

STATEMENT FOR ECO SECRETARY GENERAL FAREWELL CEREMONY

H.E Mr. Gholamreza Ansari,

Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy

Tehran, 6th August, 2018

Distinguished Ambassadors and Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Salam Alaikom,

Tonight we have all gathered here to cast our message of appreciation to an accomplished Secretary General who led our organization to move further in the direction of regional development through his leadership capabilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nowadays we are all at a critical juncture and facing considerable challenges that tend to undermine international norms, rules and institutions and demolish the historical foundations of the world order. Therefore, we need to recognize the far reaching implications of such challenges and adopt necessary measures to mitigate their destructive consequences and one way to address them is close partnership of members of international community through multilateralism.

In this context, I am happy to avail this opportunity to inform you that the Islamic Republic of Iran will host the 3rd Summit of Asian Cooperation Dialogue on 15 October this year in Tehran and we are expecting the Summit to open a new chapter of cooperation towards a functional multilateral order.

The ECO as functional multilateral platform has provided us with tremendous opportunities to work together in a synergic manner to offset the destabilizing forces and help us achieve our development goals and contribute to the world prosperity and peace. And the role of H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca has been quite crucial in success of the Organization.

During his tenure as Secretary General, H.E Mr. Akca has recorded various achievements in different areas of cooperation such as implementation of valuable projects on transport, tourism, disaster risk reduction, communication, nanotechnology, environment, mines, energy and customs.

Therefore, learning from our past interactions and cooperation, along with developing and consolidating our national capacities for resilient economies, we shall maximize our efforts to work together to realize the potentials of our Organization and utilize them to meet aspirations of our nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran as the host country of the ECO Secretariat has always been supportive of the Organization's efforts and will continue its full support in the future. My government has recently appointed H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour, a capable diplomat for the post of the Secretary General replacing H.E Mr. Akca. I am confident that the next Secretary General will do his utmost efforts to

accomplish his mission and meet the high expectations of the Member States envisaged in the ECO Vision 2025.

As I already mentioned H.E Mr. Akca has contributed a lot to our organization and I am sure that he will continue his support in his national capacity as well. H.E Akca, besides leading the Secretariat, has also been studying the Iranian history and culture as well as learning the Farsi language and he might now be able to read the poems of Mulana, Ferdowsi, Saadi and Hafez. His endeavor proves that he has enjoyed his stay in Tehran and has established strong bonds of friendship with Iranian society. Hereby, I would like to assure him that we will always extend him and his family warm welcome in his future visits to Iran in personal capacity.

Once more, I would like to reiterate my sincere thanks to H.E Mr. Akca, for his excellent performance as Secretary General and wish him and his family prosperity, health and happiness for the future.

Thank you very much.