



226th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

10th January, 2018
ECO Secretariat - Tehran

Report

The 226th CPR Meeting was held on Wednesday 10th January 2018 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Khan Durrani, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Iran. It was attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States except Uzbekistan. The ECO Secretary General along with concerned officials of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. The list of participants is enclosed as *Annex-I*.

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

2. Under this agenda item, the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan proposed that under ***Agenda Item No.6 "Any Other Business"***, it would like to raise the issue of forthcoming Meetings in Pakistan i.e. (i) *"1st Meeting on ECO Reinsurance Company"* and (ii) *"Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC) Meeting"*. The Council showed no objection to the proposal of Pakistan and adopted the following Agenda of 226th CPR Meeting for deliberations:

Agenda

1. *Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 226th CPR Meeting*
2. *Adoption of the Draft Report of the 225th CPR Meeting*
3. *Submission of 28th RPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme 2018 and Calendar of Events 2018 to the upcoming COM for approval*
4. *Preparations for 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting preceded by Senior Officials Meeting on 16-17 April 2018 in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan:*
 - (a) *Draft Agenda*
 - (b) *New "Scales of Assessment" and "ECO Reforms"*
 - (c) *Draft Dushanbe Communique*
 - (d) *Organizational Matters*
5. *Administrative Matters:*
 - (a) *Continued discussions on new nominations for the post of Deputy Secretary General (EME, HRSD, DOCCU, Admin) and Director (PERS)*
 - (b) *Recommendations of the Selection Panel*
6. *Any other business*
7. *Date of the next CPR Meeting*

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of 225th CPR Meeting

3. The Council adopted the Draft Report of the 225th CPR Meeting circulated to the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/225th Meeting/2017/1623 dated 20th December 2017, ***along with amendments proposed by the Republic of Turkey in paragraphs 30 and 35 of the Draft Report***. The amendments were circulated to the Member States through Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/225th Meeting/2017/1649 dated 27th December 2017.

Agenda Item No.3

Submission of 28thRPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme 2018 and Calendar of Events 2018 to the upcoming COM for approval

4. The 28th RPC Meeting was held on 11th - 14th December 2017 in Islamabad (Pakistan). The RPC Report, Work Programme-2018 and Calendar of Events-2018 were

circulated to the Member States vide ECO Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/RPC/28th Meeting/2017/1621 dated 20th December 2017.

5. The Representative of the Republic of *Azerbaijan* drew the attention of the Council mentioning that in the Calendar of Events-2018, there are two events (i) *6th Meeting on the ECO Heads of Privatization Administration* " and (ii) *"5th HLWG on Privatization and Private Sector Development"* wherein the venues have been mentioned as *"Baku"*. The Representative requested changing the venues to *"TBD"* instead of *"Baku"* for both the meetings besides re-formulating or deletion of Para 52 - *Sector 'D': Agriculture, Industry and Tourism*" in the Work Programme-2018.

6. The Council after deliberation and considering the views of the Representative of the Republic of *Azerbaijan* as well as the *Legal Adviser* of the ECO Secretariat in view, decided to amend the venues of above two meetings as *'TBD'* in the Calendar of Events 2018 besides deleting Para 52 of Sector 'D' in the Work Programme 2018. *The Council also endorsed the 28th RPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme 2018 (with deletion of Para 52 of Sector 'D') and Calendar of Events 2018 (with proposed amendments by Azerbaijan) and recommended for formal approval by the upcoming COM Meeting.*

Agenda Item No.4

Preparations for 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting preceded by Senior Officials Meeting on 16-17 April 2018 in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan

7. The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan has decided to hold 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting preceded by Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on 16-17 April 2018 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan). All the Member States have been informed accordingly.

8. Deputy Secretary General Mr. Kanan Nazarov briefed the Council about the latest position of the forthcoming 23rd COM Meeting in Dushanbe (Tajikistan). He informed that the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan will lead the Pakistani delegation in the 23rd COM Meeting. He said that the ECO Secretariat prepared the Draft Agenda of the 23rd COM and circulated to all Member States vide its Note Verbale No. CFU/COM/23rd Meeting/2017/1651 dated 27th December 2017. Pakistan has conveyed its concurrence to the Draft Agenda of 23rd COM. Remaining Member States were requested for early confirmation of participation in the forthcoming 23rd COM Meeting as well as provision of inputs for the Draft Agenda.

9. As per previous practice, Deputy Secretary General further requested the Council for establishment of a *"Preparatory Committee (PREPCOM)"*, to be Co-Chaired by present and future Chair of COM to develop draft final outcomes of COM as well as finalize 'Draft Dushanbe Communiqué'.

10. ECO Secretary General reminded Turkmenistan delegation for early provision of comments/ views on *"Scales of Assessment"* and *"ECO Reforms"* so that efforts are made to finalize both the issues at the earliest. He further informed the Council that the Secretariat has developed a *"Zero Draft Dushanbe Communiqué"* which is being circulated soon to all the Member States as well as its further deliberation in PrepCom's meetings.

11. The Representative of the *Kyrgyz Republic* informed the Council about the participation of Kyrgyz Foreign Minister in the forthcoming 23rd COM. However, formal communication will be conveyed on receipt from the capital. The Representative said Agenda Item No.6 of the 23rd COM Draft Agenda wherein it has been mentioned *"Agreements between ECO Member States"* may be changed as *"ECO Agreements"* as it might have some misunderstanding in current/Russian version.

12. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* informed the Council that the Iranian delegation will be led by its Foreign Minister His Excellency Mr. Javad Zarif and the Secretariat will be formally informed soon. The Representative also hoped to receive the “Zero Draft Dushanbe Communiqué” from the Secretariat for consideration by the authorities concerned and also finalization of basic framework of “Draft Dushanbe Communiqué” by PrepCom.

13. *The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan taking the floor referred to the possibility of holding ‘Special Conference on Afghanistan’ on the sidelines of 23rd COM Meeting in Dushanbe and said if this event is going to held as it was proposed, then the concerned authorities of ECO Member States including the host country and Afghanistan need to be formally notified in order to make necessary preparations in this regard.*

14. After deliberations, the Council decided to establish a “*Preparatory Committee (PREPCOM)*” to be Co-Chaired by the existing Chair (*Pakistan*) and the future Chair (*Tajikistan*) to discuss all the issues relating to upcoming COM meeting in Dushanbe as well as finalization of “Draft Dushanbe Communiqué” well in time. The Council also decided to hold the first meeting of the PrepCom at the end of *January 2018* at the ECO Secretariat and formal communication will be sent to Member States soon.

Agenda Item No.5

Administrative Matters

a. **Continued discussions on the new nominations for the posts of Deputy Secretary General (EME, HRSD, DOCCU, Admin) and Director (PERS)**

15. It was decided in the 225th CPR Meeting for holding of an “Informal CPR Meeting” which was convened on Tuesday 26th December 2017 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A “*Brief Paper*”, prepared by the ECO Secretariat was circulated to the Permanent Representatives regarding “*age limit*” in the ECO Staff Regulations.

16. ECO Secretary General briefed the Council that after the Informal Meeting, the Secretariat circulated a Summary Report to all Member States vide Secretariat’s Note Verbale No: LA/Administration/2018/8 dated 3rd January 2018. The Secretary General further said that the Secretariat also proposed a draft decision for consideration by the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR). The proposed draft decision is reproduced below:

“The Council of Permanent Representatives, with the understanding that the retirement age of the ECO Secretariat is needed to be raised and within the context of gender equality and abolition of discrimination, decided to recommend extension of the retirement age of the ECO Secretariat from 60 to 65, irrespective of the gender of staff to the Council of Ministers. The Council of Permanent Representatives further decided to recommend to the Council of Ministers abrogation of Article 19.2.4 which provides for the possibility of re-employment of staff, on a yearly basis, after the retirement age of 60. The Council of Permanent Representatives also found it necessary to seek approval of the Council of Ministers, with retroactive effect as of 1st January 2018, through silence procedure and to this end 24th of January 2018 as the deadline.

In the above-mentioned context, the Council of Permanent Representatives, further decided to recommend appointment of Mr. Hadi Soleimanpur (Iranian national) as the replacement of Mr. Seyed Jalaleddin Alavi, Deputy Secretary General for Administration, Energy and Sustainable Development to the Council of Ministers. The approval of the Council of Ministers shall be sought by the ECO Secretariat along with the above-

mentioned recommendation for the amendment. The Council also set 24th of January 2018 as the deadline for this purpose. In addition, the Council of Permanent Representatives decided to appoint Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev (Kazakh national) as the replacement of Mr. Akim Urmantayev, Director for Projects, Economic Research and Statistics. The appointment takes effect upon the approval of amendment of Article 18.5."

17. The Council after deliberation decided to recommend to the ECO Council of Ministers the following amendments in the ECO Staff Regulations:

a- Article 18.5 is amended as follows:

"Article 18.5: Retirement at the age of 60 65 for men and 55 for women"

b- Article 19.2.4 is deleted:

~~"19.2.4: Upon attaining the age of 60, the Secretary General may, however, re-employ on yearly basis a retired member of staff for further period which shall not exceed five years."~~

18. In the context of the above mentioned amendments, the Council of Permanent Representative also decided to recommend to the Council of Ministers the appointment of Mr. Hadi Soleimanpur (*Iranian national*) as the Deputy Secretary General for Administration, Human Resources and Sustainable Development, Energy, Minerals, Environment, Drugs and Organized Crimes (**Category-I, D3**) replacing Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari who would complete the extended term of his appointment on **29-01-2018**.

19. The CPR also agreed that absent a COM Meeting, the approval of the honourable Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States on above mentioned recommendations may be sought through circulation. In case of no objection by any honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs within 15 days (i.e. by 24th of January 2018), the above mentioned amendments and appointment may be treated as approved by COM.

20. The Council also decided to appoint Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev (*Kazakh national*) as Director for Project, Economic Research and Statistics (PERS) replacing Mr. Akim Urmantayev. The appointment will be effective pending approval of proposed amendment to the *Article 18.5* of the ECO Staff Regulations.

b. Recommendations of the Selection Panel

21. The Council was informed that the Selection Panel meeting was held on 10th January 2018 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Imran Haider, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Chairman of Selection Panel said there were two re-employment cases: (i) *Mr. Hasan Sahin, Programme Officer (Turkish national)*, who is going to retire on 14-01-2018 and (ii) *Mr. Mehmet Ali Saglam, Programme Officer, (Turkish national)*, who will retire on 31-01-2018. He said the Representative of Turkey informed that its capital require more time for evaluation of Secretariat's request. It is pertinent to mention that the ECO Secretariat sought one year's re-employment of both the Secretariat's employees. The Chairman of Selection Panel requested Council's deliberation and decision in both the cases.

22. The Council after deliberation decided the following:

(i) Since Mr. Hasan Sahin (*Turkish national*) will reach the age of retirement on 14-01-2018 and pending the decision of the Republic of Turkey on his possible re-employment or nomination for his replacement, he will be re-employed, as per Article 19.2.4 of the ECO Staff Regulations, from 15th January 2018 until the next (227th) CPR meeting.

- (ii) The case of Mr. Mehmet Ali Saglam (*Turkish national*) will be dealt with in line with the ongoing process of amendment to the Article 18.5 of the ECO Staff Regulations.

Agenda Item No.6

Any Other Business

23. Under this agenda item, the Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* enquired from the ECO Secretariat about the progress with regard to the payment to Ms. Farideh Yeganeh Esfarjani, a former employee of the ECO Secretariat.

24. ECO Secretary General stated that 215th CPR meeting authorized the ECO Secretary General to settle/conclude the case of Ms. Farideh Yeganeh Esfarjani after consent from the Republic of Turkey. He said a Note Verbale was addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey and reply in this regard is awaited.

25. *The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey said the concern was stemming from the fact that, the lady in question had retired from the Secretariat 25 years ago, but asked for financial benefits only recently, so this raised the question of statute of limitations, but after further deliberations and evaluations and in a spirit of compromise, Ms. Esfarjani's request has been seen as agreeable, hence the Secretariat can proceed with the payment to the concerned lady her benefits in line with the rules and regulations of the organization.*

26. The Council, while appreciating the kind gesture shown by the Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey*, authorized the ECO Secretariat for making payment to Ms. Farideh Yeganeh Esfarjani, in line with decision of 215th CPR Meeting.

27. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Pakistan* taking the floor stated that Pakistan side has informed the Secretariat for holding the "*1st Meeting on ECO Reinsurance Company*" to discuss about the modalities for the establishment of the company which is scheduled to be held on 19th of January 2018. He said the Secretariat has already circulated the same to the Member States. The Representative requested the distinguished colleagues from *Iran* and *Turkey* to convey suitable nominations for the "General Assembly" and the "Board of Directors" at the earliest. He further informed that "*9th Meeting of Road Committee of TTCC*", "*6th Meeting of the Customs Transit Committee of TTCC*" and "*9th Meeting of TTCC*" meetings are scheduled to be held from 13th - 15th February 2018 in Islamabad (Pakistan). He requested all the Member States to convey their nominations as soon as possible to enable the authorities in Pakistan for firming-up the programme of these meetings accordingly.

28. Under this agenda item, Deputy Secretary General Mr. Kanan Nazarov informed the Council that the ECO Secretariat has prepared two Lists of Events to be financed/supported from Special Support Fund (SSF) 2018 and distributed the same to the distinguished delegates. He said these Lists will be circulated to the Member States for seeking approval in the next CPR Meeting. Deputy Secretary General, however, mentioned that there are some events scheduled in February/March 2017, therefore, approval of the Council is required so that these events are held accordingly. The list of the events are as under:

List-I: TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Event/Activity</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Date</u>
1.	9 th Meeting of Road Committee of TTCC	Pakistan	13 February 2018
2.	6 th Meeting of the Customs Transit Committee of TTCC	Pakistan	14 February 2018
3.	The 9 th Meeting of TTCC	Pakistan	15 February 2018

List-I: AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND TOURISM

1.	4 th Coordination Committee Meeting on Industrial Property Rights	Pakistan	7-8 March 2018
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List-II: PROJECTS, ECONOMIC RESEARCH & STATISTICS

1.	Regional Training Workshop on Emerging Issues implementation of Sustainable Development Goals	Iran	25-28 February 2018
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29. The Council considered and approved the above mentioned meetings/events to be supported from Special Support Funds (SSF) 2018.

30. The Council also noted the observation made by the Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Afghanistan* regarding inclusion of some events to be held in 2019 in Afghanistan in the SS Fund List and decided to discuss the same once the lists are circulated to the Member States and the Secretariat formally receives inputs on these lists.

31. Under this agenda item, ECO Secretary General also informed the Council about "*5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (ECO-MMCFT)*", scheduled to be held on 23-24 January 2018 in Islamabad (Pakistan). He said the host authorities have informally received confirmation from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic. However, formal confirmation is required to achieve the quorum. On this, the CPR Chairman requested the Member States for early confirmation of participation in the said meeting.

Agenda Item No.7

Date of the next CPR Meeting

32. The Council decided to convene its next (227th) Meeting on Wednesday 14th February 2018 at 10:00 hrs.

33. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* informed the Council that efforts are being made to hold the *227th CPR in Kish Island* where the accommodation will be arranged by them. Moreover 4-5 air tickets will be provided for the ECO Secretariat + the CPR Chairman, however, the distinguished Member States may have to arrange their air tickets. The Representative said all issues are being coordinated with the Kish authorities and the ECO Secretariat will be formally conveyed for onward information to the Member States.

34. While adjourning the meeting, the CPR Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to the distinguished Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States for their participation and valuable contribution in the Meeting.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Ahmad Haroon Najmpoor, Minister-Counsellor
- Mr. Nader Pajohesh, Second Secretary
- Ms. Zahra Badaghi, Administrative Assistant

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- Mr. Bunyad Huseynov, Ambassador
- Mr. Javid Musayev, Counsellor

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General
- Mr. Abulfazl Mohammad Alikhani, Deputy Director General
- Mr. Shahrokh Edrisabadi, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- H.E. Mr. Baghdad Kultayevich AMREYEV, Ambassador
- Mr. Yerbol Akhmetov, Minister-Counsellor

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Mr. Aziz Kurumbaev, Counsellor,

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Khan Durrani, Ambassador
- Mr. Imran Haider, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Ghulam Hussain, Second Secretary

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr. Firdavs Yusupov, Second Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:

- H.E. Mr. Riza Hakan TEKİN, Ambassador
- Ms. Hatice ÖZDİL, Third Secretary

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- Mr. Islam Sakhatow, Third Secretary

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akça, Secretary General
- Mr. Seyed Jalaedin Alavi Sabzevari, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Bahodur Rahmonov, Assistant Director (CFU)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, English-Persian Interpreter/Translator
