can act as a great hub for energy cooperation between energy rich Central Asia and energy deficit South Asia and projects such as CASA 1000 which includes four of the ECO member states and TAPI which includes three of the ECO member states, if completed, can be considered as excellent examples of energy cooperation in our region.

Besides, extension of regional railways to Afghanistan and through Afghanistan to other countries can help both Afghanistan and the region to benefit more effectively from the economic resources and economic cooperation opportunities in the ECO region.

Afghanistan hosted the First Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on Feasibility Study for railway route from China along Tajikistan to Afghanistan and through Afghanistan to Iran, Turkey and Europe on July 12-13, 2009 in Kabul and we hope that the project will be pursued more seriously by all countries along the route.

I am glad to inform that the construction of Hiratan-Mazar-e-Sharif railway, as one of the important railway segments in Afghanistan, started on January 22<sup>nd</sup> this year by the National Railway UTY of Uzbekistan and with financial aid from the Asian Development Bank and is planned to be completed by November this year.

I hope that further implementation of the TTFA will provide more cooperation opportunities in the area of transport among member states.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

Over 80% of the population of Afghanistan lives in rural communities and hence, food security and agricultural productivity is of highly importance for us. Improved research and technology will help increase agricultural production and improve food security. Afghanistan, while engaging actively in the activities of the ECO Seed Association, is expecting to further benefit from the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security especially from the technical Cooperation Program on Strengthening the Seed Supply.

We are pleased that the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the ECO Seed Association is going to be hosted by Afghanistan in May this year.

Natural disaster management is another important area of cooperation among the member states. Just one week back, on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010, a series of avalanches in Salang Pass area in Afghanistan killed 172 and injured 137 people. This sad incident is indicative of the scale of vulnerability to natural disasters in Afghanistan as well as of the huge challenges and needs of the country in management of natural disasters.

As it has been emphasized in different ECO-related occasions including in the 10<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit Meeting, we need greater regional cooperation in management of

natural disasters and it will not be possible, unless effective programs are developed and implemented within the organization in this regard.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We appreciate the ECO's participation in the reconstruction of our country through the Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan. The Organization has already approved four of our proposed projects, two of which are in different phases of implementation and the other two are to be started soon. We hope that the organization will approve more of our proposed projects in the near future.

The Government of Afghanistan is committed towards the Organization's objectives and is taking serious steps to further involve in the activities of the ECO Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions.

We have been able to host a number of important ECO events in 2009 and is determined to host more of the Organization's events in the current year, to some of which I referred earlier.

Let me inform that per the declaration of the third meeting of the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan which was held in Islamabad on May 13-14, 2009, the Centre for Regional Cooperation (CRC) has recently been established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan with the aim of coordinating regional cooperation activities of different line ministries. It will also work as the RECCA Secretariat and will be responsible for organizing training programs for government officials dealing with regional cooperation issues. The Center will help Ministry of Foreign Affairs and all line ministries to better follow up on Afghanistan's commitments within the regional organization especially the Economic Cooperation Organization. We look forward to effective partnership between the Center and the Organization.

It is my earnest conviction the ECO Regional Planning Council, as an excellent opportunity before us to review and streamline the activities of the organization, can have an important role in identifying more concrete and beneficial areas of cooperation with the aim of benefiting more effectively from the economic resources of the ECO region.

In the end, let me wish the Meeting fruitful deliberations, and all member states, successful efforts in implementing the decisions of the Meeting.

Thank you,

**Statement of H.E. Borghei, vice and Deputy Foreign Minister and Care taker for  
Economic Affairs**

**At**

**The 20<sup>th</sup> ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)  
Antalya, Turkey**

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

**His Excellency Mr. Chairman**

At the outset and on behalf of Islamic Republic of Iran delegation, I would like to extend my congratulation to you for being elected as the chairman of the 20<sup>th</sup> ECO Regional Planning Council.

I am confident that under your leadership, some instrumental solutions will be offered for expansion of regional cooperation and important decisions will be adopted to achieve objectives of the Organization.

I also wish to express my gratitude thank the government and people of the Republic of Turkey for their warm and sincere hospitality and thank the Secretary and his colleagues for making efforts to organize this meeting.

I hope the deliberations and discussions of the specialized committees and main session of the regional planning council could produce fruitful and positives outcomes for promoting cooperation to the collective benefit of ECO Member States.

**Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The evolutional trend of societies indicates the development of rationality, righteousness and justice seeking as the prevailing trend in the world evolution. Along with this trend, regionalism and policy of regional cooperation will prepare the ground for countering injustice, narrowing the gap among rich and poor countries as well as adopting balanced development plans in terms of economy, politics, society and culture for all countries and nations.

It is definite that by establishing such a trend there will be no room for a system based on materialism and domination.

**His Excellency Mr. Chairman  
Distinguished Colleagues**

ECO organization is regarded as a very intelligently-designed entity to promote our region and, if its capacities could be used completely, it could have an effective role in the region and the world more than ever. Fortunately the atmosphere prevailing among ECO States relations is based on insight, rightfulness, justice seeking and honoring high human causes and values. Numerous commonalities in terms of culture and religion as well as age-old historical bonds among ECO Member States are sustainable and strong elements to guarantee its success. We believe that while in the past the military strength was used to be the indication of power in

international system, in future cultural strength and civilization fundamentals will be regarded as the base for power and effectiveness. Fortunately ECO, enjoying cultural wealth and unique role as the central link to the human civilization, could attain a high position in the world as a powerhouse and be a safe island on the rough sea of world political and economic relations. Through offering its ideas and discourses, Economic Cooperation Organization could present a new paradigm of attitude based on human values, fair and balanced relations and benefiting all member states for other regional and international organization by making use of cultural commonalities and civilization background.

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), if relies and insists on its cultural commonalities and human values, could be a role model for all other international organizations based on mutual benefit.

**Honorable Colleagues  
Ladies and Gentlemen  
Excellencies**

We, the planning authorities of ECO Member States who have now convened here, could take advantage of such an opportunity and consider the roots to the global financial crisis which even though we didn't have any role to provoke it, our nations are suffering its consequences. We believe this crisis is caused by wrong planning models which must be revised and considered.

Let us remember that around 28 years ago, the issue of non-usury banking was at its recipient stages, however today credible banks insist to stick to it as their privilege. In order to achieve these lofty objectives, cooperation among planning organizations of the member states plays an important role. In this direction, special importance should be given to devise novel paradigms for expansion of national and regional sustainable development based on beliefs and national necessities.

Improvement of statistical methodologies, organizing data bases of human resource, geographical information, positional and logistic data, and finally harmonizing and integrating data systems and planning methods in all member states could contribute a lot to achieving these objectives.

**Distinguished Colleagues**

As you are aware, in order to achieve high objectives of ECO, diverse and proper entities and institutions have been established which could make use of the outcomes of this meeting to improve planning methods and have more effective role in their relevant realm.

There is a huge collection of activates and events in front of ECO Cultural Institute for strengthening cultural ties which needs to be more addressed. Moreover, it is a decent idea to launch ECO Science Foundation in order to prepare the ground for moving beyond boundaries of science and new technologies based on potentials of the region. Making use of ECO Insurance College should be also taken into account.

## **Distinguished Participants Ladies and Gentlemen**

Thanks to diligence and determination of its Member States, during past years Economic Cooperation Organization has made important achievements in various areas. Operationalization of Transit Transport Framework Agreement aiming at creating the proper infrastructure to expand transport in the region and launching demonstration container train on Islamabad – Tehran – Istanbul route through efforts made by Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Turkey are among achievements of the Transport sector of ECO. Strengthening other rail network such as Almaty – Bandarabbas and Almaty – Istanbul and China – Afghanistan together with expansion of road transit plans will manifest ECO position in the world more than ever.

Preparing grounds for trade is among other priorities of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Fortunately, necessary measures such as signing required agreements and establishing relevant entities have been conducted. In this connection, ECOTA and Visa Simplification Agreement for businessmen of member states as well as Investment Promotion Agreement have been signed by member states.

I would like to inform you that last agreement has been ratified by the legislative body of the Islamic Republic of Iran and it is expected that other signatories could make arrangements for its ratification so that it could be operationalized.

The Islamic Republic of Iran holds this belief that all the member states are entitled to fair opening of markets. Therefore, it is necessary that all member states could have trade concessions through implementation of ECOTA.

Moreover, membership of all member states in ECO Trade and Development Bank is of high importance in order to strengthen it and to open its branches in major economic and trade spots of member states so that it could financially support economic activists and operators.

On the other hand, efforts have to be made to both expand ECO relations with other regional and international organizations particularly financial and financing institutions and to make optimal use of their facilities for strengthening financial capabilities of ECO Trade and Development Bank.

Signing of an MOU to start ECO Reinsurance Company in last week, which is the harbinger of another milestone to create entities to support trade and economy in the region, is taken as a good omen.

## **Distinguished Participants**

Today the issue of sustainable energy is closely related to environment; therefore, adopting unanimous positions regarding Copenhagen Agreement is truly important.

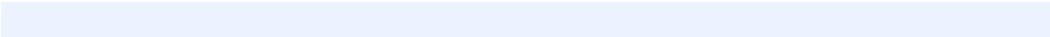


It is unfortunate that in Energy sector, ECO has not achieved a lot. Taking into the account that one of the duties of this council is to review and evaluate ECO Secretariat's specialized and economical function in pursuing and implementing decisions, in this meeting through performing professional review on our performance in the last year we hope, while removing problems and providing facilities, we could fulfill the responsibilities of energy sector i.e. preparing precise expertise and conduct feasibility studies. In this direction, it is recommended that a mechanism could be provided from outside the ECO Secretariat to evaluate the performance of its six directorates.

Islamic Republic of Iran, as a founding member of the Economic Cooperation Organization and the host country to its secretariat, has always made expansion of brotherly and friendly political relations with its neighboring states the priority of its foreign policies and promoting cooperation with member states within ECO framework the priority of regional policies and it will spare no effort to strengthen ECO.

In conclusion I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the officials of our brotherly and friendly country Turkey for their warm hospitality. I would also like to thank the ECO Secretariat for organizing this meeting.

Thank you Sir,



**Statement by Mr. Ashraf M. Hayat,  
Secretary, Planning & Development Division/  
Leader of the Pakistan Delegation**

**20<sup>th</sup> ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meeting  
Antalya – Turkey, 16-18 February 2010**

Honourable Chairman

Honourable Secretary General, Mr. Mohammed Yahya Maroofi

Distinguished Delegates

Excellencies!

It is a great pleasure for me to participate in the "20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Regional Planning Council (RPC) of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) being held in the beautiful city of Antalya. At the outset, I would like to express my profound gratitude on my behalf and on the behalf of my delegation to the brotherly Government of Republic of Turkey for warm welcome and generous hospitality being extended to us and the excellent arrangements made for this meeting by the ECO Secretariat.

It has been my great pleasure to visit Turkey on a regular basis and to benefit from expression of your rich heritage and magnificent history as I have visited the capitals of other esteemed ECO members. We have each a rich heritage. This heritage is a manifestation of belief in our selves and an urge to excellence. What brings us together to the RPC today, is belief in our future and a common destiny.

Mr. Chairman

2. I also wish to congratulate you for assuming the chair of the 20<sup>th</sup> RPC meeting. I am confident that your vast experience and wise council will help with productive deliberations on ways of employing our huge resources for the common benefit of our people. I am sure the proceeding of this meeting will serve as strong input for the planned ECO Summit later this year. May I pledge my delegation's full support to the objectives of this meeting first as we have remained committed to ECO's mandate since its inception.

**Excellencies!**

3. It is encouraging to note that the ECO region has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies in recent years. In the last 10 years, sound macroeconomic management and wide-ranging structural reforms adopted by Member States have contributed to a sustainable economic growth and improved significantly the quality of life indicators among members countries. However, the growth momentum in most

ECO Member States, in recent years, has been affected by the global financial and economic meltdown. The 20<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council meeting is being convened at a time when the world is recovering from the deepest global crisis in recent history.

4. In this regard, global economic crisis heightened has lightened the need for decoupling of emerging economies from the traditional markets, of course, within a realistic framework. One of the main objectives of ECO to promote trade and investment among its Member States is laudable. In 2007, the intra-ECO trade accounted for about 7.5 percent. This situation is far from satisfactory, when compared with other regional blocks and especially as it is at the top of our agenda for integration. Pakistan believes that robust implementation of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) would be a major step towards minimizing barriers to trade and ultimately establishing a Free Trade Area in the ECO region by 2015.

5. Development of an effective modern transportation and communication network within ECO is important as a key factor in expansion of trade and economic integration. This is particularly, important because seven out of the ten ECO members are land-locked. Pakistan stands committed to continued facilitation of land locked countries' trade. Our Gawadar Port established for closer relations with our neighbours to the west and north could serve as a key transit hub. The Transit Trade Agreement (TTA) and Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) are important to address major issues relating to customs, trade facilitation, road, rail and inland water transportation. I welcome the honorable ECO Secretary General's many initiative listed today and reaffirm also GoP's commitment to upgrade the Quetta-Taftan railways sector.

6. An important initiative by the ECO is the establishment of an interconnection and parallel functioning of electric power system in the region by 2015 to overcome the problem of energy shortages in the region. Development of multiple oil and gas pipeline networks and promoting development and utilization of new renewable sources of energy in the region would help the ECO Member States to meet their energy requirements for growth and increase the trade.

### **Excellencies!**

7. I would as a basis to create opportunities for cooperation like to share with you Pakistan's socio-economic progress and future outlook. Pakistan's main emphasis in the economic field is to manage for positive outcome the demographic transition with a rising share of working age population. Our challenges in this regard include; utilizing the potential of youth for attaining sustainable economic boom and converting the demographic transition into demographic dividend. Going forward, our priority is to manage domestic demand and expansion of domestic markets; improving export competitiveness; increasing savings and investment and tax to GDP ratio to support growth momentum to create jobs and economic activities. We have moved into an economic revival phase after a period of macro-economic stability as we cannot afford to break the growth momentum too long.

8. The majority of Pakistan's quality life indicators covered by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have improved significantly since the last decade, particularly those relating to education, access to health care facilities and nutrition. In 2009, adult literacy rate has increased and infant and child mortality and maternal

mortality rates reduced significantly. Coverage of child immunization has increased and population growth rate has declined. The economy has now begun to show signs of improvement. Inflationary pressures have eased; exports and industrial production have increased; the current account balance has improved significantly, and the fiscal gap has narrowed. The government has taken decisive actions to restore confidence of markets and investors.

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

9. In 2008, the government provided a vision for development to be achieved in the coming ten years enshrined in what we refer to as the nine point agenda. We have devised a holistic approach to attain significant improvements in people's lives through accelerated economic growth and by developing physical and human infrastructure.

10. We have committed considerable resources on strengthening and expanding the country's physical and human capital infrastructure. The National Trade Corridor, an input oriented program targets creation of new national logistics support with motorways and expressways fed by a feeder network, restructuring of the Railways and establishment of modern distribution facilities and warehouses linked to container ports and airports. The Corridor would cater to development overtime of a broad range of support services for businesses such as shipping, freight management, trucking, insurance and banking. Pakistan has recently strengthened its policy and regulatory framework for Public Private Partnership. It has met with considerable success in the telecommunication, energy and transport sectors and is moving to other areas such as infrastructure service procurement and municipal services in water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, social sector and real estate.

**Excellencies!**

As overarching objective our continued focus centres on poverty reduction and sustainable development because of the strong nexus that exists between security and economic growth. Our focus is also to ensure full support to private sector growth and innovation and for the government to have the governance institutions to support their effort.

11. The ECO countries' enormous energy and mineral reserves is a resource that would help build closer cooperation among member countries particularly with those deficient in energy. In addition to cooperation in ensuring reliable regional fuel supply, there are significant potential payoffs from cooperation in environmentally sustainable means of energy sources and in sharing experiences in energy conservation and alternative energy development. Unparalleled changes have taken place in electronic communications technology. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has a significant role in shaping and transforming ways in which business is conducted. Pakistan is committed deeply to rapidly adopt ICT applications in our region.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!**

13. We are glad that ECO has evolved a cohesive and sound agenda to reinforce the individual efforts of each member country. With such effort we hope that the ECO

region would move ahead to achieve its mandate for bringing a meaningful change in the lives of the people.

Mr. Chairman!

14. I am of the firm belief that under your able guidance the RPC meeting will achieve the desired objective of accelerating the pace of economic cooperation between the Member States. I conclude with the hope that the technical sessions would draft the ECO's agenda for the year, keeping in mind the imperatives, we have just agreed upon. In the coming days we would examine closely the progress achieved, and the proposals to promote conditions for sustainable economic development with our common objective which is to raise the standard of living and quality of life of our people.

I thank you very much.

Statement by the Representative of Uzbekistan  
during the 20<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting (Antalya, 16-18 February, 2010)  
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Dear Mr.Chairman,  
Distinguished heads of delegations,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Excellencies,

First of all I would like to thank ECO secretariat and Turkish government for organization of such meeting and warm hospitality.

And now let me tell briefly about economic development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in last year. Macroeconomic stability and stable economic growth rates are a proof of the correctness of the economic course chosen by Uzbekistan and acknowledged as the Uzbek model of economic reforms.

In 2009 the GDP of Uzbekistan increased by 8.1%, industrial production by 9%, agricultural production by 5.7%, retail trade turnover by 16.6% and paid services by 12.9%.

The state budget has been was implemented with a surplus without cuts in budget spending, while the inflation level did not exceed the forecast and comprised 7.4%.

The measures to strengthen the banking and financial sector have allowed to double the cumulative capital of the banks in the past two years, while the share of bank credits used for investment purposes has reached 70%.

A complex of measures have been implemented to ensure financial stability of the enterprises of the real sector, mainly through modernization of production, reduction of the products' cost price, expansion of cooperative ties among local companies and stimulating internal demand. The volume of localized production increased 2.3 times last year, with launch of more than 120 new types of products.

Thanks to support and stimulation of the local exporting enterprises in the conditions of unfavorable conjuncture at world markets, in 2009 the export volumes increased by 2.4%.

Excellencies,

Uzbekistan has pursued the policy of structural transformation and diversification of the economy, modernization and technical renewal of production, and attraction of investments, mainly foreign ones. New production capacities were launched last year in the automobile building, construction materials, chemical, food, light, pharmaceutical and other industries. Car and railway transport systems and communications have also seen extensive development.

The anti-crisis measures taken in 2009 have resulted in creating more than 940,000 new workplaces, including over 500,000 in the rural areas.

During 2009 in the framework of the Investment program and sector programs of technical modernization we implemented 690 investment projects, of which 303 projects were successfully completed. In the whole, 22 large production facilities were commissioned in the country, of which 8 facilities – in the oil and gas, chemical and metallurgical industry, 9 – in the machine building and 5 – in the construction industry.

Last year there were completed the implementation of such strategic projects as the reconstruction of aggregates of ammonia at the “Ferghanaazot” and “Maksam-Chirchik” enterprises, construction of the plant in Namangan on producing headlights and lights for automobiles, as well as of the “Daewoo Textile” textile complex in Bukhara. The booster compressor station “Gazli” and gas dewatering installation at the “Kungrad” compressor station with a productivity of 35 million cubic meters of gas per day have been commissioned. The construction of gas pipeline, which goes through the territory of Uzbekistan from Turkmenistan to China, was completed. It expands the transit potential capacities of our country.

Excellencies,

Besides, more than 480 new productions have been established in the provinces, above all, in the sphere of small business, as well as in such branches as the industry of construction materials, food and light industries, as much as other branches of economy.

Thanks to implementation of the strategic investment projects on construction of the “Novoangren-Uzbekistan” Power Transmission Line-500 with substation, 165-km-long “Ahangaran-Pungan” trunk gas pipeline through the Kamchik mountain pass, as well as of the “Guzar-Surhan” high voltage power transmission line we have in fact completed creation of the single power and gas systems in the scope of entire country.

This permits to reliably provide the population of Ferghana Valley and south of Uzbekistan with natural gas and electricity, as well as significantly increase the export of electricity.

During last year there were commissioned 217 kilometers and undertook a complete overhaul of 538 kilometers of automobile roads as well as 19 bridges. More than 280 billion UZS at the expense of the country’s Road Fund were channeled to accomplishment of such works. Five bridges were commissioned with participation of Japanese capital on the new railroad line Toshguzar-Boysun-Kumkurgan. Six new double track sections of the Navoi-Uchkuduk-Sultanuzdag-Nukus railroad line have been commissioned.

The substantial works were accomplished in 2009 on construction of the inter-modal center of international transportation on the basis of the “Navoi” Airport as one of the key facilities of the free industrial and economic zone being established in Navoi Province. During last year the national air company, exploiting the modern

transport aircraft rented from the “Korean Air”, undertook more than 330 flights on international destinations and transported about 8,500 tons of cargo, which paved way to integrate the Navoi Airport into the global logistical network.

The international logistical center in the town of Angren has also been constructed and commissioned. It will provide the year-round transport link between the regions of the country and the provinces of Ferghana Valley.

Twelve investment projects were launched in this direction in 2009. Tashkent-Bukhara communication backbone was expanded on the basis of modern technologies, which has allowed to increase the throughput 60-fold and thus provided for opportunities of rendering broadband services such as video-telephone connection, Internet and so on. The international lines of communication Andijan-Osh, Kungrad-Beyneu, Denau-Tursunzade, Termez-Khayraton have been commissioned.

Thank you for you attention



Text of the Statement by  
Mr. Mustafa Lakadamyali on behalf of the  
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Delegation  
At the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Antalya, Republic of Turkey  
(16-18 February 2010)

Mr. Chairman  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour for me and my delegation to participate in the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council. I extend to you all the heartfelt greetings of the people and the Government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

At the outset, I would like to express our sincere appreciation and profound thanks to the ECO Secretariat and the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality that is being extended to us in this beautiful city.

Mr. Chairman,

As you, no doubt all know Cyprus has a long standing political dispute which affects everyday life of all Turkish Cypriots, as well as the state of the economy in general. Therefore, first and foremost I would like to share with you in brief the recent developments in Cyprus.

Following the UN (United Nations) backed referenda on 24 April 2004, the Cyprus issue has taken a new turn and a new state of affairs has emerged strong “No” by the Greek Cypriot side in the separate simultaneous referenda not only meant the rejection of a blueprint for a solution, but meant the rejection of a comprehensive settlement on the island.

Thereafter the initiatives taken by the Turkish Cypriot side resulted in the commencement of the new negotiation process in March 2008. However, the new process has failed to produce a solution so far, due to the intransigent policies employed by the Greek Cypriot side. I would like to reiterate, once again, that the Turkish Cypriot side is ready for a settlement in Cyprus that envisages a new partnership, in line with the established UN parameters and body of work. Absolute application of bizonality, political equality of the two peoples, the equal status of the two founding states that will lead up to the establishment of a new partnership state and turkey’s full and effective guarantee will constitute the parameters for a solution to the Cyprus issue.

The unrealistic and unreasonable demands of the Greek Cypriot side make it difficult to reach a compromise and affect the current negotiation process in a negative manner.

Distinguished Delegates,

Turkish Cypriot people are grateful to the Member Countries of ECO for extending support to the Turkish Cypriot people in their rightful cause. We call upon all Member States to further develop bilateral relations with the TRNC to overcome the unjust isolations imposed upon them.

Mr. Chairman  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The efforts of our government to further develop the economy of the TRNC has been redoubled especially in the face of the current prevailing atmosphere of global economic crisis as well as, in the absence of a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus.

The TRNC economy has experienced a high rate of growth since 2004. The economy registered 8.1 % annual average growth rate during the last five years (2004-2008). GDP was 3,957 million US dollars in 2008.

A liberal economic system is being implemented in the TRNC under this system, the promotion of the private sector with limited Government intervention, the rational use of natural resources, the encouragement of foreign investment that will generate added value and employment are given priority and importance.

Mr. Chairman

Higher education plays an important role in the economy and it is the fastest growing sector in the TRNC. There are seven excellent universities providing higher education to 43,328 students from over 60 countries. The fees are very competitive. Around 2.6 percent of these students are from ECO countries, except Turkey. Currently, limited number of scholarships are granted to students from ECO countries. In this context we would welcome a decision by the Member States, to include our universities in the available options for the higher education of their youth.

In addition to higher education tourism, construction and agriculture are the leading sectors in the TRNC economy private sector and foreign investments carry great importance for these sectors.

In this respect, encouragement of foreign investment is among the primary objectives of our Government's development policy. Investment opportunities exist especially in the tourism sector. Hotels and conference tourism, special interest tourism and marina construction are just a few of the investment opportunities that await the foreign businessmen in the TRNC. In addition to abovementioned fields, newly developing areas such as health, tourism and agri-industry are considered as attractive fields of investment for the private sector in the TRNC and for foreign investors.

Consequently, those wishing to invest in the TRNC can be sure of a positive government attitude. In this connection, the TRNC government is keen to welcome investors from ECO countries to our country. The relevant ministries would be at the

disposal and service of potential investors and businessmen who would like to learn more about the extensive tourism and business opportunities that exist in the TRNC.

Due to the isolations imposed on the Turkish Cypriot people by the Greek Cypriot side, the main hurdle for the development of our economy is the lack of direct flights to and from the TRNC. However, we maintain an effective air link with the outside world via turkey, with the participation of both public and private airline companies.

In 2008 the net tourism income of the TRNC was 434 million US Dollar. Share of trade and tourism in the GDP is 15.4% there are a total of 124 tourist establishments in the TRNC including 13 five star hotels, with a bed capacity of 15,784 according to our estimates more than 478,000 tourists visited the TRNC in 2008.

Mr. Chairman

It should be noted that the TRNC hosted two important ECO events, namely a workshop titled "Air and Water Pollution Control" in August 1998 and another workshop on "Waste Water Management and Treatment Technology" in May 2004. I have the honour to express that those events enjoyed a great deal of success. In this connection I would like to state our desire to host similar ECO events in our country.

Mr. Chairman

I thank you all for your most kind attention and for your continued support to the people of the TRNC in our just struggle to secure our rightful place among the family of nations.

Thank you.