



229th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

11th April 2018
ECO Secretariat - Tehran

Report

The 229th CPR Meeting was held on Wednesday 11th April 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 and attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States except Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. 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. The Council adopted the following Agenda of 229th CPR Meeting for deliberations:

Agenda

1. *Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 229th CPR Meeting*
2. *Adoption of the Draft Report of the 228th CPR Meeting*
3. *Preparations for 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting preceded by Senior Officials Meeting on 16-17 April 2018 in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan (continued)*
4. *Preparations for the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport*
5. *The request of Educational Institute (ECO-EI) to revise its Budget*
6. Administrative Matters:
 - (a) *Recommendations of the Selection Panel*
7. *Any other business*
8. *Date of the next CPR Meeting*

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of 228th CPR Meeting

3. The Council adopted the Draft Report of the 228th CPR Meeting circulated to the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/228th Meeting/2018/399 dated 27th March 2018.

Agenda Item No.3

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

4. 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting preceded by Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) is scheduled to be held on April 16-17, 2018 at Dushanbe.

5. Deputy Secretary General Mr. Kanan Nazarov briefed the Council stating that Draft Agenda, Annotated Draft Agenda along with Tentative Programmes (*received from the host authorities*) of SOM and COM Meetings have been circulated to Member States. He further informed that according to Draft Agenda of COM, all relevant documents, prepared by ECO Secretariat have been circulated to Member States. These documents include: (i) Report of Secretary General, (ii) Progress Report on Implementation of ECO Vision 2025, (iii) updated Compiled Positions of Member States on ECO Scales of Assessment and Reforms (iv) draft new Modalities on establishment of Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions (v) latest Information on ECOTA, (vi) Draft Decision & Draft Protocol amending the Statute of RISCAM (vii) Annual Reports of the Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions (viii) updated information about the ECO Specialized Agencies and affiliated bodies under the establishment and (ix) New ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan (EAPA).

6. Deputy Secretary General further informed the Council that besides invitation to the Chairman for the Executive Committee, Executive Secretary of CIS, Representatives of International Organizations based in Tajikistan i.e. UNDP, World Bank, IDB, etc. have been invited by the Republic of Tajikistan in the 23rd COM Meeting and as per Rules of Procedure, Council's approval is required for inviting these guests in the 23rd COM meeting.

7. On CPR Chairman's request, all the distinguished Representatives of the Council conveyed the level of participations in the upcoming 23rd COM Meeting as under:

- i. Foreign Minister, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*
- ii. Deputy Foreign Minister, Republic of Azerbaijan*
- iii. Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran*
- iv. Deputy Foreign Minister, Republic of Kazakhstan*
- v. First Deputy Foreign Minister, Kyrgyz Republic*
- vi. Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, Islamic Republic of Pakistan*
- vii. Minister of Development, Republic of Turkey*
- viii. Foreign Minister, Republic of Turkmenistan (Not confirmed)*
- ix. Deputy Foreign Minister, Republic of Uzbekistan*

8. After deliberations, the Council approved the List of Invitees by the Republic of Tajikistan as guests for attending the 23rd COM Meeting on 17th April 2018 in Dushanbe.

9. The Council also deliberated on the following issues:

(A) Draft Dushanbe Communiqué

10. Co-Chairman of PrepCom, Mr. Imran Haider, Minister/Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan briefed the Council stating that as per decision of the Informal CPR Meeting, 6th PrepCom Meeting was held on April 9, 2018 but unfortunately no progress could be made on *Draft Dushanbe Communiqué* as some Member States including one which put the whole Communiqué in bracket did not participate in the meeting. Therefore, it was decided, with consensus, to refer the matter to CPR for discussion.

11. On enquiry by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran*, regarding attendance, the Co-Chairman of PrepCom informed that in absence of few Member States in the 6th PrepCom Meeting, the attending Representatives were of the opinion for withdrawal of all political-paragraphs from text of the Dushanbe Communiqué. However, consensus could not be achieved due to absence of three Member States.

12. After briefing by the Co-Chairman of PrepCom, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* brought to the notice of the Council about a Note Verbale of 10th April 2018 from Turkmenistan wherein it was mentioned "...to list the ECO countries, adopting this document with the exception of Turkmenistan...". He opined that there are other issues to be discussed but if this is the situation, then there is no use of convening of today's CPR Meeting. He said if we are unable to have consensus here in the CPR then probably it is also not possible to conclude the document in Senior Officials Meeting (SOM).

13. The Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey* stated that in view of absence of Representatives of few Member States, especially one who had the concerns on the Draft Communiqué; it would not be appropriate to take any final decision at this stage. He suggested referral of the issue of Dushanbe Communiqué to Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in Dushanbe.

14. After deliberations and in absence of consensus, the Council decided to refer the issue of Dushanbe Communiqué for finalization by the Senior Officials Meeting in Dushanbe.

(B) Scales of Assessment and Reforms

15. The Co-Chairman of PrepCom informed the Council that the 6th PrepCom Meeting deliberated the issues of "*Scale of Assessment and Reforms*" particularly the issue of - 4.63% deficit of the Organization budget. The issue was also discussed in the Informal CPR Meeting on 7th April and consequently the ECO Secretariat issued a Note Verbale on 8th April 2018 mentioning that "*the Council discussed- 4.63% (minus) deficit reflected in the table may be divided/contributed by the Member States, except Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, whose shares are already on the higher side*". However, the Representative of Kyrgyz Republic was of the view that the issue requires more and thorough/detailed deliberations by the Working Group and, therefore, we should avoid taking any hasty decision in this regard. During the meeting, it was also suggested to obtain fresh mandate from the forthcoming 23rd COM Meeting to convene more meetings of the Working Group for this purpose.

16. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** stated that the issue of meeting the -4.63% deficit will require more time until we receive comments/views from the Member States. He suggested that the Secretariat may also propose other options for speeding-up the process as still the issue of Scales of Assessments has not yet been finalized and meeting the deficit of -4.63% of the Organization's budget will further take a long process.

17. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** also suggested detailed deliberations by the Working Group on the issues of "*Scales of Assessment*" and "*ECO Reforms*". He emphasized that there should not be any conditions such as more contributions more posts and opined that this is not the case at all. In the Informal CPR Meeting it was decided to divide the deficit of - 4.63% among four Member States, however, they agreed on the condition that "*if the Reform is accepted*". The Permanent Representative, however, said negotiations could be made within the Working Group and also supported the work done by EPG and Secretariat's new proposal, which require more deliberations and dissuasion in order to come up to a conclusion.

18. The Secretary General recalled that earlier a Working Group was established for deliberation/discussion on the issues of "Scales of Assessment" and "Reform". However, in a fresh attempt for having a possible conclusion, he suggested discussing these issues in the Senior Officials Meeting in Dushanbe.

19. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** while expressing concerns over the outcomes of the Working Group established for the purpose of Scales of Assessment and Reforms, endorsed the proposal of the Secretary General to make another attempt for discussing these issues at the level of Senior Officials Meeting in Dushanbe. The Ambassador stated that budget was a matter of serious concern and in case the issue is not resolved, the Organization will again face shortfall in the budget.

20. After deliberations, the Council decided to refer the issues of "*Scales of Assessment*" and "*ECO Reforms*" to be discussed and finalized by the Senior Officials Meeting in Dushanbe.

(C) Draft Agenda of 23rd COM

21. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** made reservations about the language under Agenda Item 8: "*Writing off in full volume of the arrears of the Republic of Uzbekistan.....*" and suggested to change it as "*Discussion under arrears of the*

Republic of Uzbekistan". He said once a decision on the issue is taken then it can be written as "**Writing Off**".

22. However, the Representative of the Republic of *Uzbekistan* opposed the suggestion proposed by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* for changing the decided language mentioned in Agenda Item No.8.

23. The Secretary General stated that after the Informal CPR Meeting and based on the instructions, the Draft Agenda of 23rd COM was again circulated by the ECO Secretariat to the Member States.

24. After deliberations and acknowledging the concerns raised by Iranian side about the language under Agenda Item 8, the CPR Chairman stated that amendments suggested in the Draft Agenda were agreed during the Informal CPR Meeting. Moreover, after amendments, the Secretariat has circulated the Draft Agenda of 23rd COM Meeting to the Member States and, therefore, we may maintain the principle of consensus and approve it.

(D) New ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan

25. The Co-Chairman of PrepCom informed the Council that 6th PrepCom Meeting discussed the New ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan. However, the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan requested that it would be preferable if the matter could be discussed at the level of SOM.

26. The Secretary General stated that the draft ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan was developed and amendments in the Modalities would be discussed in the Senior Officials Meeting (COM).

27. The Council decided to refer the New ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan (EAPA) for discussion and finalization by Senior Officials Meeting in Dushanbe.

Agenda Item No.4

Preparations for the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport

28. Director (Transport and Communication) of the ECO Secretariat briefed the Council regarding the preparation of the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport preceded by Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on May 3, 2018 at Turkmenbashi. He said opening ceremony of the new International Seaport is scheduled to be held on May 2, 2018. Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda has already been circulated to the Member States. The Council was also informed that invitation letters signed by the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan have been dispatched to the relevant Ministers, with hospitality details. The Director requested the distinguished members of the Council for early confirmations of respective delegations of the Member States. Information regarding logistic arrangements will immediately be communicated on receipt. He further said that ECO Secretariat has received a request from Turkish Cypriot State for participation in the Ministerial Meeting which requires approval by the CPR.

29. On a query by the CPR Chairman about the shortage of time, Director of the Secretariat informed that it was also a matter of concern for the Secretariat too but added that host country is pursuing it bilaterally through their respective Embassies in the Member States.

30. The Secretary General said basically its a sideline Ministerial Meeting as Turkmenistan has invited more than 30 countries for the opening ceremony of

Turkmenbashi Seaport and it has been informed some countries being represented at the level of Presidents and Prime Ministers, including ECO Member States. He sought CPR's approval for (i) *participation by Turkish Cypriot State* and (ii) *Invitations to International Organizations*.

31. The CPR Chairman made a query whether the information regarding participation of affiliated bodies and invitation to other International/Regional Organizations including the participation by the Turkish Cypriot State have been circulated to Member States.

32. Taking the floor, Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* showed concerns stating that the ECO Secretariat received a letter of 3rd April 2018 from Turkish Cypriot State for participation in the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting, however, till today it has not yet been circulated. He sought explanation why the required action has not been taken by the Secretariat.

33. The Council was informed by Director (T&C) of the Secretariat that keeping the previous practice in view the matter was believed to be discussed in the CPR meeting.

34. However, the CPR Chairman showed concerns and said that as per standard procedures, every receipt of information received by the Secretariat should invariably be circulated to all Member States for seeking instructions from the respective capitals before being discussed in the CPR. However, he asked for immediate circulation of the same communication without any further delay. Moreover, CPR Chairman put it on the distinguished members of the Council for taking a decision.

35. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey*, while agreeing to the observations and concerns of the CPR Chairman, said that since approval of CPR is required with regard to participation of Observers and other interested parties, it would not be preferable to keep the issue in abeyance until the next CPR Meeting. He suggested while the Secretariat circulates necessary documents to the Member States, the Council, due to paucity of time, may adopt silence procedure for a decision.

36. After deliberations and reminding the Secretariat for timely circulation of the received information to the Member States, the Council approved participation of Turkish Cypriot State, in its capacity as Observer, in accordance with the ECO Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at ECO, at inaugural and closing ceremonies of the 9th Ministerial Meeting on Transport to be held on 3rd May 2018 in Turkmenbashi.

Agenda Item No.5

The request of Educational Institute (ECO EI) to revise its Budget

37. Deputy Secretary General (Admn) Mr. Hadi Soleimanpur briefed the Council stating that in light of provision contained in Chapter-II of Rules of Procedure of Educational Institute's (EI), which stated that considering the Board of Trustees (BoT) shall meet biannually and in the absence of BoT, the Council of Ministers (COM) or Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) shall decide on approving the annual budget of ECO Institutions including ECO-EI. The ECO-EI vide its Note Verbale of 7th February 2018 requested the Secretariat for inclusion of their proposed Revised Budget with change in Scale of Salaries on the Agenda of CPR for consideration. ECO Secretariat vide Note Verbale of 25th March, 2018 circulated the ECO-EI proposal among the Member States along with their current and proposed requested Salary Scales and the rationale to revise budget for consideration of this august hall. He informed that the Secretariat has also provided the salary structure of ECO-Cultural Institute (ECO-EI)

and ECO-Science Foundation (ECOSF) and invited Prof. M. Akif Kirecci, President of ECO-EI for further briefing to the 229th CPR Meeting about the proposal.

38. ECO Secretary General added that it was decided in the 28th Meeting of RPC to harmonize the Salary Scale of ECO-Specialized Agencies and as explained by DSG (ADMN) in absence of BoT meeting, the ECO-EI requested the Secretariat to raise the issue before the CPR.

39. Taking the floor, President of ECO-EI while thanking the CPR Chairman and distinguished members of the Council for giving him the floor, informed that the first BoT meeting held in the year 2012 approved the strength of 26 personnel at the time of establishment of Educational Institute but could not be realized for many reasons. He said after his appointment by 2nd BoT, staff strength in the budget was reduced to 15 personnel, in order to facilitate the 'D' level positions as hiring of professionals is quite difficult within the less attractive salary structure due to expensive and highly cost of living standard in Turkey. Keeping these circumstances in view, the Institute proposed rise only in salary structure. The President EI further highlighted that:

- (i) Salary increase has been proposed within the BoT total approved budget altogether;
- (ii) Changed some percentage of certain items while increasing the shares of salaries and allowances. The methodology applied for doing this was adoption of 'D' level structure of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) which is located in Islamabad and did some other revisions in other salaries; and
- (iii) Category-II and below level positions, some salary revision also proposed reducing some of the salaries in order to adjust chapters.

40. The Representatives of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* and *Pakistan* informed the Council that revised budget proposal of ECO-EI has been received and views/comments will be communicated to the Secretariat on receipt from the concerned authorities/capital.

41. The Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey* while appreciating the briefing by the President Educational Institute showed some concerns. He acknowledged that the new proposed budget does not bring any addition to the total budget, however, the share of salaries are increasing in the total budget of the Institute. Moreover, the budget allocated for Conferences, Seminars and Workshops have almost been halved from \$200,000 to \$113,000 annually. The Ambassador emphasized that the Institute must involve itself more in such activities and understands the fact that the Institute requires services of skilled and professional personnel and for this purpose they need to increase the salaries and some further adjustments can be considered. He also quoted the example of the international organization "The Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (*SESRIC*) in Ankara where salaries of 'A' category staff are comparably much lower than the proposed salaries in Educational Institute. The Ambassador said it does not mean that he is totally against the proposed budget but just wanted to point out the fact that we can improve the work of the Institute.

42. The CPR Chairman asked the President Educational Institute whether at any time did the ECO-EI consulted its sister organizations while formulating these salary structures. He asked on what basis this existing salary structure was decided.

43. The ECO-EI's President said that the proposal was made in consultation with the President of the ECO Science Foundation to review the existing salary structure of

Educational Institute and the revised budget proposal was made accordingly. He also added that EI's sister organizations did not allocate budget to include professional events in their program as maintained by the Educational Institute. He further said, if desired, that they would further study to work out the salary structure of A-level category.

44. The Chairman, however, reiterated his observation, seeking further elaboration on the proposal including the decrease in holding the professional events.

45. ECO Secretary General informed the Council that the establishment of Educational Institute and the formation of its financial & administrative frameworks do not relate to the period of present President EI Mr. Akif. He explained that Education Institute (EI) was established in 2012 while appointing a symbolic President without any remuneration. He said that the BoT, during its 2nd Meeting held in July 2017, decided to formalize the EI's institutional activities, endorsing the formal appointment of a new President, budget and Work Program. Secretary General further said that the Government of the Republic of Turkey allocated a building for EI's Office and underlined that keeping very old nature of the EI's salary structure, the President of Educational Institute after studying the administrative and financial aspects of the documents related to the establishment of ECO Cultural Institute and ECO Science Foundation, developed a proposal for consideration of RPC in order to harmonize the Salary Scales.

46. The CPR Chairman while appreciating the briefing by ECO Secretary General, said now the '*Blueprint*' is before the Council and some Member States are awaiting responses from their capitals, sought more views from the participants.

47. The Legal Advisor brought to the attention of the Council about article 8 and 8.1 contained in the ECO-EI's financial regulations, which stipulates that the Institute's President is empowered to transfer the allocated funds between chapters and items but he reiterated that this can only be done if needed.

48. On a query by CPR Chairman for raising the issue before CPR if the institute had the powers of re-appropriation of Fund, Legal Adviser further elaborated that proposal had two aspects each of those related to the change of salary structure and the revision of the already endorsed contents within the approved budget. He explained that the EI require increase in salary rather transferring of fund which was beyond the delegated powers of the organization, raising the level of salaries would rest with the CPR or any other higher ECO Forum in the absence of EI's Board of Trustees (BoT) meeting which shall, as prescribed, meet biennially under the prevailing regulations of the Institute.

49. The Chairman sought more information pertaining to rationale behind raising such a proposal as well as decrease in the proposed budget allocations for holding of the technical and capacity building events.

50. President of Educational Institute referring the relevant financial provision contained in their regulations, stated that the existing budget allocation for disbursement of salaries annually stands approximately US\$358,000/- and for other recurring expenditure US\$325,000/- respectively. However, after proposed increase, the figures would stand approximately US\$470,000/- (*salary and allowances*) and US\$213,000/- (other recurring expenditure) within the prescribed limitation. He further added that their sister organizations had no such budgetary allocations to hold scientific meetings, workshops, seminars etc. as provisioned by Educational Institute to run their affairs in more professional manners. He emphasized that there were no other options except altering the available resources to meet the Organization's targets.

51. The CPR Chairman inquired that normally scientific activities reflected in Calendar of Events and based on that appropriations are made.
52. President Educational Institute conveyed that even within the proposed budget we would be able to maintain our action plan with some minor contributions from other sources including ECO Member States at least for the first year.
53. While thanking the EI's President for his efforts to revive the Institutional activities, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* sought further clarification over the appointments of BoT Members as this would address the disposal of such matters more quickly.
54. President Educational Institute underlined that under the prescribed procedure the BoT Meeting would be held biannually. He said keeping the urgency for accelerating Organizational work and implementing the Action Pan, duly approved by 2nd Board of Trustee (BoT), the proposal is brought-up before the CPR for consideration.
55. After protracted deliberations, CPR Chairman asked the President of Education Institute and the Secretariat to formally submit the Education Institute's budgetary proposal with relevant administrative and financial rules along with powers of President Educational Institute for further evaluating the case in next CPR meeting.

Agenda Item No.6

Administrative Matters

a. Recommendations of the Selection Panel

56. The Council was informed that meeting of Selection Panel was held on 9th April, 2018 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Imran Haider, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. ECO Secretariat received nomination of Chaudhary Hadees Muhammad (**Pakistani national**) for appointment against the post of Steno Secretary (**Category-II, P2**). The Selection Panel recommended appointment for a full term of four years effective from date of his joining the Secretariat. Upon request of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Tehran, the Selection Panel also recommended relieving of present incumbent Steno-Secretary Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan of his duties on joining of the ECO Secretariat by Chaudhary Hadees Muhammad.
57. The Secretary General informed the Council that the Secretariat has received nomination of Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli against the post of Deputy Secretary General (**ADMN, EME, HRSD & DOCCU**) from the Republic of Turkey. The information has been circulated to the Member States and also included in the Draft Agenda of SOM & COM Meetings scheduled to be held on 16-17 April 2018 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) for approval.
58. The Council, on the briefing by the ECO Secretary General and recommendation of the Selection Panel, approved the following:
- (a) **Deputy Secretary General (Category-I, D3)**
The Council, as per ECO Rules and Regulations, recommended to COM nomination of Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli (*Turkish national*) for appointment as Deputy Secretary General (Admn, EME, HRSD & DOCCU) for formal endorsement by 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) scheduled to be held on 17th April 2018 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan)
 - (b) **Steno-Secretary (Category-II, P2)**
 - (i) Appointment of Chaudhry Hadees Muhammad (*Pakistan national*) as Steno-Secretary (**Category-II, P2**) for a term of four years effective

from the date of his joining the Secretariat replacing Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan.

- (ii) Moreover, the present incumbent Steno-Secretary Mr. Israr Ahmad Khan may be relieved of his duties in the ECO Secretariat upon joining of Chaudhry Hadees Muhammad.

Agenda Item No.7

Any Other Business

59. Under this agenda item, the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* brought to the notice of the Council the following two issues:

- (i) Recalled that during the last CPR Meeting, it was decided that one participant from each Member State would be reimbursed airfare from Special Support Fund to attend the "*2nd Expert Group Meeting on the establishment of ECO Agriculture-by-Technology Network*" to be held from 5-7 May, 2018. He added that as pointed out by the Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* in the previous CPR Meeting, the event was supposed to be included in the Calendar of Events and agenda of CPR. The Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* sought clarification for non-inclusion of the same in the agenda of today's CPR Meeting.
- (ii) Proposed that there were 3 or 4 countries (*Romania, Georgia, Armenia and one other country*) who had earlier applied for Observer/Membership Status or Dialogue Partnership but due to political differences among the Member States, the requests were put in shelves. He proposed to find-out the cases in order to finalize them.

60. On the first query by the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of *Iran*, ECO Deputy Secretary General Mr. Kanan Nazarov stated that in the last CPR meeting the Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* stated that the decision in this regard would be conveyed in next CPR Meeting. He sought Council's decision for inclusion of the said meeting in the List of Events to be supported from Special Support Fund.

61. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* stated that they have no objection as their concern was not stemming for one particular meeting. Referring the present list of meetings/seminars i.e. *Iran 25, Pakistan 20, the Secretariat 18, Turkey 6, Afghanistan and Tajikistan 2 each, Azerbaijan Kyrgyz Republic 1 each* to be financed under SSF, stated that, in principle, the SSF financed meetings/seminars should be planned in such a way that the utilization of Special Support Fund be made on the basis of equality or keeping the balanced-based distribution in view.

62. The Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* supported the idea of the Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey* for utilization of SSF on the basis of equality and said that if other Member States intend to convene any kind of event within the ECO from SSF are welcome.

63. The Council considered and approved the proposal of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* for inclusion of the meeting of "*2nd Expert Group Meeting on the establishment of ECO Agriculture-by-Technology Network from May 5-7, 2018*" in the List of Events to be supported from SS Fund.

64. Assistant Director (International Relations) of the ECO Secretariat referring to the second query of the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran* informed

the Council that so far the ECO Secretariat has three Observers and there were initial deliberations for initiating granting reciprocal Observer Status to ASEAN. Moreover, at present the Secretariat has no other applications/requests seeking Observer/Membership Status or Dialogue Partnership.

65. After response of the ECO Secretariat on the second query of the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of *Iran*, the CPR Chairman stated that since the requesting countries did not pursue their applications, therefore, it is not appropriate to go further until they knock back.

66. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of *Turkey* supported the stance of CPR Chairman and underlined that there doesn't seem any current pending application neither for full membership nor for observer status and added that any such application could be considered by CPR provided that they are pursued by the applicant parties.

67. The CPR Chairman considered that during the past 25 years after their first applications, the Organization must have taken some decisions as to accept or decline those requests or if this had not happened, it meant either lack of interests or opposition to the entry of any Observers or Organization. He added that if that were the case, there would have been fresh applications seeking the desired status either Observer or Dialogue Partnership. Noting that since the Secretariat had no such requests, the Council should end up discussion over it as we would only move case- by-case on each fresh request.

Agenda Item No.8

Date of the next CPR Meeting

68. The Council decided to convene its next (230th) Meeting on **Tuesday 15th May, 2018 at 10:00 hrs at the ECO Secretariat - Tehran.**

69. 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 contributions in the proceedings of CPR. He further added that this was his last meeting as CPR Chairman since the next Chairmanship would be taken over by Tajikistan after 23rd COM at Dushanbe on 17 April 2018.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Nader Pajohesh, Second Secretary
- Ms. Zahra Badaghi, Administrative Assistant

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

- H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General
- Mr. Akbar Khodai, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Shahrokh Edrisabadi, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- 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, Minister/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 the Republic of Uzbekistan:

- H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullaev, Ambassador
- Mr. Umid Babaev, Third Secretary

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akça, Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Hadi Soleimanpur, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Mohammad Ahmad Raza, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Mohammad Akbar Azizi, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, English-Persian Interpreter/Translator
