

The 6th RPC Meeting

Report

(Tehran, 5-7 March, 1996)

No. CON/RPC-6/96/RPT (adopted)

The Sixth Meeting of the Regional Planning Council of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Tehran on 5-7 March 1996. The Meeting was attended by the delegations of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Turkish Muslim Community of Cyprus and the representatives of the ECO Secretariat. The list of participants is at **Annex I**.

AGENDA ITEM NO.1

INAUGURATION

2. The Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Mirzadeh, the Honorable Vice-President and the Head of the Plan and Budget Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A copy of the inaugural speech is at **Annex II**.

AGENDA ITEM NO.2

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

3. H.E. Mr. Hossein Kazempour Ardebili, Senior Adviser to the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran was unanimously elected as Chairman.

AGENDA ITEM NO.3

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. The Meeting adopted its Agenda which is at **Annex III**.

AGENDA ITEM NO.4

APPOINTMENT OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

5. The Council decided to form an open-ended Drafting Committee to prepare the report of the Meeting. The Council also appointed another drafting Committee to review the draft Annual Economic Report.

AGENDA ITEM NO.5

OPENING STATEMENTS

6. The Leaders of the delegations made their opening statements outlining their general views regarding the activities of the organization during the year 1995-96, which are at **Annex IV**.

AGENDA ITEM NO.6

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

7. The Secretary General of ECO presented a report, a copy of which is at **Annex V**. In his report the Secretary General briefly highlighted the salient activities of the organization during the year under review and also presented several concrete ideas and proposals for the consideration of the Council. The Secretary General also called upon the Council that in compliance with the directives of the Council of Ministers, an effort should be made to curtail the proliferation of ECO activities. He also called upon the Council to focus on the consolidation of the already a-reed and approved projects. The Secretary General further apprised the Council of the status of ECO's relationship with various international organizations. Noting that this was his last report to the RPC, the Council appreciated the commendable role that the Secretary General had played in the past four years to activate and revitalize the activities of the organization as well as to enhance its status and image in the international community as a major regional economic organization.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORTS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND REVIEW OF THEIR ACTIVITIES DURING 1995-96:

(A) COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION (CECC)

8. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following- observations:

- **Establishment of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and ECO Reinsurance Company.**

9. The Council endorsed the recommendations of the Committee for the early establishment of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and the ECO Reinsurance Company. The Council recommended that the Parties should complete all necessary arrangements before the ECO Fourth Summit Meeting in order to finalize the decisions on the draft Constitution, including the proposal made by the Pakistan delegation to change the title of the Constitution to 'Articles of Agreement of the Reinsurance Company' and to activate the simultaneous establishment of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and the ECO Reinsurance Company. The Council took note that the Interim Committee will meet from 8-9 April 1996 in Istanbul.

- **Implementation of ECO Protocol on Preferential Tariffs.**

10. The Council took note of the observations of the Committee regarding the implementation of ECO Protocol on Preferential Tariffs and formulated the following recommendations:

- a) The Council agreed that a comprehensive study needs to be undertaken to suggest measures for promotion of intra- regional trade taking into account the present tripartite arrangement of Protocol on Preferential Tariffs, the global trends of forming Free Trade Area, impact of Turkey's participation in EU Customs Union and inconsistencies among the foreign trade regimes of the Member States as well as the implications of Uruguay Round Agreements.

b) The Council noted that the overall liberalization of Turkey's foreign trade regime and extensive tariff reduction resulting from Turkey's membership of the EU Customs Union would be beneficial to ECO Member States. The Council emphasized the need for strengthening, at the same time, ECO's existing- regional trade arrangement i.e. Protocol on Preferential Tariffs, by enhancing- its scope and applicability in terms of accession of other Member States to its, further increase-in tariff reductions from the current rate of 10 percent, elimination of non and Para tariffs barriers, and a realistic appraisal of the agreed lists of commodities being traded under this Protocol taking into account other international obligations of the Member States. The Council decided that the Preferential Tariffs Committee should meet on 15-16 April 1996 in the Secretariat to finalize the lists of commodities to be covered under the Protocol for submission and approval in the 6th Session of the Council of - Ministers. The Council observed that the expansion of the lists under ECO Protocol on Preferential Tariff should only be considered within a multilateral framework. The number of products in the list and the products on which tariff cuts can be enhanced to 20 percent should be considered and suggested by the Committee on Preferential Tariffs taking- into account other international obligations of the Member States.

(B) COMMITTEE FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (CCTC).

11. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Progress of Implementation of Almaty Outline Plan for the Development of Transport Sector in the ECO Region.**

12. The Council advised Member States to send progress report on the implementation of Almaty Outline Plan to the Secretariat latest by 20th April 1996 to enable the CCTC to regularly monitor the progress of implementation of all sectors of the Plan. These reports would be furnished to the Secretariat on a yearly basis.

- **ECO Road Network and Road Transport.**

13. The Council observed that since the adoption of the Almaty Outline Plan, not much progress had been achieved towards the implementation of its provisions. The Council asked the CCTC to prepare a realistic and techno-economically viable strategy for implementation of the agreed projects, to extent possible, through their inclusion in the National Development Plans of the concerned member states or in cases of large-scale projects through external financing in the form of credits or consortium funding by international financing and credit institutions.

14. The Council noted that the concerned Turkish authorities had developed a format regarding establishment of Data Bank on Road Transport which is now being circulated to the Member States. The Member States should then provide to the Secretariat basic information on this format.

15. The Council requested Member States to furnish by end of April 1996 their proposals for correction on the map prepared by the Islamic Republic of Iran circulated by the Secretariat to enable the Iranian side to finalize the same before the Sixth Meeting of the Council of Ministers to be held in Ashgabat. If no proposals were received by the time as indicated above., it would be presumed that the concerned Member States found the map in order. The Council further recommended that these additional routes should also be annexed to the Almaty Outline Plan.

- **ECO Railway Network**

16. The Council noted with satisfaction the progress reported by the member states regarding construction of railway links. The Council agreed that additional routes identified by the Member States should be adequately reflected in the ECO Railway Network by the concerned Iranian authorities, who are preparing the map. The Council further recommended that these additional routes should also be annexed to the Almaty Outline Plan.

17. The RPC also noted with particular satisfaction the completion of Tedjan-Sarakhs-iMeshad Railway Line which is planned to be inaugurated on the occasion of the Fourth ECO Summit Meeting in May, 1996. To ensure proper use of this railway link as a regional bridge-head linking the member states with each other and with the outside world, the Council suggested that the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkmenistan may prepare a framework of transit facilities to be made available to the users from within and outside the region and should give the framework an adequate publicity prior to and on the occasion of the-inauguration.

- **Multimodal-Transport.**

18. The Council welcomed the proposed study on the Multimodal Transport to determine a comprehensive trade and transport regulatory framework for an efficient regime on Multimodal Transport in the ECO Region as envisaged in a comprehensive paper on "Multimodal Transportation for the ECO Region" prepared by the IDB. The Council also welcomed the ESCAP proposal to formulate with the assistance of UNCTAD, ECO and UNDP, a Transit Trade Treaty for the ECO Region. In view of the commonality of IDB, ECO and ESCAP proposals, the Council agreed to the recommendation of IDB to combine the IDB/ECO/ESCAP proposal as a single but comprehensive effort. The Secretariat was requested to liaise with the ESCAP to re-draft the proposal.

19. The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold a seminar on "the Concept of Multimodal Transport" in Iran. The delegation of Iran also proposed that the detailed proposal formulated by them may be used to enable the Secretariat to secure financial and technical assistance from the relevant international agencies.

- **Air Services.**

20. The Council noted the progress of implementation of the Agreement on the establishment of ECO Air Company. The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Iran as Coordinator of the ECO Air Project, to pursue the matter vigorously with the signatory Member States to fulfill their obligations and complete the remaining actions for the establishment and smooth functioning of the Company. The delegation of Iran

urged the Council to encourage other Member States to join the ECO Airline Company and also to facilitate the operation of the Company.

- **ECO Shipping Company.**

21. The Council noted with satisfaction the coming into operation of the ECO Shipping Company and its official launching on 9th March 1996. The Council requested the signatory Member States to fulfill their obligations and complete the remaining actions for smooth functioning of the Company. The other ECO Member States were also urged to join the Company and facilitate its operation.

- **Consideration of the Report of the High-Level Expert Group Meeting (Almaty, 4-6 July, 1995).**

The Council adopted the report of the High Level Expert Group (HLEG) meeting along with the observations and recommendations of the CCTC and recommended that these be reflected in the Almaty Outline Plan. The Council, however, observed that the HLEG did not specifically address itself to the issues spelt out in the mandate given to it by the RPC. The Council decided that the CCTC itself should assume the mandate of the HLEG for implementation of the Almaty Outline Plan and at its next meeting may explore the possibility of a sectoral ministerial meeting in the field of transport for a high-level review of progress and reiteration of commitment for early implementation of the projects envisaged in the Almaty Outline Plan.

- **Follow up of ECO/ESCAP Seminar on Accession to International Transport Conventions.**

23. The Council observed that the Member States may consider the advisability of their accession to those Land Transport Facilitation Conventions to which they have not yet acceded.

- **Consideration of the Report of Eighth Meeting of Directors General of Telecommunications held in Ashgabat on 27 November, 1995.**

24. The Council referred the preliminary Outline Plan for the Development of Telecommunications and Postal Links prepared by the Directors General of Telecommunications and adopted by the CCTC to the concerned experts of the Member States for indepth examination and evaluation to determine its feasibility and compatibility with ECO region's needs and requirements. Meanwhile the Member States may also exchange their preliminary views on this draft outline plan.

- **Three IDB Experts in the Fields of Roads, Railways & Multimodal, and Telecommunications.**

25. The Council requested the Secretariat to obtain and circulate the reports of the IDB Experts as early as possible for examination by the CCTC.

- **Programme of Action for the Transport and Tele- communications Decade in the ECO Region (1995-2004)**

26. The RPC requested the Member States to furnish by end April 1996 their detailed views on the implementation of the Transport and Telecommunications Decade.

- **ECO Land Transport Permits.**

27. The Council noted the proposal of the Republic of Turkey for the issuance of Road Transport Permits to the transporters operating in the ECO region and decided that comments on the format prepared by the Turkish side should be circulated among the Member States for consideration at the next meeting of CCTC.

- **Bilateral Agreements regarding Road Transport.**

28. The Council noted that bilateral agreements between Islamic Republic of Iran and the Governments of Kazakstan, Kyrgystan and Tajikistan regarding simplification of entrance and transit procedures for transporters through the Iranian territory had been ratified while the agreement with Turkmenistan had been ratified by the Iranian side and was in the process of being ratified by the Turkmenistan side. In view of the opening of the railway link- between Iran and the Central Asian Republics, the Council felt that all efforts be made to ensure smooth flow of and services between ECO Member States.

- **Review of the Terms of Reference for the Committee and Consolidated Work Programme.**

29. The Council approved the Terms of Reference for the CCTC as proposed by the Committee with the observation that the implementation of Almaty Outline Plan should be undertaken in collaboration with UN-ESCAP as well as other related international agencies such as ECE.

(C) COMMITTEE FOR TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION (CTIC).

30. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Cooperation for Production of active raw Materials for Antibiotics/Pharmaceuticals.**

31. The Delegation of Turkey informed the Council that the name of the Turkish Company (SIFAR) be deleted from the list and also indicated their preference to delete this project from the work of CTIC. The Council decided that the arrangements for undertaking the feasibility study should be finalized within six months by the nominated companies. If no progress was reported by the Companies to the Secretariat within six-months, the project would be deleted from the list of projects under consideration by CTIC.

- **ECO Consultancy and Engineering Services.**

3)2. The Council taking-note of the progress achieved in establishing the ECO Consultancy and Engineering Services Company recommended that the proposed Company after its establishment should be given priority to undertake both the establishment of ECO Data Bank as well as any consultancy and engineering work for ECO projects. The Council decided that concrete progress should be reported to it by the Company within one year.

- **ECO Secretariat's proposal to promote Industrial Cooperation among ECO Member Countries and Regional Treaty for Promotion and Protection of Investment among ECO Member States.**

33. The Council decided that Secretariat should collect the relevant information from all Member States to prepare a Compendium of incentives and concessions available in the Member States. This Compendium should then be the basis of further examination by CTIC to consider evolving a Regional Framework of investment policies and concessions to attract and promote investment in the ECO region.

- **Regional Conference on industrial Pollution Control.**

34. The Council, in view of lack of sufficient interest in the project, decided to delete the activity from the work of CTIC.

- **Cooperation in the Industrial Training Programmes.**

35. The Council endorsed the proposal that the Member States should furnish details of their Industrial Training Programmes to the ECO Secretariat for circulation.

- **Implementation of the Terms of Reference for the Committee.**

36. The Council took note of the progress in the implementation of the agreed Terms of Reference and directed the Committee to review the Terms of Reference with a view to limiting the scope of work of the CTIC to priority areas and adopting a project-oriented approach.

- **Cooperation on Standardization and Quality Assurance System.**

37. The Council encouraged the Governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan to consider joining the Inter-regional Standards and Metrology Organization.

- **Industrial R&D and Technological Development.**

33. The Council endorsed the decisions made in the Second EGM on Industrial Research and Development and noted with appreciation the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to establish the Centre for Coordination of the activities of Focal Points for Industrial R&D in the Member States for accelerating the process of cooperation in this field in accordance with the provisions of Quetta Plan of Action and Istanbul Declaration.

- **Three Feasibility Studies in Industrial Sector.**

39. The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to provide the draft terms of reference for conducting feasibility study in the remaining field of telecommunications. After consideration of TOR, for the three studies, namely automotive, power and energy equipment and telecommunications industries, the Committee may designate coordinators from amongst the member states for coordinating/carrying out these studies.

- **Establishment of ECO Institute of Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Exploration and Mining.**

40. The Council endorsed the recommendation of the Committee that instead of the establishment of a new ECO Institute of Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Exploration and Mining, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkey would nominate a Centre for coordination and dissemination of all information on scientific and technical fields in consultation with each other. The Council called upon other Member States to notify their centers or focal points for exchange of information in the related fields.

(D) COMMITTEE FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION (CAC).

41. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Revision of the Terms of Reference.**

42. The Council considered and approved the TORs as recommended by the Committee with amendments and emphasized that common action within the framework of these TOR may please be undertaken with a view to promoting a project-oriented approach. The TORs as approved are at **Annex VI**. The Turkish delegation stated that preparation of a common agricultural programme referred to in item 2 (iii) of the TORs was not applicable for Turkey.

- **Proposals for better participation of Member Countries in the approved programmes and Projects.**

43. The Council agreed with the proposals for better participation of Member States in the approved programmes and projects with the observation on the third proposal that participation of all -Member States in the major programmes of Calendar of Events may not be declared mandatory but should certainly be encouraged.

- **Consideration of possible areas of Cooperation.**

44. The Council welcomed the following offers:

- i) Pakistan offered to host a Workshop on Current Problems of Cotton Production in Pakistan tentatively on 10-12 September 1996.
- ii) Turkey offered to host a Conference of Chairmen of Agricultural Banking and Credit Institutions, on 23-24 May 1996.
- iii) Iran offered to host a Task Force on the Establishment of Buffer Zones for animals in the border areas of the Member States on 9-11 June 1996 or 30 June-2 July 1996.

- **Training Facilities in the Field of Agriculture.**

45. The Council noted with satisfaction that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran had furnished the details of the training facilities offered by them and urged the other concerned Governments to furnish the details of their training facilities for utilization by the Member States.

- **ECO Agricultural Common Market.**

46. The Council requested the sponsor of the proposal (Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran) to provide full details of the proposal for consideration of the Member Governments and the Committee.

- **ECO Agricultural Mechanization Centre.**

47. The Council requested the sponsor of the proposal (Government of the Republic of Turkey) to provide full details of the proposal for consideration of the Member Governments and the Committee.

(E) COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION (CESCC)

48. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Finalization of the Modalities for ECO Awards.**

49. The Council recommended that the ECO Awards Committee comprising one member from each ECO country with Secretary General as its Chairman, may be constituted to finalize the modalities for future ECO Awards on the basis of the recommendations already made including the draft framework and modalities for the ECO Awards submitted by Turkey (*Annex VII*), as well as other views to be made available by the Member States. Accordingly, this meeting shall be included in the ECO Calendar of Events.

- **Establishment of the ECO Cultural Institute and the ECO Science Foundation.**

50. The Council urged all Member States to expedite the ratification of the Charter of ECO Cultural Institute and the Charter of ECO Science Foundation.

- **Formulating, a Comprehensive ECO Educational Exchange Programme including the Teaching of languages and Provisions of scholarships etc.**

51. The Council asked the Member States to provide information regarding the availability of scholarships for ECO students in the Member States including the

teaching of Languages to facilitate the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive ECO Educational Exchange Programme. The Member Governments may furnish the requisite information until the next meeting of the Committee. If the information is not received by then, the programme should be deleted from the work programme of CESCC.

- **Provision of higher expanded vocational training within the Region to skilled workers in Specific fields.**

52. The Council asked the Member States to furnish concrete views in response to Iranian and Turkish offers of vocational training to the Secretariat by the next Committee meeting. If the information is not received by then., this item would be deleted from the work programme of CESCC.

- **Cooperation in the Field of Journalism.**

53. The Council noted the valuable recommendations of ECO Mass Media Seminar held in Istanbul in October 1995 and directed that these recommendations be implemented effectively. In this regard the Council noted the Agreement signed on December 2, 1995 between the Turkish and the Iranian national news agencies on the Establishment of a body under the name of "the Union of ECO News Agencies" and encouraged other Member States to consider joining it.

- **Cooperation in the Field of Sports.**

54. The Council noted the schedule of sports activities and exchanges in specific fields as proposed by Pakistan and requested the Member States to furnish their comments on the above proposal latest by the next meeting of the Committee to enable the RPC to take a decision. If the information is not received by then, this item may be deleted from the work programme of CESCC.

- **Organization of ECO Olympiads in various Disciplines among the youth of the region.**

55. The Council decided that in view of lack of sufficient interest, this programme of cooperation may be deleted from the work programme of CESCC.

- **Regional Network in Bio-Technology.**

56. The Council welcomed the Iranian proposal for the establishment of Regional Network in Bio-technology earlier circulated among the Member States and urged the concerned authorities in Member States to consider the possibilities of joining the Iran-UNESCO venture and intimate their position to the Secretariat by the next meeting of the Committee for consideration of the proposal further.

- **Iranian offer of Scholarships in the ECO College of Insurance, Tehran.**

57. The Council welcomed the Iranian offer of 5 Scholarships for students from ECO countries in the ECO College of Insurance at Tehran. The details of selection process would be circulated by the Iranian side through the Secretariat.

(F) COMMITTEE FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY

58. The Council adopted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Consideration of the Report of the Fourth EGM on Oil, Gas and Petrochemicals.**

59. The Council considered the report of the Fourth EGM on Oil. Gas and Petrochemicals with the following observations:

(a) The Council agreed on an indicative export route (pipeline) from Central Asian oil producing region via Islamic Republic of Iran to Persian Gulf in addition to those routes already identified.

(b) The Council agreed that the Head of the National Energy Committee of Iran be the Project Manager to undertake joint Study of Long Term Development of ECO Energy Demand and Supply with active participation of national focal points of other Member States. The Terms of Reference for such a Study should also be prepared in consultation with and with the consent of all Member States.

- **Fourth EGM on Power.**

60. The Council accepted, with appreciation, the offer of the Government of Turkmenistan to host the Fourth EGIM on Power and decided to include it in the ECO Calendar of Events for 1996-97.

- **Publication of energy booklet:**

61. The Council requested the Coordinator (Republic of Turkey) for the publication of Energy Booklet to furnish the draft well before the next meeting of CCE.

- **Routes for oil, gas pipeline network for the ECO region.**

62. The Council considered the indicative routes of oil, Gas pipeline in ECO Region and urged Member States to work out an Outline Plan before the next Committee Meeting.

- **Reconsideration of the proposal to organize the meeting of the Chief Executives of oil, Gas and Petrochemical.**

The Council accepted with appreciation the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the meeting of the Chief Executives of Oil, Gas and Petrochemical on the basis of agenda to be drafted by Iran during the second half of the year 1996.

- **Interconnection and parallel functioning of power systems of the ECO Member States.**

64. The Council considered the recommendation of the Committee and decided to refer the issue as suggested therein to the Fourth EGM on Power to examine various aspects of this question with recommendation for further course of action.

(G) COMMITTEE FOR DRUG CONTROL (CDC)

65. The Council adopted the report of the Third Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Review of the Report of the EGM on ECO Drug Control Action Plan.**

66. The Council endorsed the draft consolidated Plan of Action on Drug Control as recommended by the EGM except for the provisions on the Drug Control Coordination Unit on which the Council formulated a position given in para 67 and 68. Meanwhile the Secretary General was requested to seek assistance from the relevant International Organizations to implement the ECO Plan on Drug Control.

- **Establishment of ECO Drug Control Coordination Unit.**

67. The Council considered and referred for adoption to the Council of Ministers the Project Outline and terms of reference for DCCU, prepared by the Secretariat and finalized by the 3rd Meeting of CDC and urged the Secretariat to negotiate with relevant

international organizations for the modalities of provision of technical and financial assistance to the project taking into account the views expressed by Member States.

68. As for the size and level of the DCCU, the matter was pended till a final decision of the Sixth Meeting of the Council of Ministers in light of the overall reorganization of the ECO being, considered by the Eminent Persons Group.

- **Training Programmes.**

69. The Council welcomed the training programmes offered by the Member States and encouraged the Member States to make use of these offers.

(H) COMMITTEE FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELDS OF ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH (CCEH)

70. The Council adopted the report of the Second Meeting of the Committee with the following observations:

- **Review of the Terms of Reference of CCEH.**

71. The Council approved the Terms of Reference of CCEH as recommended by the Committee.

- **Cooperation in the Health Sector.**

72. The Council decided that various proposals and offers made in this and other sectors may be included in ECO's Programme of Work only if appropriate financial sponsorship (hosting and organizational arrangements) could be ensured.

- **Cooperation between ECO and UNICEF.**

73. The Council endorsed the outcome of the four workshops organized with the assistance of UNICEF during 1994-95. The council directed the Secretariat to further liaise with the UNICEF Headquarters for a future programme of joint activities within the framework of MOU on cooperation between the two organizations.

- **Cooperation between ECO and UNFPA.**

74. The Council appreciated the very successful first joint event of ECO/UNFPA Conference on Women Status and Health held in Tehran in August 1995. The Council also noted with satisfaction that the Governments of Pakistan and Kazakstan are planning to host the remaining two ECO/UNFPA joint events in April 1996.

- **Seminar on Montreal Protocol.**

75 .The Pakistan Delegation informed the Council that they are ready to host the Seminar on Montreal Protocol and would welcome a cosponsor. if co-sponsorship could be arranged, the event would be included in the next Calendar of Events.

- **Other Proposals on Environmental and Ecological Matters.**

76. The Council noted various offers and decided that further information may be exchanged through the Secretariat on these proposals with a view to evolving concrete project proposals. A proposal submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran is placed at ***Annex-VIII*** for consideration by CCEH at its next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO.8

FINALIZATION OF THE DRAFT ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 1996-97

77.The Council finalized and recommended to the Council of Ministers for approval the Annual Programme of Work and Calendar of Events for 1996-97 as at ***Annex IX***.

AGENDA ITEM NO.9

PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL ECONOMIC REPORT.

78. The Council asked the Member States to provide to the ECO Secretariat the updated information and data based on the format utilized in draft Regional Annual Economic Report prepared by the Secretariat, not later than one month prior to the 6th Meeting of Council of Ministers.

79. The Council also asked the Member States to provide to the ECO Secretariat the basic economic data of recent five years covering sectors such as economic structure, government budget and fiscal system, money and banking, balance-of-payments, intra-regional trade, foreign economic assistance and foreign private investment, price indices, along with an economic outlook for their respective countries.

80. The Council decided that after the compilation of this data by the Secretariat, the Report should be broadened by bringing in a comparative analysis of economies of the Member States as well as trade matrix of the re-ion. To this end, the Council suggested that technical consultation should take place amongst Member States with a view to procuring technical and financial assistance from international agencies.

81. The Council decided that the Economic Report of the Turkish Muslim Community of Cyprus will be annexed to the Annual Economic Report.

AGENDA ITEM NO.10

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

82. The Council took note of the views of the Turkish Delegation regarding the need to streamline the work of technical committees as well as to reduce their number. The Pakistan Delegation also shared the concern of the Turkish Delegation regarding the quality of out put of various technical committees.

83. The Chairman informed the Council that the issues regarding reorganization and restructuring of ECO are being-examined by an Eminent Persons Group established for the purpose by the ECO Council of Ministers. The recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group are expected to be considered by the ECO Council of Ministers during its forthcoming meeting to be held in Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) in May 1996.

AGENDA ITEM NO.11

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

84. The Council recommended to hold its next meeting in Tehran on 24-26 February 1997 subject to the approval by the ECO Council of Ministers.

AGENDA ITEM NO.12

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT.

85. The Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Planning Council was adopted unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO.13

VOTE OF THANKS.

86. The Meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chairman for conducting the deliberations of the meeting in the most efficient manner. All the delegations placed on record their deep appreciation and thanks to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting- and the warm hospitality extended to them. The Meeting also appreciated the efforts of the Secretary General and his able staff in the preparation of comprehensive working papers to facilitate the work of the Council. In his concluding remarks, the Secretary General also placed on record his appreciation for the constructive role played by the RPC in the advancement of ECO's goals and objectives and implementation of ECO's economic priorities (copy of his statement is at ***Annex-X***)

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