



# **240<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

## **Report**

**22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019**  
***ECO Secretariat - Tehran***

## Report

The 240<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), held on July 22, 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.

2. At the beginning of the Meeting, **the Secretary General** briefed the Council on his participation in the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the BoG of the ECO-TDB held on July 4, 2019 in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey and BoT Meeting of ECOSF held on July 9, 2019 in Isfahan, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

3. In his statement, **ECO Secretary General** informed the Council of the main statement made at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Board of Governors of ECO Trade and Development Bank. In this context he said that, the emphasized on the need of establishment of the ECO Vision Fund with collaboration of ECO Bank to finance the implementation of the priority regional projects which has been provided for in ECO Vision, along with the need for forming of ECO Clearing Union was shared with the Members of the Board of Governors. He emphasized that one of the concerns raised several times at meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives, namely, the need for expansion of the mandate of the ECO Bank also shared with BoG of ECO-TDB.

4. Moreover, the **Secretary General** informed the Council that concerned Director of the Bank made valuable presentation to the participants on the growth and development of the global economy as well as economies of the ECO Member States along with the current financial position of the Bank. The Secretary General suggested that the Director of the Bank may make a presentation at one of the meeting of the Council upon invitation.

5. As for the presence of **Secretary General** at the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) of the ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) held in Isfahan on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 he said that the Meeting was organized after the span of 3 years. He informed the Council that the Meeting considered the comprehensive report of the ECOSF President on the activities and programmes of the Foundation and approved its strategies and work plans for the period 2019-2020. The Meeting also adopted the Isfahan Communiqué- 2019.

6. In his statement, **ECO Secretary General** gave an overview of the two key decisions took during the BoT, (i) the Board approved the suggestion of the President ECOSF to constitute an International Advisory Board comprising of eminent scientists and technologists and science leaders of international repute from across the globe. The BoT also endorsed consideration of the winners of Mustafa Prize in S&T, ECO Awards and other internationally recognized individuals in the field of S&T as members of International Advisory Board (ii) Appointment of Next President

of ECOSF, as the tenure of current President ECOSF would expire on 2 September 2019, as reflected on Para 59 of the Report of BoT of ECOSF.

7. **ECO Secretary General** has informed that BoT Meeting complete Report has been circulated on 17 July 2019. He also reiterates the Secretariat's request to the remaining signatory Member States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkey, and Uzbekistan) to expedite their respective ratification processes to become member of this important specialized agency of the ECO.

8. In the end, the **Secretary General** informed the Council about four (4) important ECO Events/Meetings in August 2019:

- i. 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council, 18-19 August 2019, Tehran- I.R. Iran
- ii. 3<sup>rd</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism and 5<sup>th</sup> High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting, 22-23 August 2019 in Tajikistan;
- iii. 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Central Bank, 29 August 2019, Tehran- I.R. Iran
- iv. 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Donors for the ECO Fund for Afghanistan, 28-29 August 2019, Kabul, I.R. Afghanistan.

9. **Secretary General** emphasized the Member States to make participation at highest level in the above mentioned important meetings.

#### **Agenda Item No.1**

##### Adoption of the Agenda

10. The Secretariat proposed the following Draft Agenda of the 240<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting for adoption:

#### **Draft Agenda**

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 240<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
  2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 239<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
  3. Follow-up to the decisions of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting; ECO Reforms etc. (*continued*)
  4. Presentation by the representative of the University of Applied Sciences and Technology (UAST) of the Islamic Republic of Iran on scientific capacities and activities of the University
  5. Preparatory arrangements for the Second Meeting of the Heads of Central Banks of ECO Member States
  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
11. The **Chairman** with the aim of creation of a further convergence of views concerning the reform proposal(s) proposed that the Council may defer the agenda item No. 3 to its next meeting. The Council approved the Agenda together with the proposal of Chairman related to Agenda item No. 3.

#### **Agenda Item No.2**

##### Adoption of the Draft Report of the 239<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

12. **The Council** adopted the Draft Report of the 239<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/239<sup>th</sup> Meeting/2019/559 dated 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019 along with amendments proposed by the Republic of Turkey in paragraphs 23, 24, 30, 32 and 34 and Islamic Republic of Pakistan in paragraph 61 of the Draft Report.

### **Agenda Item No. 3**

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

13. The agenda item was postponed to the next CPR as per the explanation given under agenda item No. 1.

### **Agenda Item No.4**

Presentation by the representative of the University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST) of the Islamic Republic of Iran on scientific capacities and activities of the University

14. The **Chair** briefed the Council that the Secretariat receive a Note Verbale No. 531/362/110549 dated 3 July 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran informing that the University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST) of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the framework of its International Cooperation Programmes, intends to give presentation on UAST's scientific capacities and activities at the CPR meeting.

15. **Prof. Mahmoud Reza Delavar, Adviser to the President** and Director General of International and Scientific Cooperation Office, University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST) has introduced UAST and its international and scientific activities as well as missions and provided some suggestions to ECO Chairman and respected Permanent Representative of ECO Member States.

16. **Prof. Delavar** further briefed that UAST is the largest public university in Iran which was established in 1992 under auspices of Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) to provide applied science and technology and higher vocational education and training (VET) programs at university level. At present, UAST has 309000 students at Associate Degree, BSc. and MSc. programs in four disciplines including (i) industry, (ii) agriculture, (iii) management and social sciences and (iv) culture and art educational programs. UAST has got 47000 academic staff teaching and training the students at 600 educational centers of the university throughout the country. UAST has 12 joint institutes with different ministries. In addition, UAST has 12 technology clusters and more than 120 innovation centers.

17. He gave suggestions to the ECO Member States are as follows:

- UAST is going to conduct some short-terms, single-modules and workshops on applied sciences and VET;
- UAST plans to organize some Associate Degree, BSc. And MSc. programs.
- Holding courses for training of trainers;
- Establishment of some dual degree educational programs on applied sciences and VET;
- Holding internship courses for some selected disciplines;
- UAST is ready to admit some tuition fee paid students in applied sciences and VET from ECO Member States;

- Establishment of some joint educational centers, technology parks and innovation centers and organization of some conferences and exhibitions on applied science and technologies as well as VET with ECO states;
- UAST can establish some scientific ties both bilaterally and multilaterally with ECO states; and
- Exchange of students, trainers and academic staff for some internship programs, some short term and degree-based educational programs and visits is also proposed.

18. The **Council** appreciated the presentation given by the representative of UAST and requested the Member States to cooperate with the University as it is highly beneficial in order to enhance cooperation and professional capacities of the Member States.

#### **Agenda Item No. 5**

##### Preparatory arrangements for the Second Meeting of the Heads of Central Banks of ECO Member States

19. The **Chair** briefed the Council that the Secretariat received a Note Verbale No. 531/362/116120 dated 8 July 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding providing the Council with the latest development and coordination concerning the preparatory arrangements of the Second Meeting of the Heads of Central Banks of ECO Member States scheduled to be held on 28-29 August 2019 in Tehran.

20. **The Representative of the Central Bank** of the Islamic Republic of Iran briefed the Council regarding hosting the second meeting of ECO Heads of Central Banks in Tehran on 28-29 August 2019. She further said that the core objectives of ECO are promotion of trade and investment among its Member States. Furthermore, according to the ECO Vision-2025, Member States have committed to double intra-region trade, increase ECO share in the global trade and specifically exports, to make potential for economic growth.

21. **The Representative of the Central Bank** of Iran stated that in pursuance of this objective, the Organization has laid down necessary regulatory frameworks for investment opportunities and initiated measures towards progressive removal of trade barriers within the Region and expansion of intra and inter-regional trade and investment. Besides all this efforts, a well-developed and well-functioning financial system is a prerequisite without which this objective won't be realized. She said that the banking sector, as the most prominent financial intermediaries in the region, is the blood vessels of such a financial system and given its efficient robust services, it can promote the trade in the region. She emphasizes that the Central banks are the heartbeat of the banking sector, have an essential role to play with respect to the smooth function of the banking system and subsequently, the development of financial system. Thus, they sure have a substantial potential contribution to increase regional cooperation and growth.

22. **The Representative of the Central Bank** stressed the need to accomplish ECO Vision 2025 to a large extent depends on central banks reinforcing their role in supporting different aspects of banking cooperation. To this end, Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran has the honour to host the Second Meeting of the Heads of the Central Banks. She informed the Council that invitations have already been forwarded and she hoped that Central Bank's Governors of ECO Member States participate personally in this meeting to show their comprehensive support and solid intentions towards ECO region's growth. She said that this Meeting would be a

starting point for future cooperation and joint efforts aiming to enhancing the banking cooperation and trade development of the ECO region and intend to present a new framework in this meeting, for expanding and promoting banking and financial cooperation in order to support economic affairs. It was added that the related documents of the Meeting will be circulated soon among the Member States. She further requested the Member States to inform the host authorities of the composition the representatives of their central bank participating in the meeting as soon as possible.

23. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** stated that to improve and strengthen trade relations between the Member States, this specific meeting would help a lot. He further said that as mentioned by the Representative of the Central Bank of Iran, this meeting has very important agenda to consider in order to find a new instrument supporting trade, banking and financial relations amongst the ECO Member States. He stressed the need to formulate the ECO Clearing Union, which is beneficial for the ECO region, in order to use local currencies. He reiterated to find the way for implementation of joint ECO Regional Projects and also give mandate to the ECO Trade Bank and enhance its role for financing the development projects within the ECO region. While agreeing with the views from the Representative of the Central Bank of Iran, he expressed expectation that the Governors of Central Banks from all ECO Member States will personally attend the said Meeting to have constructive round of deliberations, in order to have positive and constructive result for the benefit of the people of ECO region.

24. The **Council** requested the Member States to ensure the active and highest possible level of participation to the Second Meeting of the Heads of Central Banks of ECO Member States and also thanked the Representative of the Central Bank of Iran regarding providing information with the latest development and coordination concerning the preparatory arrangements of the Meeting.

#### **Agenda Item No. 6**

##### **Administrative matters**

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

25. **The Chairman** reminded that the Secretariat received Note Verbale dated June 24, 2019 from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan regarding the duration of the appointment of the nominee from Afghanistan for the post of Deputy Secretary General (T&I, AIT and IR), which was circulated to the Member States by the Secretariat's Note Verbale dated 26 June 2019.

26. He further reminded that the Council of Permanent Representatives at its 239th Meeting decided to seek COM's approval for the appointment of the nominee from Afghanistan through the silence procedure. Taking into account that the aforesaid Note Verbale received on the date of the CPR Meeting, the Council also agreed to provide Pakistan with two weeks time limit, as of the date of CPR Meeting, during which they may convey their view, if any, as to the aforementioned Note Verbale.

27. **The Chairman** informed that the silence procedure for the appointment of the nominee from Afghanistan initiated after consultations of the Secretary General with Ambassadors of Pakistan and Afghanistan. As per the Note Verbale dated 15 July 2019, in case of no objection within the time limit of two-weeks as of the date of

circulation, the nominee will be appointed as Deputy Secretary General for the period ending on 13 August 2021 from the joining date.

**(b) Recommendations of the Selection Panel**

28. The Selection Panel met on July 22, 2019. The Meeting was coordinated by Mr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, ECO Deputy Secretary General and chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Turkey and Republic of Kazakhstan were present at the meeting.

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

**(i). Assistant Accountant (Category-II, P2)**

The matter was discussed by the panel. However, as no consensus was made, it is recommended that further deliberations may be made at CPR's level with regard to the appointment of Mr. Didar Issakhanov (**Kazakh National**) as Assistant Accountant (Category-II, P2).

**(ii). Database Officer (Category-II, P3)**

Term of Service in respect of Mr. Waqar Siddique (**Pakistani National**) may be extended until the joining of his successor.

30. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** stated that the nomination proposed by Kazakhstan to their post of Assistant Accountant has been vacated since February 2018. He said that during the Selection Panel Meeting, the concerned DSG confirmed that this issue should not be related to the contribution issues of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He requested the Council to consider and approve the said appointment.

31. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** said that he shared the understanding of his country that this issue is linked with the broader issue of Kazakhstan's position on the reform process. However, as already that issue has been removed from the agenda of the 240<sup>th</sup> CPR's meeting, therefore, there is no point in discussing appointment. He further explained that in the current scale of assessment, the share of Kazakhstan is 16%. The current number of administrative positions was allocated to Kazakhstan when it was contributing 16%. However, in practice we observe that the said rate is not being met by Kazakhstan and it disagrees with its SoA. He further said that among other things, the issues of the proportionality between the number of posts of the Member States and their respective rate of contributions as well as the arrears of the Member States, are being considered under the reform process. Hence, he continued, the Council must be wary of allocation of posts that is in proportion to the rate of contribution. He further said that this is their position and Pakistan would follow the recommendations and proposals of the august Council on this issue and would go along wider consensus.

32. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** said that he agreed with views expressed by the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and further details would be discussed after he received instructions from their capital.

33. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** stated that they have two requests i.e (i) inclusion of Kazakhstan nomination in the agenda of the next Meeting and (ii) stipulate the position of Kazakhstan in the CPR Report (*the position of Kazakhstan sent to ECO Secretariat as a Non Paper was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No: Admin/Reform/2019/590 dated 21.07.2019*).

34. After the consideration of the views shared the **Council decided** as follows:
- With respect to the appointment of Mr. Didar Issakhanov (**Kazakh National**) as Assistant Accountant (Category-II, P2), the due to lack of consensus the issue was postponed until the next Meeting.
  - As for the Database Officer (Category-II, P3), the Council agreed on the extension of the tenure of the incumbent Database officer Mr. Waqar Siddique until the joining of his successor.

**Agenda Item No.7**

Any other business:

35. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** requested the Member States for active participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Donors for the ECO Fund for Afghanistan (1<sup>st</sup> MDECOFA) scheduled to be held on 28-29 August 2019 in Kabul. It was also informed that so far, the two countries (unofficially) and TIKA (officially) confirmed their participation in the **said meeting**.

36. **The Chairman**, stressed the need of participation of Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives in the CPR Meeting at their level, due to some important issues, which requires the consideration/discussion of the level of Permanent Representatives.

**Agenda Item No.8**

Date of the next CPR Meeting

37. While adjourning the Meeting, the CPR Chairman expressed his sincere thanks to the distinguished Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States and Representatives from University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST), Tehran and Central Bank of Iran respectively for their participation and valuable contribution in the Meeting.

38. The Council decided to convene its next (**241<sup>st</sup>**) Meeting on **Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019 at 10:00 hours at the ECO Secretariat-Tehran.**



Annex-I

**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. Javid Musayev, Counsellor

**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:**

- Mr. Mian Azmat Farooq, First Secretary

**Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:**

- Mr. Firdavs Yusupov, Second Secretary
- Mr. Saidali Shosaidov, Attaché

**The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:**

- Mr. Zahit Uzun, Counsellor
- Ms. Hatice Ozdil, Third Secretary

**The Embassy of Turkmenistan:**

- Ms. Selbi Mukhammedova, Attache

**The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:**

- Mr. Umid Babaev, Third Secretary

**The ECO Secretariat:**

- H.E. Mr. Hadi Soleimanpur, Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Assistant Director (AD CFU)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Chaudhry Hadees Muhammad, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, English-Persian Interpreter/Translator

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