



239th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

24th June 2019
ECO Secretariat - Tehran

Report

The 239th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), held on June 24, 2019 at the ECO Secretariat, was chaired by H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador of the Republic of **Tajikistan** to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Permanent Representative to ECO. The Meeting was attended by 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**. The ECO Secretary General along with concerned officials of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. The list of participants is enclosed as *Annex-I*.

2. The Chairman opened the Meeting after a short welcoming statement made by the Secretary General on the occasion of presence of H.E. Ambassador Nizomiddin Zohidi as the new Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to ECO holding the chairmanship of CPR.

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Secretariat proposed the following Draft Agenda of the 239th CPR Meeting for adoption:

Draft Agenda

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 239th CPR Meeting
 2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 238th CPR Meeting
 3. Follow-up to the decisions of the 23rd Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting; ECO Reforms etc. (*continued*)
 4. Cooperation with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
 5. Seeking Observer Status in Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS/Turkic Council)
 6. Administrative matters:
 - Appointment of Deputy Secretary General (T&I, AIT and IR) (*continued*)
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 7. Any other business:
 8. Date of the next CPR Meeting
4. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** inquired if item 5 of draft agenda No. 1 regarding observer status in the Turkic Council was included on request of some Member States or otherwise.
5. **Deputy Secretary General (T&C, PERS and CFU)** informed that no request was made from any Member States for inclusion of this item in today's agenda. However, he explained that H.E. Mr. Baghdad Amreyev, Secretary General of Turkic Council during his visit to ECO Secretariat on April 7-8, 2019 made a suggestion for Observer Status of ECO in Turkic Council.
6. The **Secretary General** also brought to the attention of the Council that, the Turkic Council was granted observer status by ECO and there exist cooperative relationship between ECO and Turkic Council based on the MoU signed between the

parties. Recently, a further step was taken for development of a work programme concerning different fields of common working areas. Under this circumstances it was suggested, as was explained by DSG that ECO may consider observership status at Turkic Council.

7. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, in the absence of formal invitation from Turkic Council on the matter at hand, requested exclusion of the concerned agenda item from draft agenda.

8. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** inquired about the concerns behind Iranian reservation over the ECO's Observer Status in the Turkic Council.

9. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** stated that the observer status was already granted to Turkic Council. Furthermore the two sides maintain cooperative relationship based on an MoU and, having a work plan. The question is that what value will be added to ECO by requesting observership status at Turkic Council based on the informal initiative brought up by the other side.

10. The **Secretary General** stated that he might request the Turkic Council to send an official invitation to ECO offering Observer Status, which would be shared with the Council in one of the coming CPRs Meetings.

11. The Chairman summed up the views expressed and the **Council** adopted the Agenda No. 1 of meeting excluding agenda item 5.

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 238th CPR Meeting

12. The Council adopted the Draft Report of the 238th CPR Meeting circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/238th Meeting/2019/473 dated 12 June 2019 along with amendment proposed by the Republic of Turkey in paragraph 21 of the Draft Report.

Agenda Item No. 3

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

13. The **Chair** briefed that realizing the importance of the reform process with a view to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, the council continued discussions on the issue as well as the relevant proposal developed by the Secretary General in consultation with the Member States. He acknowledged the Secretary General's efforts and the resultant outcomes of his consultations as well as formulation of three different proposals, appreciating the acceptance of one of the proposals by Kazakhstan, Iran and Pakistan noting that the Republic of Turkey needed some time to consider it. the Chair **also** informed the Council about the receipt of a Note Verbale dated May 28, 2019 from the Republic of Turkey expressing some concerns over the proposed formula. He stated that the received communication of Turkey was circulated amongst Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale dated May 29, 2019.

14. The **Chair** recalled that the 238th Meeting of CPR mandated the Secretariat to ascertain Member States' written views on the proposed formula by June 17, 2019 which were requested vide Secretariat's Note Verbale dated May 30, 2019. He further informed about the circulation of another Note Verbale by the Secretariat dated June 18, 2019 conveying no receipt of response by the Member States in the matter.

However, taking into account the previously raised reservations by some Member States, a revised formula would shortly be developed by the Secretariat to address such concerns, the Chair added. He further conveyed that a new non-paper was also developed to address the concerns about the adjustment of Kazakhstan's balance of payment till the end of 2018. The Chair requested the Secretary General to update the Council on the issue.

15. The **Secretary General** briefed the Council that the 237th Meeting of CPR considered the proposal on reform process. Based on the administrative part of the proposal, some posts from the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are offered to the other ECO Member States, namely Kazakhstan and the non-represented Member States (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). The proposal has also provided the adjustment, relinquishment and establishment of some new posts, as per reflected in the report of 237th CPR Meeting. He added that, at the time, preparation of a report and development of a formula on the adjustment of contribution of Kazakhstan were supposed to be developed by SG in order to be submitted to COM.

16. The **Secretary General** added that based on the views expressed at 237th meeting and further consultations held, a formula to address the arrears of Kazakhstan was developed which shared with Member States. He said that the 238th Meeting of CPR on May 29, 2019 desired Member States' written views on this part of proposal by June 17, 2019 considering all aspects of discussions held during the meeting. The 238th CPR also mandated the Secretary General to continue the process of ongoing consultations, expecting some substantive progress by 239th session.

17. The **Secretary General** informed that as it was mandated by the 238th CPR, the Secretariat requested Member States' written views in the matter vide Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/238th Meeting/2019/437 dated May 30, 2019. However, he mentioned that no views were received, in this regard. He added that this position was brought to the notice of the Member States vide Note Verbale dated June 18, 2019, informing them that taking into account the questions previously raised by some Member States, a revised formula on the arrears of Kazakhstan would be developed and shared with Member States in due course, to address the raised observations.

18. The **Secretary General** highlighted that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provided a formula reflecting some main elements that stipulates the non-acceptance of write-off, emphasizing on the adjustment of the outstanding contribution in a phased manner in line with the practice of international organization. He said that the proposal of Pakistan incorporated in a non-paper (section "F") was informally circulated amongst the Member States on June 23, 2019. The Secretary General underlined that the reform proposal had two main segments including (i) distribution of posts reflected at A, B, C, D and E (ii) adjustment of outstanding arrears of contribution of Kazakhstan given at "F" of the proposal. The whole package is placed before the participants and for consideration of the Council, he underlined (*Annex-II*).

19. The **Secretary General** stated that the Republic of Turkey forwarded a Note Verbale on June 28, 2019 seeking therewith, inter alia, the position of Kazakhstan on the plan for payment of their arrears. The said Turkish communication was circulated amongst the Member States soon on receipt.

20. The **Secretary General** said that considering the latest developments on formula for adjustment of contribution of Kazakhstan as well as the progress made so

far on the reform process and taking into account the receipt of recent Turkish communication in the matter, the Council might be desirous of further consultations with regard to the adjustment of Kazakhstan's balance of contributions. Under the given situation, the Secretariat is of the view that the Council may approve the first segment of the draft proposal i.e. A, B, C D, and E as administrative part of his proposal while requesting the concerned Member States, particularly Turkey and Kazakhstan to consult with each other and come up with a mutually agreed proposal in regard to segment F.

21. The **Chair** sought Member States' positions/comments on Secretary General's suggestion regarding segmental approval of the given proposal.

22. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** noted that the reform process initiated during the tenure of former Secretary General was now getting a new dimension, adding that the idea was to maximize the efficiency and ownership of the organization while the issues seem to be piling up. He said that the idea regarding distribution of posts was there to maximize the contribution of all Member States, emphasizing that in particular case of Kazakhstan the idea was to resolve the issue of their arrears and thereafter increase their representation in the organization.

23. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** continued that now we want to go forward with the distribution of posts without addressing the second issue, expressing their discontent over the formula as it does not meet their expectations. He pronounced that the Turkish position was clearly mentioned last month before the CPR, whereas this month they had to reiterate the same things. He categorically emphasized that any write-off should not be acceptable to the organization. However, as per the given formula inserted in the CPR agenda, the Council was expected to address such an issue out of the budgetary contributions of other Member States, which appeared opposed not only to the principle that Iran, Pakistan and Turkey put together but it would also affect the organization's total budget, he underscored.

24. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** added that all the participating delegates were required to ask their capitals as they would pay the arrears of Kazakhstan from their respective share of contribution. He maintained that this issue was being reiterated both in official and unofficial meetings but it seemed quite unfortunate to discuss the same formula, adding that the Member States were supposed to convey their views on the issue by June 17, 2019, however, no one could convey its position, except Turkey. Recalling the position of his Pakistani counterpart expressed during last meeting of CPR, he stressed that offering more positions to the Member States who were not paying their share would not achieve any concrete result. He requested the Representative of Kazakhstan to convey their official position on the formula.

25. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** said that no doubt the first proposal made by the Secretary General entailed somehow language which may have impression that the payment of Kazakhstan's arrears would be adjusted through the savings of the Secretariat and thus through the Member States. She seconded the views of Turkish Representative noting that this might set a precedent to receive such future requests based on individual's reasons. The Pakistan's Representative underlined that the payment of arrears was always a very sticky issue in all international organizations, considering those issues to be solved through mutual agreement of the Member States which have accrued the arrears

under a committee and the secretariat of the relevant organization. Though it was decided not to accept writing off of the arrears, a mutually acceptable payment plan seemed acceptable as sometime it is not possible for a Member State to pay the arrears in a lump-sum manner due to certain reasons including country's financial constraints, and therefore it seeks flexibility, she noted.

26. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** stated that through the formula under consideration it is being tried to resolve the issue. However, she requested the Representative of Turkey to help improve the text with some alternative phrase considering Para F of the proposal regarding adjustment of Kazakhstan's contribution, enabling the Council to break the deadlock.

27. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** conveyed that as per their formula, *the Council after having considered the question of arrears accumulated by Member States may unequivocally declare that no write-off is acceptable for the outstanding contribution of any Member States. However, as per international practices, Member States may enter into an agreement with the Secretariat for payment of their outstanding contributions in a phased manner. It may further underline that the following adjustment formula in respect of Kazakhstan has been considered as an exception and would in no way constitute and be considered a precedent in future. The Council, while taking into account the outstanding payment of financial contribution until the end of 2018, and welcoming the fact that the Republic of Kazakhstan has agreed to further increase its share of contribution to the annual budget of the organization from 16% to 18%, may consider the following to adjust the outstanding amount: "In every financial year during which the financial contribution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is 18% as per the new scale of assessments, has been paid in full, the Secretariat will utilize an appropriate amount out of that contribution towards adjustment of the outstanding payments that remain for Kazakhstan until the end of 2018. Part of the said amount may be secure from keeping at least one post of Kazakhstan vacant throughout the adjustment period. The Secretariat is also authorized to consider and utilized this amount as a component of the annual budget of the organization"*.

28. The Permanent Representative of **Pakistan** clarified in this formula that the outstanding contribution of Kazakhstan would be met by Kazakhstan itself through its annual contribution and not by any other Member States or the Secretariat, adding that in this regard, the Secretariat would enter into some form of agreement to decide the relevant payment plan, keeping the mode and percentage of such payment in view. Realizing the repeated episodes of discussions as well as clarity in Pakistan's proposal that addresses the concerns of Member States, she requested that if the Council could not move forward, it might set this issue aside, in order to avoid recurrent moving in circles.

29. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** acknowledged the efforts made by the Secretary General and the Ambassador of Pakistan for settlement of the issue. He recalled their informal meeting on June 17, 2019 that discussed the issue at length keeping in view all aspects of proposals and options made by Member States. He said that for the time being this formula was optimal to move forward and let Kazakhstan decide on increasing its share to 18%, adding that the first installment of their contribution was already paid. He expressed Kazakhstan's readiness to leave one of their posts vacant to effect the adjustment of arrears, expecting his Turkish counterpart to support the formula. He further said that the said formula was forwarded to their capital for consideration along with Turkish Note Verbale.

30. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** stated that he wanted the issue to be solved to go ahead. While reiterating his earlier position, he underlined that his Kazakh counterpart was saying that Kazakhstan did not accept the arrears while Pakistan's Representative stated that the write-off of the arrears would not be accepted. He said it was supposed that the arrears were being paid and the budgetary contribution was being increased to 18%, whereas the situation seems vice versa. In fact, Kazakhstan would be paying 16% while 2% to be adjusted against their arrears. However, if Kazakhstan would like to move forward, it should convey their written position about the acceptability of this formula. He further said that the organization contrary to previous approach is now appearing to go forward with accepting the redistribution of posts while sidelining the budgetary issues. He appreciated Pakistan's efforts, reiterating his reservations over any write-off. He said that Turkey was not against the payment plan but against settlement of arrears out of the organization's budget.

31. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** made a reference to the proposal of Pakistan and drew the attention of the Council to the fact that the formula developed by Pakistan is an effort to get out of the deadlock on the adjustment of contributions of Kazakhstan. As regards the issue of outstanding payment of Kazakhstan, he noted that wordings to accommodate country's request for write off of its arrears were changed several times with a view to finding out a mechanism of payment. He said that his Pakistani counterpart clarified that the amount of arrears would be paid by Kazakhstan which is reflected in the formulated text, as well. He recalled that the initially used term "so-called arrears" was strongly opposed. Considering Turkish position, he reiterated that the amount of arrears should be borne by Kazakhstan and it was transparently mentioned in the negotiated/proposed text. The Iranian Representative expressed discomfort noting that the process, started from zero-point during the term of previous Secretary General, was still there despite a lapse of considerable time. He requested the Turkish Representative to provide alternative language of the formulated text, avoiding inordinate wastage of time.

32. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** stated that there seemed to be another misunderstanding about their position. He elucidated that Turkey's emphasis on principles and formula as well as strengthening of the organization was not commensurate with resistance or opposing the consensus in the organization. He said that the summary of the proposed formula transpired that Kazakhstan's vacant post would pay the amount of arrears that seemed irrational, portraying imaginary distribution of posts. He reiterated his earlier position that in this way the debts would be borne by the organization and Member States, disapproving the impression that the issue was between Kazakhstan and Turkey. While requesting the Representative of Kazakhstan to officially inform about their position on the proposed formula, he said that the contents of their Note Verbale in this regard might be taken into consideration, adding that Turkish authorities would favorably consider it upon receipt of Kazakhstan's official/written response.

33. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** reaffirmed that the proposed formula and Turkish's Note Verbale were already sent to their capital. He requested the deferral of the issue till the next meeting of CPR, expecting Kazakhstan's position by then.

34. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** expressed optimism for an affirmative resolution after receipt of Kazakhstan's official position. However, he

noted that as per estimated calculation of payment plan through leaving one post vacant it would take around 25 years to settle the amount of arrears, inquiring if it was acceptable to Member States and the Secretariat to leave such post vacant up to that time. He also requested from the Secretariat to prepare a fact sheet on country-wise detailed calculation of payments and each Member State's budgetary contributions and wage payments received by each Member State's nationals in the ECO for transparency purposes.

35. The **Chair** noted that this agenda was being discussed since long period of time with no consensus. He said that this way continuation of discussions would achieve no sane aim even in the next meeting of CPR. He acknowledged the views of Pakistan's Representative regarding existence of such issues in other regional and international organizations. While requesting Turkey to consider the proposal of Pakistan and help improve the text, he sought Kazakhstan's official position on the given formula.

36. The **Chair** requested the Secretary General to again discuss with Kazakhstan and Turkey as well as other concerned Member States seeking their inputs to improve this formula of payment plan. If there is consensus, the issue may be brought before the next meeting of CPR, he said. However, he discouraged the inclusion of the matter in the agenda of CPR without any consensus. He further requested the Secretary General to seek Member State's concurrence to discuss the reform proposal in two phases. He considered that one phase would discuss Para A, B, C, D, E, whereas the other would cover discussions on Para F of the draft formula, and if agreed by the Council, this may be adopted.

37. The Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** stated that under the current reform proposal there exist a linkage between the posts to be offered to Uzbekistan and the post (s) to be relinquished by Kazakhstan. He said that any such delay in finalization of reform process would prolong the allocation of post (s) to non-representative Member States who are ready to pay their contributions as per new scale of assessments. He proposed some changes to the point I and II of the draft reform proposal, seeking amendments as follows:

- II. *The Post of fourth Deputy Secretary General which is established under the reform process is offered to the Republic of Kazakhstan and ~~after the relinquishment of~~ the post of Director of Projects, Economic Research and Statistics at D2 level **will be abolished upon taking up the post of DSG by Kazakhstan;***
- III. *~~The posts of Director of Projects, Economic Research and Statistics at A new post at D2 level as the Director of Tourism is established and along with the post of Research officer of the Directorate of Trade & Investment at P3 level are offered to the Republic of Uzbekistan.~~*

38. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** underlined that Pakistan is one of the countries that agreed to relinquish three of its posts in P-level category, out of which one is to be given to Uzbekistan. She requested in-writing provision of the amended proposal of Uzbekistan for examination and more clarity.

39. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** recalled the issue of write-off of the Uzbekistan's contribution. He said that the financial contribution for 2018 should be paid by Uzbekistan according to its share as the

matter of writing off was related to the period before 2018. He requested that the issue should be held up until it was concluded by the audit board.

40. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** underscored that his country's proposal for writing-off the arrears was adopted by 23rd COM in April 2018, adding that since the budget of the state was already approved by that time, Uzbekistan's share to ECO was not envisaged in that budget. He further said that the decision to write-off was made during ECO's meeting and as per international practice such decisions do not entail a retroactive effect. He clarified that Uzbekistan would start paying its share starting from 2019 after allocation of the posts. However, he said that the Audit Board would make conclusion about Uzbekistan's contribution for 2018 which was pending for the time being. He requested the focus to be made on distribution of posts first for which Uzbekistan presented its proposal in order to speed up the process. As per item IV of the revised document, aforesaid posts will be filled by Uzbekistan only after materialization of the contributions. If the Council agrees to allocate D-2 post to Uzbekistan, it will start making payment and afterwards nominate someone for that post.

41. The Permanent Representative of **Uzbekistan** added that Uzbekistan had no posts in the Secretariat. He noted that there was no consensus on reform process though Uzbekistan stood ready to pay soon after allocation of the posts. The Permanent Representative supported the Chair's views on discussion of the issue in phases. He also underlined that the decision of COM about Uzbekistan's arrears was quite clear that included the year 2018.

42. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** clarified that, at the end of every financial year, any unpaid contribution by Member States is calculated as the arrears. Hence, the contribution of Uzbekistan to the budget of financial year of 2018, could not be calculated as its arrears when the COM in 2018 decided to write-off the arrears of Uzbekistan.

43. The Permanent Representative of **Uzbekistan**, taking into account the views expressed as to the first segment of the draft proposal, requested addressing of the issues of non-represented Member States by the Council within the reform process as an independent issue from the issue of Kazakhstan or other Member States. He requested the Council to ask the Secretariat to provide the Permanent Representatives with a proposal in this regard within 10 days.

44. The **Chair** suggested solving the problem in phases and reflected the general feeling of the Council for deferring the case to the next session, as well as requested the Secretary General to discuss the issue with relevant Member States for developing consensus. He reiterated his proposal, requesting the Secretary General to clarify the issues which could not be solved now.

45. **The Secretary General** added that the proposal of Uzbekistan as to the points II and III of the draft proposal will be clearly reflected in the report for its consideration by the Member States, however taking into account that Uzbekistan and some other Member States raised the issue regarding non-representative Member States in the organization as well as proposal to delink the issues of non-represented and other Member States, the Secretariat will prepare the draft proposal on the said issue for its consideration by the Member States.

46. The **Council** agreed on the issuance of separate draft proposal addressing the issue of non-represented Member States at the Secretariat.

Agenda Item No.4

Cooperation with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

47. **The Secretariat** had informed the Council during the 236th CPR Meeting on 4 February 2019, that the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) had expressed its desire to sign an MoU with ECO to provide a basis for engagements, enabling the development of a holistic approach for disaster preparedness and response including Disaster Risk Reduction.

48. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** endorsed the suggestion of the Secretariat and asked the Secretariat to invite the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to deliver their presentation as proposed by the Secretariat and it would be more helpful.

49. After briefing by the Secretariat on the issue the **Council** decided:

- i. To mandate the Secretariat to consult and negotiate with the OCHA regarding the substance of the MoU and possibility of transforming it in a way to support activities and projects/ programmes laid down in the draft ECO Regional Framework and ECO Vision 2025 for DRR, and report the initial results to the Member States.
- ii. The Member States to kindly send their inputs and comments on this agenda item to the Secretariat to guide its activities.
- iii. Furthermore if the CPR needs more clarification and technical details, the Secretariat may invite OCHA to one of the next CPR sessions and deliver a presentation followed by Questions and Answers session for Member States, elaborating on OCHA's motivations to sign an MoU with the ECO.

Agenda Item No. 5

Seeking Observer Status in Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS/Turkic Council)

50. The agenda item was deleted from the draft agenda as per the explanation given under agenda item No. 1.

Agenda Item No. 6

Administrative matters

(a) Appointment of Deputy Secretary General (T&I, AIT and IR) (continued)

51. The **Chair** briefed the Council that the silence procedure set by 237th CPR for gaining the approval of COM for the appointment of nominee from Afghanistan (Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi) against the post of DSG (T&I, AIT and IR), was broken. During the 238th CPR Meeting, it was informed by Pakistan's Representative that formal instructions were still awaited from the relevant authorities in Pakistan, requesting the Secretary General to continue talks with Afghanistan on this issue to find a solution before the 239th CPR Meeting. He asked the Secretary General to update CPR on the result of his consultations.

52. The **Secretary General** stated that under the mandate given to him by the 238th CPR, he had consultation on the issue with Afghanistan. He added that as a result, Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan just before the meeting, containing Afghanistan's views on the issue. He

mentioned that the received Note conveys Afghanistan's readiness for the appointment of Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi (Afghan National) against the post of DSG (T&I, AIT and IR), until the completion of tenure by incumbent Secretary General.

53. The **Secretary General** further conveyed that Afghanistan also mentioned in their note that based on the condition and situation predominating the organization after August 2021, the decision on remaining period of tenure of Afghan's DSG might be made on the basis of reciprocal cooperation and understanding of the Member States. He said that consultations were made with the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and other Member States on this issue and they were found agreed to accept the nomination of Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi as DSG up to August 2021.

54. The **Secretary General** further said that he requested the Member States to give their opinions on the second part of the official Note Verbale of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. He also informed the Council that Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is ready to negotiate on the number of posts as they requested and show maximum cooperation and flexibility on this issue.

55. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** supported the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on the first paragraph of the official Note Verbal. However, he elucidated that second paragraph was beyond their control as it entailed decision-making for future.

56. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** stated that during the meeting of CPR in February 2019, there was consensus amongst Member States that Afghanistan should hold the post of DSG for three years, expressing his concerns over opposition on previously secured consensus by Pakistan. However, since Afghanistan was, now, willing to accept the post of DSG up to 2021, a solution should be found out as soon as possible considering the time that Afghanistan already lost to hold the post of DSG. He also sought clarification if the procedure was common to relinquish the post of DSG concurrently with the completion of tenure by SG or otherwise.

57. The **Legal Advisor** stated that the 237th CPR meeting, decided to resort to silence procedure for gaining approval of COM as to the appointment of nominee from Afghanistan. He added that the procedure set to this end expired without result. As for the rotation of post of DSG to non-founding member states he said that the posts of DSGs are held by founding Member States, however, once a founding Member States assumes the post of SG, the respective post of DSG goes to a non-founding Member State. This is based on the decision made at 10th COM meeting and the practice developed thereunder. This holds true, in the case at hand. Notwithstanding, there exist some concerns about the time of returning of the post of DSG to the founding member state, when the concerned founding Member State holds no longer the post of SG. Taking this into account, and the fact that in case of appointment of DSG from Afghanistan for a full term, the date of termination of tenure of the appointee, will not be in concurrence with the timing of completion of the term of office of the incumbent SG, coinciding of the timing of termination of tenure of the nominee for the post of DSG with the term of office of SG was proposed.

58. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** inquired if the given method was legally practiced or otherwise needed to take to the COM.

59. The **Legal Adviser** responded that the appointment of DSG needs the approval of the Council of Ministers (COM), and therefore, this decision would also be taken by the Council reaffirming the existing principle without making this directly.

60. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** said that they had received instructions from Kabul particularly on the second part of the Note Verbale regarding completion of rest of the tenure by Afghan DSG after August 2021 as eight months of his tenure would remain thereafter. He emphasized that if possible the Council might take a decision regarding first part, assuring that the second part of the Note Verbale would be taken up with their capital.

61. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** recalled that there were certain anomalies when this issue was discussed in the last CPR that cropped up during the procedure and regular interactions which needed to be addressed. He explained that there were two ways to sign the contract period of DSG i.e. (i) to sign the contract for full term of three years or (ii) to sign it for the period corresponding to the tenure of the incumbent Secretary General left until completion. He further said that Afghanistan requested some additional posts which were also conditional with raising the level of their contribution. In the given backdrop, Pakistan's position was still awaited on the appointment of Afghan's DSG. He underlined that willingness to raise contribution a little bit might not encourage other Member States to be more ambitious in expecting more posts. Citing Afghanistan's willingness to increase their share from 1.28% to 2% if it were given three posts including the one post that it wanted to upgrade, it would encourage other Member States to start forwarding ambitious requests to the Secretariat for additional seats. He conveyed that Pakistan had requested the Secretary General to consult with Afghanistan to make some appropriate recommendations after such consultations.

62. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** expressed his concerns over linking the two separate issues i.e. appointment of Afghan DSG and additional posts to Afghanistan.

63. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** said that the post of DSG from Afghanistan was not related to the reform process or level of contribution, adding that this was a COM's decision. He underlined that firstly this post was allocated to Azerbaijan and after that it was to be given to Afghanistan. He reiterated that Afghanistan had now accepted this post until the tenure of the incumbent Secretary General. The Iranian Representative said that he accepts the proposal of Afghanistan without referring the date.

64. The **Chair** noted that the silence procedure for the appointment will be held until the receipt of Pakistan's position to hold it on. However, Afghanistan has now accepted the term of appointment of their DSG till the end of incumbent SG's tenure. As far as the second part of their Note Verbale is concerned, the Afghan Representative would consult with his capital on the issue and that could be addressed on receipt of their official position.

65. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** informed that, their official position in this regard would be conveyed shortly through a Note Verbale in order to avoid any further delay and inconvenience.

66. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** noted that the decision on appointment of DSG from Afghanistan was already taken with consensus

of all Member States. He expressed his concerns as to how long the procedure be delayed, seeking some time limitation in this regard, in order to avoid further loss of time for Afghanistan's DSG.

67. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** clarified that Pakistan had no objection on the issue as already decided and approved. He further said that Pakistan did not want to set any negative precedent. However, he requested a two-week time to respond in the matter.

68. The **Council** extended a two-week time to receive the response from Pakistan as requested by Pakistan's Representative. It was also agreed on resorting to silence procedure for the appointment of the nominee for the period proposed by Afghanistan, that is until August 2021, after receiving the views from Pakistan.

(b) Recommendations of the Selection Panel

69. The Selection Panel met on June 24, 2019. The Meeting was coordinated by Mr. Kanan Nazarov, 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, except Republic of Kazakhstan.

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

Director for Energy, Mineral and Environment (Category-I, D2)

Term of service in respect of Mr. Fuad Farzalibayov (Azerbaijani national) as Director for Energy, Mineral and Environment may be extended up to December 31, 2019 subject to final approval of such extension by the COM (Through silence procedure as per the existing practice).

Programme Officer for Trade and Investment (Category-II, P3)

Term of service in respect of Mr. Muhammad Safdar (Pakistani national) as Programme Officer for Trade and Investment may be extended up to December 31, 2019.

Documentation Officer (Category-II, P2)

Ms. Gulden Uzun (Turkish national) as Documentation Officer may be appointed for a full term of four years with effect from the date of her joining.

71. The **Council** approved the above mentioned appointments as recommended by the Selection Panel.

Agenda Item No.7

Any other business:

72. **The Secretary General** requested the Council to extend the tenure of Mr. Abolfazl Azizpanah (**Iranian National**), Programme Officer for Energy, Mineral and Environment from **June 22, 2019 to July 6, 2019** for 15 days due to upcoming Capacity Building Seminar/Workshop titled perspectives challenges of Regional Electricity Market: Harnessing Trade & Investment Opportunities scheduled to be held in Tehran on 2-3 July 2019.

73. The Council approved the extension in services of Mr. Abolfazal Azizpanah as requested by the Secretary General.

Agenda Item No.8

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 (240th) Meeting on **Monday, 22nd July 2019 at 10:00 hours at the ECO Secretariat-Tehran.**

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Shabir Ahmad Ahadi, In charge of Economic and ECO Section,

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- Mr. Taleh Zohrabov, Counsellor
- Mr. Nariman Orujaliyev, First Secretary

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

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

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- Mr. Gamzat Khairov, Counsellor

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Mr. Akilbek Kilichev, Minister, Counsellor

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- H.E. Ms. Riffat Masood, Ambassador
- Mr. Mian Azmat Farooq, First Secretary

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr. Rustam Oimahmadov, Third Secretary
- Mr. Saidali Shosaidov, Attaché

The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:

- Mr. Emirhan Yorulmazlar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Ozgur Murat, 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 Soleimanpur, Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Sayin Kaan, Director HRSD
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Assistant Director (CFU)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Mohammad Ahmad Raza, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Chaudhry Hadees Muhammad, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, English-Persian Interpreter/Translator
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