

**The ECO Secretary General's
Statement for the 4th Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the
ECOSF**

(Isfahan, 09 July 2019)

Honourable Mr. Chairman,

**Honourable Ministers, H.E. Mr. Chaudhry Fawad Hussain,
Minister of Science and Technology of Pakistan, and H.E. Dr.
Mansoor Gholami, Minister of Science and Technology of Iran**

**Distinguished President of Science Foundation, Prof. Manzoor
Hussain Soomro**

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of great pleasure and profound honour for me to address this important Meeting of the ECO Science Foundation. Personally, it is also a privilege for me to be here in my city and its university, a leading institution known for its academic excellence. As a university professor and member of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, I feel special honoured to be with the Honourable Dr. Mansour Gholami, Minister of Science, Research and Technology of

Islamic Republic of Iran and other members of the Ministry in this august meeting.

Excellencies,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and ECO Science Foundation for making excellent arrangements for this important meeting as well as for extending generous hospitality to the participants. I would also like to thank the delegates from Member States of the ECO Science Foundation for their participation in this BoT Meeting. I also deem it my responsibility to register my special thanks for the Government of Pakistan particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Ministry of Science & Technology for hosting the headquarters of the Foundation in a successful manner.

Honourable Mr. Chairman,

Cooperation among the ECO Member States in the field of Science & Technology holds a significant importance for realization of Organization's key objectives as well as strategic goals as envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir and ECO Vision 2025. Given the context of UN backed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we at the ECO

believe that strong scientific and technological foundations are a must for sustainable economic growth and meeting the development challenges of the modern era.

Excellencies,

The ECO Science Foundation, a core specialized agency of the ECO, became operational in December 2011 and mandated to promote and support activities in the field of science and technology in its member states. It must be a matter of great satisfaction that the ECOSF has achieved a number of accomplishments in the past years and has contributed valuably to the promotion of scientific cooperation in the region. With the diversification of its activities in various areas, and development of institutional linkages with relevant regional and international organizations, it has emerged as an important body of the ECO capable of achieving progress in the areas identified in its Charter as well.

Distinguished delegates,

As you might be aware of, the ECO is currently undergoing a reform process aimed at making ECO a more effective and efficient regional organization capable of realizing its core objectives strategic

goals as envisaged in the ECO Vision 2025. It would also bring new dimensions to the working of the ECO's specialized agencies including ECO Science Foundation and would build harmonization among their structure and operations. Institutional harmonization and coordination in the agenda are two important aspects of reform process. Vision 2025 set out some priority areas including energy, connectivity, sustainability, and trade as well as leading science such as bio, nano, high-tech and digitalization. Scientific researches in these areas are most welcome.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lack of sufficient funds for Foundation and delay in paying budgetary contributions from some of its members, however, remains a major impediment which is adversely affecting its projects and activities. Here, I would like to mention that the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meetings, in the recent years, have emphasized the concerned members to extend mandatory financial contributions to the ECOSF, enabling it to broaden and enhance its programmes. It is hoped that the concerned member states would recognize the financial issues of the foundation and with their active participation Foundation's activities would pick up further momentum in future. At the same time, in order to resolve the financial issue there is need for firm action in order to reformulate new working formula and scales of assessment of ECO Science Foundation.

Distinguished delegates,

In conclusion, I must congratulate the members of the Executive Committee for the dedication and hard work with which they have successfully wrapped up vital issues during their deliberations yesterday. I am certain that the spirit of cooperation would grow further in the years to come and would promote scientific and technological collaboration among the member states, leading to sustainable economic development in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me once again express my sincere thanks to the Government of the Islamic Republic Iran for their active support and contributions to convene today's meeting. I would also thank the Heads of Delegations/Representatives of the Member States for their participation and valuable contributions to the meeting.

Wish you a pleasant stay in the beautiful city of Isfahan.

Thank You.