



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

## **Report**

**25<sup>th</sup> December 2019**  
*ECO Secretariat - Tehran*

## Report

The 244<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting was held on December 25, 2019 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey* to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The 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 and the relevant staff of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as **Annexure-I**.

2. The CPR's outgoing Chair H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador of the Republic of **Tajikistan** to the Islamic Republic of Iran, extended gratitude to all the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of the Member States, ECO Secretary General and his team for supporting him throughout his chairmanship. He underlined some tangible achievements and efforts made during his term, aimed at securing the intended aims and objectives reflected in the Dushanbe Communiqué, as well as accomplishment of the organization's other important tasks, including deliberations and finalization of the reform process. The outgoing Chair conveyed best wishes to Ambassador Ors for the continued success in his responsibilities as new CRR's Chair.

3. H.E. Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador of the Republic of *Turkey* to Iran, conveyed his honour and privilege to assume the CPR's chairmanship. He acknowledged the valuable contributions made by his predecessor, appreciating his able guidance and efficient handling of the CPR meetings. He expressed optimism to seek continued support of all Member States during his term as CPR's chair, noting that the 24<sup>th</sup> COM's meeting in Antalya gave a fresh impetus to Member States' mutual efforts for increasing the developmental process in the region. He added that based on the need of more ownership, the Government of Turkey announced some priority areas to be worked upon, including trade, customs and connectivity as well as its commitment to make the organization more visible. In consultation with the ECO Secretary General, the new chair proposed the development of consensus for the formation of sub-committees to be held prior to CPR's meeting (s) under representation by Member States' Deputy Representatives and, if need, by Permanent Representatives, with a view to making efficient and effective recommendations for decision-making by the CPR. Copy of his statement is enclosed as **Annexure-II**.

4. The **Chairperson** requested the Secretariat to provide administrative/legal feedbacks to set the agenda of CPR, as well as consensus for sub-committee meeting (s). He noted that the CPR would continue to play a leading role in the state of organization's affairs, seeking Permanent Representatives to ensure the consistency of participation by DPRs in the sub-committees' meetings.

5. The **ECO Secretary General** extended sincere thanks to H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi for excellently chairing the CPR's meetings. He underlined that the ECO witnessed a notable change in the status quo during the last two years, having new wave of cooperation under ECO's chairmanship of Tajikistan, especially His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, the honourable Tajik President as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan. He recalled the 23<sup>rd</sup> COM's successful meeting at Dushanbe and the

subsequent Dushanbe Communiqué that paved the way for advancement in Member States' mutual engagements and activities.

6. The **ECO Secretary General** expressed optimism that, in line with the Izmir Treaty and ECO Vision-2025, the organization would continue to move and progress forward under the ECO's chairmanship of Turkey and patronage by His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkey's honourable President, as well as with the support of the Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu. He desired to work closely with the new chair, hoping that Ambassador Ors's able guidance would help the Council of Permanent Representatives and other ECO's organs to secure the perceived aims and objectives under the given mandate. Regarding the chair's proposal for sub-committee (s) meeting (s) to help accelerate the finalization of issues at CPR level, he stated that such a meeting could be convened in the form of informal meeting. In this context, he continued that in order to facilitate discussions at the meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives, the Council may agree on holding informal/ consultative sessions, prior to the CPR's meetings, to consider and consult on the contents of the draft agenda of CPRs. The consultation meeting could be held within one week after the issuance of the draft agenda. It was added that given the contents of the agenda of CPR, the Secretary General may inform the Member States on the date of such a meeting.

7. The **Council** also expressed thanks to the outgoing chair for his excellent contributions to enrich the CPR's proceedings. It further congratulated the new chair for assumption of CPR's chairmanship, assuring full cooperation to support all his efforts for the betterment of the organization.

8. The **in/outgoing chairs** reciprocated the gestures expressed by the Council and the ECO Secretary General, in their favour.

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

#### Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 244<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

9. The Secretariat proposed the following Draft Agenda of the 244<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting for adoption:

#### **Draft Agenda**

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 244<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
  2. Preparations for holding the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Regional Planning Council
  3. Proposal for hosting informal meeting of Permanent Representatives of ECO and Ambassadors of ASEAN based in Tehran
  4. Participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC
  5. Administrative matters:
    - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
  6. Any other business
  7. Date of the next CPR Meeting
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## **Agenda Item No.2**

### **Preparations for holding 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council**

10. **The Deputy Secretary General (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** briefed the Council that as decided by 29<sup>th</sup> RPC, the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) is scheduled for January 14-17, 2020 at the ECO Secretariat. He informed that the proposed draft agenda/annotated draft agenda and tentative programme of the meeting have been circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariats' Note Verbale No. CFU/RPC/30<sup>th</sup> Meeting /2019/1045 dated December 2, 2019.

11. The **DSG** conveyed the formation of relevant sectoral committees as per restructuring of the ECO Secretariat, as well as informed the Council regarding working papers prepared to facilitate committees' deliberations during the meeting (s), which were already forwarded to Member States along with the relevant information note. He also informed that due to time limit, as per the previous practices, the Secretariat initiated silence procedure for getting approval of CPR for reimbursing airfare along with provision of accommodation to 2 delegates of each Member States from ECO Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF).

12. He also added that since no objection was received from any Member States within the stipulated time, CPR approved the accommodation charges as well as reimbursement of return airfare (up to US\$ 900) for two (2) delegates from each Member States from FGPF.

13. **The Council** was further requested to provide the Secretariat with the list of participants at the earliest convenience.

## **Agenda Item No.3**

### **Proposal for hosting informal meeting of Permanent Representatives of ECO and Ambassadors of ASEAN based in Tehran**

14. **The Deputy Secretary General (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** informed the Council that in line with provisions of the Treaty of Izmir, the ECO has been pursuing the policy of mutually beneficial cooperation with relevant regional/international organizations. He said that the ECO attached great importance to its relations with ASEAN in view of the ECO-ASEAN shared ground to institutionalize their cooperative relationship, including same continent, developing economies, commonalities of interests, identical agendas and objectives. In the given context, developing long-term partnership with ASEAN would bring the two sides closer to collaboratively work for the benefits of the peoples of our two regions, he noted, adding that aimed at strengthening the ECO's cooperative relations with ASEAN at strategic level, the 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) concurred for the revival of "ECO-ASEAN joint Ministerial Meeting", recommending it to be convened on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's annual session.

15. The **DSG** further informed that the MoU, between the two sides concluded in 2006, calls for cooperation in trade and investment, drug control, SMEs development and tourism. The Joint Ministerial Meetings in the past stressed on developing and

promoting cooperation among the two regions in these areas. He underlined that the three main reasons, which hampered practical progress by two organizations in achieving the desired outcomes, include the following:

- i. Due to lack of established mechanism for regular interactions and consultations, most of the times the agenda of joint ministerial meetings remained ceremonial and resultantly no fruitful way forward could be reached;
- ii. Presently, cooperation among private sectors is one of the most realistic and useful tool for trade. Since, the private sectors of the two regions are not well connected, the trade potentials of the two sides could not be exploited for their mutual benefits;
- iii. For meaningful and productive relationship in the areas of common interest and relevance, the existing MoU between the two sides needs to be revised as well as updated.

16. He further noted that with a view to promoting meaningful inter-regional relations with ASEAN, the Secretariat would like to develop a mechanism forming regular consultation among respective Ambassadors of the ASEAN and ECO Member States in Iran. The mechanism would not only provide our Permanent Representatives an opportunity to offer their valuable suggestions to their counterparts but at the same time the ASEAN Ambassadors could play their role on ASEAN's relevant forums in order to materialize the common objectives.

17. The **ECO Secretary General** stated that if the Council approved informal meeting between ECO-ASEAN Ambassadors based in Tehran, the Secretariat would suggest two sets of dates to hold the proposed meeting to be considered by both sides. He added that the agenda of the meeting would entail mainly three items, including (i) reviewing the existing MoU between ECO and ASEAN; (ii) possibility of forming joint business forums between Chambers of Commerce of ECO and ASEAN countries and; (iii) find out a mechanism for permanent kind of consultations between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of ECO and ASEAN countries in every one or two years in any of the capitals of ECO or ASEAN countries.

18. **The Council**, while acknowledging the importance of developing and fortifying such inter-regional relations, asked the Secretariat to come up with two sets of dates for the proposed meeting in consultation and coordination with the relevant ECO-ASEAN Ambassadors.

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

##### Participation of Turkish Cypriot State in the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC

19. The **Chairman** informed the Council that Secretariat received Note Verbale No. TRNC/2019/147600 dated November 27, 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Cypriot State regarding their participation in the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC. He further informed that the received communication was circulated amongst Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale CFU/RPC/30<sup>th</sup>Meeting/2019/1030 dated 28 November 2019. Besides, the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey also informed about the said request of Turkish Cypriot State for participation in the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC, he mentioned.

20. The **DSG (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** requested the Council's concurrence in regard to the request of Turkish Cypriot State participation in the 30<sup>th</sup> RPC's meeting, as well as sought Council's approval for participation of the Turkic Council in the said event.
21. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** queried about the request of the Turkic Council which is needed to be received as per the respective modalities as to granting observer status and participation of observers at ECO meeting. He added CPR may consider the issue based on the request of observer which has not been conveyed in this case.
22. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** recalled and supported the proposal made by Iranian Representative during an earlier CPR's meeting regarding provision of information to all ECO Observers about the dates of the event (s), seeking their willingness for participation in the relevant meeting (s).
23. The **ECO Secretary General** requested the Council's approval for provision of information to Turkic Council and Energy Charter regarding dates of the forthcoming RPC, in order to ascertain their willingness for participation in the said event.
24. **The Council** approved the participation of Turkish Cypriot State, as an observer, in the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC. It further concurred for conveying dates of the forthcoming RPC to the Turkic Council and Energy Charter, considering the Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at the ECO, for their possible participation in the upcoming RPC.

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

##### Administrative matters:

#### **Recommendations of the Selection Panel**

25. A meeting of the Selection Panel, held on December 25, 2019, was coordinated by Mr. Kanan Nazarov, ECO Deputy Secretary General. The Panel was chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey. Other members of the Panel included the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
26. The Selection Panel made the following recommendation (s) for consideration by the CPR:

#### **Director for Trade and Investment (Category-I, D2)**

Mr. Zahid Hussain Abbasi (**Pakistani national**) may be appointed for a full term of three (03) years with effect from the date of his joining.

#### **Director for Energy, Mineral & Environment (Category-I, D2)**

The tenure of service in respect of Mr. Fuad Farzalibayov (**Azerbaijani national**) may be extended till the joining date of his successor.

The Council may like to approve the adoption of the prescribed silence procedure to seek COM's concurrence in regard to the recommended extension.

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

The tenure of service in respect of Mr. Muhammad Safdar (**Pakistani national**) may be extended up to February 20, 2020.

**Research Officer for Agriculture, Industry & Tourism (Category-II, P3)**

As per COM's decision whereby repositioning/reappointment of some incumbent staff in other vacant posts was required for the implementation of the reform process, Ms. Nasrin Esmaeili (**Iranian national**), the incumbent Research Officer for Agriculture, Industry and Tourism is supposed to be repositioned/re-appointed against the vacant post of Program Officer for Human Resource and Sustainable Development (**Category-II, P2**) for the remaining period of her existing tenure of service, based on the request of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It was noted by the I.R. of Iran that repositioning/re-appointment should not make any changes in the current salary of incumbent staff for the remaining period of tenure.

Taking into account the various administrative, legal and technical aspects/repercussions of such an exercise, the Selection Panel while deferring the consideration in the matter to its next meeting, requested the Secretariat to provide some formula for avoiding any possible legal/administrative consequences that may occur.

The Selection Panel was proposed the following as a possible criterion in the given context:

"Staff whose posts are released for the implementation of reform decisions made through silence procedure vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/241<sup>st</sup>/2019/785 dated September 22, 2019 and at 24<sup>th</sup> COM's Meeting, could be repositioned/reappointed in the vacant posts available to the relevant Member States. In case that the available vacant post is not equivalent with the released post in terms of grade and remuneration, the repositioning/reappointment of the staff concerned should take place without prejudice to his/her status in terms of salary for the remaining period of his/her tenure. This criterion is only applied to meet the exigencies of the transitional period of reform and its scope is delimited to the status of staff whose posts are released under reform decision and shall not set any precedence."

**Librarian (Category-II, P1)**

Ms. Maryam Torabi, the incumbent Librarian may be reappointed/repositioned against the vacant post of Program Officer for Transport and Communication (**Category-II, P1**) for the remaining period of her existing tenure of service.

**IT/Network Administrator (Category-II, P1)**

Mr. Hashem Simiyarian (**Iranian national**) may be appointed as IT/Network Administrator for a full term of four years from the date of his joining.

27. The **Council** approved the above extensions/appointments/repositioning/re-appointment, as recommended by the Selection Panel.

**Nomination of Mr. Jandos Asanov (Kazakhstan National) against the post of Deputy Secretary General (Tourism, Project Management, Judicial and Parliamentary Coordination & ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan)**

28. The **Deputy Secretary General (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** informed the Council that following the 24<sup>th</sup> COM's approval, a fourth post of Deputy Secretary General was created at the Secretariat for the Republic of Kazakhstan. He added that the the 18% budgetary share of Kazakhstan to ECO for 2019 was materialized. He added that the Republic of Kazakhstan forwarded the nomination of Mr. Jandos Asanov along with his CV for appointment against their newly established post of Deputy Secretary General, the DSG mentioned. The Note Verbale received from the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan circulated to all Member States through Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADM/PER/2019/1083 dated December 9, 2019. He further stated that as per the rules of procedure, the approval of the Council of Ministers (COM) is required for the appointment of Mr. Jandos Asanov as DSG, as a result, he continued CPR's approval for obtaining approval of COM as to the appointment of the aforesaid nominee through silence procedure is hereby sought.

29. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** raised a point of order, as to the agenda of CPR. He underlined that all the issues which are expected to be considered by CPR should be reflected in the agenda of CPR. He added that this issue could also be reflected as a sub agenda item in the draft agenda of today's Meeting.

30. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** emphasized that the received nomination should be included in the relevant agenda item.

31. As for the point of order raised, **DSG (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** brought to the attention of the Council that after circulation of the draft agenda of CPR, next day the Secretariat received Note Verbal from Kazakhstan about the aforesaid nomination. He added that the said note was circulated amongst Member States, specifying that this nomination would be considered under Agenda Item No. 5 i.e. Administrative Matters.

32. **The Council**, while taking into account the views of the Representatives as well as explanation made by the Secretariat, noted that the relevant sub-agenda item (s) under administrative matters should be reflected in the agenda of CPRs. However, the Council approved the adoption of a two-week "**Silence Procedure**" to seek concurrence of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) for appointment of Mr. Jandos Asanov (**Kazakhstan national**) against the newly created post of Deputy Secretary General for Tourism, Project Management, Judicial & Parliamentary Coordination and ECO Advocacy Program for Afghanistan (**Category-I, D3**).

**Agenda Item No. 6**  
Any other business

33. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** proposed there should be a more effective mechanism for drafting the CPR reports. This is because certain points made by



the representatives in the CPR are omitted, while others not expressed are included due to the reporting methodology of indirect speech. He asked the Secretary General to come out with a feasible formula to address this issue. He also underscored the Embassy's puzzlement with the Secretariat's circular note informing its pleasure about the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey's decision regarding the omission in the 243rd CPR report.

34. The Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** acknowledged the recent steps towards successful completion of the reform process, noting that there were some administrative issues to be settled for distribution, re-allocation and upgrading of certain portfolios. He underlined their expectation about transparency of such internal adjustments to be made by the Secretary General. He thus proposed further discussion of the matter during the upcoming CPRs."

35. The Secretary General noted that the Secretariat - as per the mandate given to it - was drawing up the job description of the posts which upon its completion will be circulated among the Member States for consideration.

#### **Agenda Item No.7**

##### **Date of the next CPR Meeting**

36. The **Chair** expressed his sincere thanks to the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of all ECO Member States for their participation and valuable contribution in the Meeting. He also extended his utmost gratitude to the Council for expressing kind words and appreciation for him.

37. The **Council** tasked the Secretariat to fix the date for next CPR's meeting in consultation with Member States.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- H.E. Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Lival, Ambassador
- Mr. Sayed Nader Pajohesh, Second Secretary

### The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- Mr. Rauf Abullayev, Second 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:

- H.E. Mr. Askhat Orazbay, Ambassador
- 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:

- H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador
- Mr. Firdavs Yusupov, Second Secretary

### The Embassy of the Republic of Turkey:

- H.E. Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador
- Mr. Emirhan Yorulmazlar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Zahit Uzun, Counsellor

### The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- Ms. Selbi Muhammedova, Attaché

### 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. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Assistant Director (AD CFU)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Raza Muhammad Ahmed, 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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