

The 3th RPC Meeting

Statement by H.E. Cengiz Aysun, Deputy Undersecretary of State for State Planning Organization of the Republic of Turkey and Leader of the Turkish Delegation

(Tehran, 17-19 January, 1993)

Annex-V

*Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Leaders of Delegations
Honourable Secretary General
Dear Brothers and Sisters*

At the beginning of my statement I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the hospitality accorded to my delegation and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your election as Chairman of this significant Meeting of Regional Planning Council. We are confident that your outstanding competence and wisdom will guide the Council to a successful conclusion. Our thanks also go to the distinguished Secretary General and his esteemed staff for the preparation of excellent documents for the meeting.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new members to their first RPC meeting and wish them every success in their efforts to overcome the difficulties they are currently facing in order to ensure the prosperity and well-being of their people.

The participation of the new member states in the work of the Organization will definitely enrich its substance and will bring a new vitality to its activities. In fact, this third meeting of the Regional Planning Council could be considered as the beginning of a new period in ECO. In this new period, despite the difficulties, we should endeavour to create the necessary suitable conditions for a productive and meaningful cooperation within the enlarged ECO through enhancement of economic complementarities. Implementation of liberal economic programmes and the growing emphasis on market forces in the attainment of economic development objectives will certainly have its positive impact on the productivity of ECO activities. We should, therefore, seek more active involvement on the part of the private sector in our future cooperation efforts.

*Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Delegations,*

At this point, allow me to share with you briefly my delegation's views on the overall activities of ECO and what needs to be done in the new period to enhance the efficiency of our cooperation efforts. Presently, we have eight technical committees under ECO to do the actual work. When we examine closely the agendas and activities of the committees, we notice a strong tendency towards the proliferation of projects and activities. We further notice that only a few of these projects are well documented and thoroughly multilateral aiming at the attainment of common economic objectives. We

therefore believe that our first task in the period ahead should be to carefully scrutinize the agendas of all the committees, by taking into consideration the requirements of the enlarged ECO, and with a view to streamlining the existing projects and activities.

Another point which we think should be given proper consideration is the delay in the establishment of some basic bodies which could undertake the required technical studies in an objective and efficient manner. In this respect, the ECO Trade and Development Bank, when established, will assume an important role to make up the relative weakness of ECO as compared to other similar international organizations. IRA-TURK-PAK Joint consultancy Company is another ECO institution which, with the joining of the new members, would assume a more prominent role in the preparation of feasibility studies related to various projects on the agenda. Furthermore, ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry could play a more effective role in the future and could enable us to increase the returns of our activities within the expanded economic space of ECO.

In this connection, I would like to emphasize the increased importance of trade in ECO. Indeed, it is through trade in goods and services that we can achieve lasting and mutually beneficial economic relations among our countries. In order to be able to benefit from cooperation in the area of trade, however, efforts for the liberalization of foreign trade regimes, particularly in the area of non-tariff barriers should be given more emphasis. Cooperation in the areas of Transport, Communications and Energy also calls for high priority in the coming period.

*Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Delegations,
Brothers, and Sisters,*

In the course of our deliberations, we are expected to review the work of the eight technical committees and formulate our recommendations for submission to the Council of Ministers to be convened in the first week of next month in Islamabad.

I believe that the present Session will constitute the first opportunity for most of the new member states participating in the meeting to familiarize themselves with the particulars of the projects on the agenda of ECO. We think, however, that a more systematic approach should be assumed to orient the new members to the work of ECO and to review the projects on the agenda in terms of their needs and capacities. To achieve this, we may ask the main committees to review and streamline their projects and activities in the light of requirements and capacities of the new member states.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, I would like to welcome once again the new members among us and wish the Council success in its important work.