



237th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

11th March 2019
ECO Secretariat - Tehran

Report

The 237th Meeting of CPR was held on Monday March 11, 2019 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran. At the beginning of the meeting, taking into account the completion of the term of office of the Chairman of CPR, H.E. Mr. Nematullo Emomzoda, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Permanent Representative to ECO, the Secretary General requested the Council that, in the absence of the chairman, without prejudice to the chairmanship of Tajikistan, the meeting of the Council may be presided over by a temporary chairperson.

2. The Secretary General further informed the Council that the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan also requested the observance of temporary chairmanship, until the appointment of the new Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to ECO.

3. The Council elected Mr. Majid Bizmark, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the temporary chair of the 237th CPR. Accordingly, the 237th CPR Meeting attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan**, Republic of **Azerbaijan**, Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, **Kyrgyz Republic**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, Republic of **Turkey**, **Turkmenistan** and Republic of **Uzbekistan**, was held under the chairmanship of Iran. The ECO Secretary General along with concerned officials of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as *Annex-I*.

4. Before the adoption of the Agenda of 237th the Secretary General welcomed Mr. Alibek Bakaev, Director, Department of Asian-Wide Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan who traveled to ECO Headquarters with the aim of joining at the CPR Meeting to participate in the deliberation on the reform process. He also bade a farewell to H.E. Mr. Nasser Ahmad Noor, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, acknowledging valuable contribution, support and assistance to the organization.

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

5. The Council adopted the following Agenda of the 237th CPR Meeting for deliberations:

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 237th CPR Meeting
2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 236th CPR Meeting
3. Follow-up to the decisions of the 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting; ECO Reforms etc. (*continued*)
4. The Lists of Meetings/Events and Conferences/Workshops/Seminars/Training courses to be supported/financed from Special Support Fund (SSF) (*continued*)
5. Bank account of ECO Fund for Afghanistan

6. Attendance of Turkish Cypriot State at the 3rd Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre (ECO RCC) in its capacity as observer
7. Administrative matters:
 - Nomination for the post of Deputy Secretary General (T&I, AIT and IR)
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
8. Any other business:
9. Date of the next CPR Meeting

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 236th CPR Meeting

6. The Council adopted the Draft Report of the 236th CPR Meeting circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No.CFU/CPR/236th Meeting /2019/152 dated 18 February 2019.

Agenda Item No. 3

Follow-up to the decisions of the 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting; ECO Reforms etc. (continued)

7. The **Chair** informed the Council on the latest development of the reform process citing the previous consultations on the issue and the two-page draft paper in which the crux of the whole issue discussed so far has been reflected, in the form of a draft decision which has been put before the Members of the Council for their consideration. He further while inviting the Secretary General to provide the Council with the outcome of his consultation with the member states, sought views and comments of the Members of the Council to decide on the matter.

8. The Secretary General, informed the Council about the bilateral and multilateral consultations with the Member States held with a view to making progress towards fulfilling the mandate giving to him for conducting the reform process. In this context, he brought to the attention of the Council that the views of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan which were formally conveyed to ECO, under the reform process, were discussed by the Member States, and the non-represented status of Turkmenistan at the ECO Secretariat was also considered under the reform process he added that, as pointed out by the Chair, the summary of the outcome of consultations can be observed in the draft paper circulated among the Member States.

9. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan**, who arrived from Astana to especially join the discussions as regards issue of Kazakhstan in the process of reform, thanked the Council for inviting him. He expressed happiness over attending his first CPR's Meeting, wishing to secure fruitful outcomes of their negotiations. Regarding the Kazakhstan's arrears of contribution, he referred to the part of the two-page draft decision, and requested the deletion of the word "**UNPAID**" contribution, proposing to replace it by "**the contribution of Kazakhstan from 2014 till 2019**" in Para. 47 D infra. However, he was found agreed with rest of the contents.

10. The **Council** with the aim of avoiding any ambiguity sought clarification if the Representative of Kazakhstan as to the years included in the aforesaid period" from

2014 till 2019". In this regard, the Representative of Kazakhstan clarified that the word "**TILL OR UNTIL**" means from the year 2014 to the end of 2018.

11. The **Chair** requested the legal opinion over the comments of Kazakh Representative regarding omission of "**UNPAID**", and the phrase of "**the contribution of Kazakhstan from 2014 till 2019**".

12. The **Legal Advisor** elucidated that the whole paragraph as the draft decision pertaining to the arrears of Kazakhstan was couched in general terms based on the consultations held, in the hope of covering the concerns of all Member States. He added that, the phrase "**Balance of Contribution of Kazakhstan**", may also be used in place of the term " unpaid contribution" to which Kazakhstan has a reservation.

13. Regarding offer of posts to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, the Ambassador of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** expressed his concerns over the wording "**allocation of posts after materialization of their contributions to ECO Budget, which shall take place immediately as of the date of decision**", (see para 47 A infra) seeking clarification in this regard. He suggested the Council to make it rephrased as "**the proposed positions are offered to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan only after materialization of their contributions**".

14. Taking into account the observation of the Ambassador of Uzbekistan, the **Secretary General** clarified that "as of the date of this decision" denotes the decision of the COM on the given reform formula after the endorsement by CPR. He further said that the COM's approval of amended staff strengths as well as organizational structure of the secretariat, would be secured through "silence procedure" which may be resorted to expedite the process. As a result, the proposed positions would be available for allocation to the concerned Member States as of the date in which the decision of COM obtained and the contributions of the concerned Member States have been materialized.

15. The Ambassador of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** inquired that as to why the issue of distribution of posts was subject to the decision of the COM, adding that as far as his information was concerned, COM's approval would be required regarding write-off of the arrears.

16. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** underlined that the Council was taking into consideration the entire issue as part of the reform process and it would finally require to be approved by the COM. He sought the Secretariat's comments on the procedural and legal aspects that the issue would entail, hereafter.

17. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** recalled that as per new scale of assessments (**SoAs**), the agreed share of Kazakhstan would stand at 18% and Uzbekistan at 4%. He inquired if the new SoAs were agreed upon by other Member States, as well.

18. Regarding the readjustment of some wordings as proposed by the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the **ECO Secretary General** noted that the proposed draft decision include some elements concerning the structure of the Secretariat, which certainly requires approval by COM. About the query of Iranian

Representative, the Secretary General informed that a silence procedure, circulating the recommendations of CPR on reform formula, would be adopted to solicit the final approval of the COM. He added that if no objection received from any Member States within the prescribed period of two-week, the proposed formula would immediately come into force.

19. As regards Kazakh Representative's comments, the **Secretary General** while appreciating the idea of mentioning the period of arrears noted that the mandate given to the Secretariat should be quite clear. He further admired the Legal Advisor's proposal to make it "**balance of contribution**", considering it more appropriate as to keep intact the spirit and concept of the matter. However, he said that suggestion of Kazakh Representative might also be mulled over, leaving finalization of the issue at CPR's disposal. On SoAs, the Secretary General informed that while 07 Member States already expressed their consents, the response of remaining three including, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan was awaited. He also underlined that the adjustment of a difference of 1.92% was also mentioned in the draft SoA. Nevertheless, he stated that Azerbaijan was in process of announcing final position in the matter. The Secretary General expressed optimism over establishing a mutual understanding on the issue by next COM, requesting the Council to take a decision in this regard.

20. Responding to Secretary General's comments, the Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** clarified that his proposal was not to exactly change the title but to somehow adjust the contents of the paragraph, replacing the word "**Payment**" by "**Contribution**" and "**Unpaid**" by number of years i.e. from 2014 till 2019.

21. Citing some confusion experienced in the past, the Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** proposed to make it clear as "**the arrears of contribution of Kazakhstan from 2014 to 2018**" to avoid any future ambiguity.

22. Responding to the clarification sought by the Chair, the **Legal Advisor** underscored that the Secretariat's concern with respect to the duration proposed by Kazakhstan is the inclusion of the financial year of 2014 in the draft decision. In this regard he made a reference to the decision of COM in 2009, by which the decision on the Scale of Assessments from 2009 to 2015, which is quite obvious, that the year 2014 is included in the specified period and the contributions of the Member States should have been met based on the scales decided by 18th COM. He continued that there exist no inconsistency between the views of the Member States about the rate of contributions of the Member States for the said period.

23. **The Deputy Secretary General (T&C, AIT and IR)** clarified that the year 2014 was included in the SoAs decided for the period from 2009 to 2015 by the 18th COM. He also draw the attention of the Council to the contents of the report of the Extraordinary meeting of COM in 2015 under agenda item (c) concerning the new scale of assessments 2016-2018 which shows that the extraordinary COM decided to extend the scale of assessments agreed upon in 2009 to cover the year 2016. He emphasized on the Secretariat's concern in the given backdrop.

24. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** informed that regarding the decision of the extraordinary COM's meeting in 2015, his country raised some

reservations which were clearly conveyed through a Note Verbale to the Secretariat, and based on that the amendments were proposed to calculate the amount from 2014.

25. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** also stressed that the matter in question was decided by his government in 2014, therefore, Kazakhstan would sustain with their position in this regard, adding that the discussions on the issue even from the year 2015 were acceptable.

26. **The Deputy Secretary General (T&C, AIT and IR)** read out a decision reflected under agenda item 6 of the report of an extraordinary COM in 2015 that states *“the Ministerial Session considered the adoption of the budget of the ECO Secretariat for the financial year 2015 and further reviewed the observation made by the delegate of the Republic of Kazakhstan in CPR’s Meeting that his country had approved the budget for 2015 with understanding that Kazakhstan’s contribution for 2015 will be limited to US\$ 220,000”*.

27. The **Chair** underscored that it would be appropriated if the council could focus mainly on two points i.e. (i) decision of the COM on SoA from 2009 to 2015 and (ii) position of Kazakhstan to mull over their request for writing off of contribution from 2014. However, he emphasized on the compliance of the decision taken by the 18th COM.

28. While conditionally agreeing with the proposal, the Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** stated that it did not mean that the Council had reached a conclusion as Kazakhstan still considered to include 2014 in the years of their balance of contribution. However, the Council may conclude to move forward.

29. After the extensive deliberation over para 47 D of the proposal of Secretary General the council agreed on the proposed para as follows: *The Council of Permanent Representative mandates the Secretary General to consider comprehensively the request of Kazakhstan concerning the adjustment of contributions of Kazakhstan to ECO until the end of 2018 and submit a report along with a proposed formula based on the negotiation with Kazakhstan upon which the Council of Ministers may take the appropriate decision.*

30. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** stated that he did not receive instructions about the package, which was issued today during the CPR.

31. Referring the discussions made during 23rd COM at Dushanbe, the Ambassador of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** said that no concrete scheme of reform was seen to be suggested that time, bearing an irresolute and ambiguous situation at this stage. He added that one would undergo unnecessarily in view of the indecisive position of the other, requesting a clear status of the posts to be offered to Uzbekistan, so that his country would start paying its contribution. He further said that the Council should negotiate on the matter individually to move forward or otherwise it would prolong the process.

32. Acknowledging the concerns and points raised by the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan and hoping to delink the issues, the **Secretary General** noted that the entire reform package was interrelated. He suggested that the Council may

set a time limit to secure response or reaction of the Member States. If no response received within that time frame, the silence procedure may be adopted to obtain COM's approval or the Council may principally agree on the text while reflecting the position of Turkey in the report.

33. Responding to his Iranian counterpart on the date of 24th COM, the **Turkish Representative** informed that no specific dates were received so far, but the event was expected to be held in post-summer 2019. He asserted that his country would need a certain time to be able to respond as there was a lot more to be clarified in the provided document including, the status of heads of section.

34. With regard to the given document, the Ambassador of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** suggested more elaboration to fix and reflect the missing aspects, making it in a proper format.

35. Responding to his Uzbek Counterpart, the **Kazakh Representative** stated that the document reflected an objective picture, stating that in case of Uzbekistan the rate of contribution was decreased from 8 to 4% as compare to other Member States whose share was increased. He added that as the percentage of Kazakhstan's share would increase from 16 to 18%, the country was pursuing for some more positions, therefore, the payment of share remained conditional, and that subsequently after the materialization of such a request of Kazakhstan and on possession of the position of fourth DSG, Kazakhstan would relinquish the post of Director (PERS).

36. Realizing and supporting the position of Kazakhstan, Ambassador of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** underlined that his concern was the post to be offered to his country would be released by Kazakhstan, whereas in the absence of any conclusion, the process would remain halted. In the given context, it would be better to delink such issues to preclude the dependence on each other, he emphasized. He supported the position of his Turkish counterpart, needing some time to respond.

37. The **Chair** stated that the issue was as clear as he read out the comprehensive position given in the document. Regarding comments of Turkish Representative, he said that by giving one-month time, the Council would be required to defer the issue almost to the next CPR. On the remarks of the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan, he elucidated that the reform process was a combined package entailing all its aspects interrelated, application of which would not be possible in bits and pieces.

38. Acknowledging the concerns of all stakeholders, the **ECO Secretary General** recalled that this process took a long time to take some steps forward and it might take a little more to be finalized. However, he suggested the Council to endorse it as it was principally agreed by Member States, giving a one-month time to the Member States who had some observations, to come up with their ideas, and give mandate to the Secretary General to consult, compile and bring those ideas before the next CPR with some adjustments. This would help the Council to proceed forward with the reform.

39. Considering the views of Secretary General and the comments of participating representatives as well as finding various positions on the given document, the **Chair** considered the provision of more time to the Member States to secure some

conclusion that would enable the Council to make a decision in the next Meeting of CPR. However, he acknowledged that this session had at least found a base to move forward.

40. Noting that a few Member States had no objection while the others required some time to respond, the **ECO Secretary General** suggested the Council to consider the proposed text as principally agreed upon by all Representatives with provision that the delegates would need time to finally and formally convey the concurrence in the matter after consulting with their capitals, deferring the final decision to be taken by next CPR.

41. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** underlined that his government always made timely payment of their share to the ECO's budget, whereas the country was less-represented in the secretariat's affairs. He reiterated the stance of his government to increase their share up to 2% subject to the consideration of Afghanistan's request for three positions including, the posts in D1, P3 and the preservation of existing position in P1.

42. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, while commenting on the new position of Afghanistan, noted that the entire agreement would be rearranged in case of such requests from any Member States, considering further expansion of organization.

43. The **Legal Advisor** added that under this decision, the Council would address some parts of the reform relating to non-represented Member States and Kazakhstan. However, the issue of Afghanistan was somehow foreseen and could be mulled over, within the reform process, in the next segment of the process. He added that the two-page draft text circulated today has delineated some parts of the reform process. It is not expected that this segment to be affected by the remaining parts of the reform process. As the Council progress in its discussion the respective proposals, will be submitted to CPR for its consideration.

44. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** questioned over the inalterability of the text, stating that the delegates received the document only today and would require instructions of their capitals on the issue with no condition of its inalterability. While supporting his Afghan counterpart's right to express his country's considered position, he elucidated that if Afghanistan was looking for some more posts on increased share of 2%, it would be required by Member States to examine the case.

45. The Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** stated that he did not want to take the floor since the given document had no direct relation with his country but it did indirectly. He proposed to follow the decision of the previous CPR under which Secretary General was mandated to address such issues, appreciating the Secretary General's earlier efforts that melted the ice, considerably. However, he emphasized that since the organization included the ideas and interests of ten Member States, there was a need to develop consensus by all including the given document that remained a draft, so far. Supporting the idea of Secretary General, he further suggested the circulation of this document, seeking the views of Member States in a certain timeframe.

46. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** pronounced that the given document, mainly concerned with three countries including, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, was a result of prolonged and coordinated efforts made by the Secretary General and the Secretariat in consultation with the Member States. He recalled that the relevant countries already agreed over the text though this document was not being immediately adopted. He expressed his concerns over an unnecessary debate and prolonging discussions, stating that the given time of one month was sufficient to register any reservation by Member States, requesting to move to next agenda item.

47. Eventually the Council taking into account the views expressed by the Member States considered positively the draft proposal initiated by the Secretary General under the mandate given to him for conducting the reform process, inserted the views of the Member States in the proposed text, and considered the following as agreed, however, it made it clear that revoking to silence procedure for obtaining of COM approval which is contingent upon no further observation by the Member States after consultation with their respective capitals will be decided at the next meeting of CPR:

*A. **The Council**, taking into account the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran for offering three posts at P level, that is Research Officer of the Directorate of Agriculture, Industry and Tourism, Programme Officer of the Directorate of Projects, Economic Research and Statistics as well as Librarian, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for offering three posts at P level, that is Programme Officer of the Drugs and Organized Crime Coordination Unit, Research Officer of the Directorate of Trade and Investment and Assistant Administration under the reform process **agreed as follows:***

I. The post of Research Officer of the Directorate of Agriculture, Industry and Tourism at P3 level is upgraded to the level of D1 and entitled as Head of Section - Project Management, and the post of Librarian at P1 level is re-titled as Programme Officer of the Directorate of Agriculture, Industry and Tourism and offered to the Republic of Kazakhstan along with the post of Programme Officer of PERS at P2 level;

II. The Post of fourth Deputy Secretary General which is established under the reform process is offered to the Republic of Kazkhstan after the relinquishment of the post of Director of Projects, Economic Research and Statistics at D2 level;

III. The posts of Director of Projects, Economic Research and Statistics at D2 level and Research Officer of the Directorate of Trade & Investment at P3 level are offered to the Republic of Uzbekistan;

IV. The aforesaid posts are filled only after the materialization of the contributions in accordance with the new Scale of Assessments by the Republic of Kazakhstan (18%) and the Republic of Uzbekistan (4%), which shall take place immediately.

V. The offered posts will be restored in case of non-materialization of the contributions by the concerned Member States;

VI. In case that the relinquishment of the aforesaid posts needs repositioning of the incumbent staff, concerned Member State may reappoint the incumbent staff whose posts were offered to the other Member States to the vacant post(s) available to them for the remaining part of their tenure;

B. The Council further, taking into account the rate of contribution of Turkmenistan and the fact that Turkmenistan is the non-represented Member State may agree on the establishment of new post of Economic Counselor at D2 level within the Structure of the Secretariat at the office of the Secretary General which will be offered to Turkmenistan upon its approval by COM. The Council may also agree on re-titling of the post of Assistant Administration at P2 level, as the Programme Officer under the Directorate of Transit and Transport which will be taken up by Turkmenistan upon the acceptance of the new Scale of Assessments.

C. The Council, considering the need for approval of COM, for making any changes to the Structure of the Secretariat and approval of the scale of assessments, **agree**, under the aforesaid criteria and conditions, on resorting to silence procedure to this end.

D. The Council of Permanent Representative mandates the Secretary General to consider comprehensively the request of Kazakhstan concerning the adjustment of contributions of Kazakhstan to ECO until the end of 2018 and submit a report along with a proposed formula based on the negotiation with Kazakhstan upon which the Council of Ministers may take the appropriate decision."

48. **The Council** following its previous mandate given to the Secretary General requested him to continue his consultations with the Member States on the remaining parts of the reform process as to the redistribution of posts and provide the next CPR meetings with the outcome of his consultations and proposals.

Agenda Item No.4

The Lists of Meetings /Events and Conferences/Workshops/ Seminars/Training courses to be supported/financed from Special Support Fund (SSF) (continued)

49. The **Chair** briefed the Council that the Secretariat has received a Note Verbale No. 2019/99530379-Tehran BE/23041248 dated February 21, 2019 from the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey for inclusion of the above item in the agenda of 237th CPR.

50. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** stated that their relevant authorities examined the lists and came to the conclusion that events to be financed from Special Support Fund (SSF) should be of strategic significance for the cooperation between the ECO Member States. He further said that the events, which do not involve decision-making, that is seminars, workshops, training courses, cannot be included in the list of events to be supported from Special Support Fund as per relative modalities. He also requested the Secretariat to remove the events that none of the Member States have accepted to host in 2019.

51. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** suggested that due to the financial constraints of the Secretariat, the events supported by SSF might be finalized after deciding on the request of Kazakhstan as in the present situation it would not be feasible to allocate the existing fund for some events under SSF.

52. The **ECO Secretary General** underlined that the number of conferences, seminars, workshops and training courses was reduced to eleven as compare to last year, adding that after removal of TBD it stood at (07) seven that seemed reasonable to be supported under SSF, in order to help make decision-making at higher level. While concentrating on a project-oriented approach, such activities should not be neutralized, he stressed.

53. **The ECO Deputy Secretary General (T&I, CFU, AIT & IR)** proposed that meeting under “Trade and Investment” i.e 5th Seminar on Trading Patterns in ECO Region and Accession of ECO to WTO, might remain in the list of events under SSF, as this is an important seminar.

54. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to keep intact in the list of events under SSF the “5th Seminar on Trading Patterns in ECO Region and Accession of ECO to WTO”.

55. After deliberations, the **Council** removed three (3) TBD events i.e. (i) Innovations in methodology through new technology in conducting population census; (ii) ECO-UNESCO Workshop on School Safety and related programs/actions and (iii) Training Workshop on “Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance and Management” from the Lists of Conferences, Seminars, Workshops and Training courses, and approved the lists events proposed to be supported by Special Support Fund.

Agenda Item No. 5

Bank Account of ECO Fund for Afghanistan

56. Considering the difficulties in the remittances to Afghanistan, the Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** conveyed their concurrence to the proposal. He further suggested that since the money was in Pakistani Bank at London, it might be first transferred to the National Bank of Pakistan in Kabul, and later on, the decision on its deposition in any other bank in Afghanistan could be made.

57. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** welcomed the new Representatives of Kazakhstan and Turkey. Regarding the bank account of the ECO Fund for Afghanistan, he stated that the Embassy of Afghanistan addressed a Note Verbale to the Secretariat, conveying that the Afghan Government’s preferred bank is Afghanistan International Bank (AIB). However, he added that if the issue remained unresolved, the final decision would rest with the Council.

58. After deliberations, the **Council** approved the opening of a bank account of ECO Fund for Afghanistan at the National Bank of Pakistan in Kabul for transferring of the amount from Habib Bank London.

Agenda Item No.6

Attendance of Turkish Cypriot State at the 3rd Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre (ECO RCC) in its capacity as observer

59. The Council was briefed that the ECO Secretariat received a Note Verbale No. TRNC/2019/113823 dated 14 February 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Cypriot State, conveying that a delegation from the Turkish Cypriot State would like to participate at the 3rd Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre (ECO RCC) to be held on 13-14 March 2019 in Antalya, Turkey, in its capacity as observer

60. The **Council** considered and approved, in accordance with the ECO Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at ECO, the participation of Turkish Cypriot State, in its capacity as "Observer" at the 3rd Meeting of the Steering Committee of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre (ECO RCC) to be held on 13-14 March 2019 in Antalya, Turkey.

Agenda Item No.7

Administrative matters:

Nomination for the post of Deputy Secretary General (T&I, AIT and IR)

61. The **Chair** briefed the Council on declaration of the vacancy for the post of DSG (T&I, AIT & IR) as of 10 March 2019 conveyed to the Member States vide Note Verbale No. ADM/PER/2019/141 dated 13 February 2019. He added that receipt of a Note Verbal from Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, was also mentioned in the Secretariat's cited communication regarding country's readiness for nomination against the circulated post as per paragraph-23 of the report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers (New York, 23rd December 2016).

62. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** extended his gratitude to the Secretariat for circulation of nomination of Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi (**Afghan National**) against the post of DSG (T&I, AIT and International Relations), requested the approval of CPR for recommending the nominee to the Council of Ministers.

63. While supporting the nomination of DSG from Afghanistan, the **Iranian Representative** pronounced that this post would require to be assumed by an Iranian candidate on relinquishing the charge of the post of Secretary General by Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour (**Iranian national**) in August 2021. He underlined that since the tenure of Secretary General was not extendable, the Iranian candidate would suffer at least for six months if the DSG-designate from Afghanistan assumed office for a full term of three years. While expecting the Afghan DSG's earliest joining, he sought Secretariat's views on such cases keeping the past experiences in view. He proposed the expiry of Afghan DSG's service together with the completion of term of appointment by incumbent Secretary General.

64. Commenting on the issue, the **Legal Advisor** stated that when the office of the Secretary General goes to a founding Member State, their respective post of DSG is offered to a non-founding Member State. Accordingly, when the post of SG is not held any longer by any of the founding Member States, the offered post of DSG to the non-founding Member State is expected to go back to the founding Member States. He explained that, the concern raised by the founding Member State is about the full term appointment of the nominee which would affect the returning time of the post of DSG to the founding Member State.

65. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** stated that his country's DSG was supposed to complete full term of three years, adding that right now the picture wasn't clear as to which country the new Secretary General would belong. He anticipated that the post of Secretary General might be allocated to another founding Member State whose vacant position of DSG could be taken over by an Iranian candidate.

66. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** underlined that the tenure of DSG from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan should be a full term of three years as per the staff regulations.

67. The **Secretary General** desired a clear decision to avoid any future ambiguity in the term of appointment. He said that the portfolio of the new Deputy Secretary General might be changed as the number of DSGs under the reform process would increase from three to four.

68. After extensive deliberations, the Council took note of the principle underlined by Iran concerning the date of returning of the post of DSG offered to a non-founding Member State for the period during which one of the founding Member State assumes the office of the Secretary General, that is the date in which the concerned founding Member State cease to hold the office of the Secretary General and decided to recommend to the COM the appointment of Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi (**Afghan National**) against the vacant post DSG for T&I, AIT and IR (Category-I, D3) for a full term of three years to be effective from the date of his joining. It further agreed to seek the approval of the COM in this regard through adoption of 14-days' silence procedure.

b) Recommendations of the Selection Panel

69. The Selection Panel met on March 11, 2019. The Meeting, coordinated by Mr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, ECO Deputy Secretary General, was chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan. Other Members of the Selection Panel included, the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey.

70. The selection Panel made the following recommendation for consideration by the CPR:

Programme Officer for Agriculture, Industry and Tourism (Category-II, P3)

Ms. Aysegul Yorulmazlar (**Turkish national**) may be appointed against the post of Programme Officer for Agriculture, Industry and Tourism (Category-II, P3) for a full term of four years with effect from March 11, 2019.

71. The Council approved the appointment of Ms. Aysegul Yorulmazlar (**Turkish national**) as recommended by the Selection Panel.

Agenda Item No. 8

Any other Business

Words of Appreciation

72. Considering that H.E. Mr. Nasser Ahmad Noor, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is scheduled to leave Tehran on completion of his tenure in Iran; the Council expressed its appreciation to outgoing Ambassador, acknowledging the excellent working relationship with him and his significant contribution and assistance to the organization. The Council also acknowledged the exceptional, professional and personal tolerance level of Ambassador Noor and his visionary diplomatic insights.

73. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan extended his gratitude for the kind words expressed by the Council to honor him and reciprocated the gesture.

Agenda Item No.9

Date of the next CPR Meeting

74. 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.

75. The Council decided to convene its next (238th) Meeting on **Monday, 22nd April 2019 at 10:00 hours at the ECO Secretariat-Tehran.**

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- H.E.Mr. Nasser Ahmad Noor, Ambassador
- Mr. Sayed Nader Pajohesh, Second Secretary
- Ms. Zahra Bodaghi, Administrative Assistant

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- Mr. Javid Musayev, Counsellor
- Mr. Rauf Abdullayev, Second Secretary

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

- H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark, Permanent Representative/Director General
- Mr. Abolfazl Alikhani, Deputy Director General, ECO Affairs Bureau
- Mr. Sayed A. Shabibi, Senior Expert, ECO Affairs Bureau

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- H.E. Mr. Askhat Orazbay, Ambassador
- Mr. Alibek Bakaev, Director, Department of Asian-Wide Cooperation, MFA
- Mr. Yerbol Akhmedov, Minister, Counsellor

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Mr. Melisbek Baysimakov, Counsellor,

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- Mr. Imran Hayder, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Mian Azmat Farooq, First Secretary
-

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr. Firdavs Yusupov, Second Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:

- Mr. Emirhan Yorumazlar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Ms. Hatice ÖZDİL, Third Secretary

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- Ms. Selbi Mukhammedova, Attache

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

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

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Mr. Hadi Soleimanpour, Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Husyein Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Assistant Director (CFU)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Ms. Mozghan Golchin, Chief Accountant
- Mr. Mohammad Ahmad Raza, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Mohammad Akbar Azizi, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Chaudhry Hadees Muhammad, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
