



245th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

24th June 2020
ECO Secretariat

Report

The 245th CPR Meeting was held on June 24, 2020 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador of the Republic of **Turkey** to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Permanent Representative to ECO. The meeting was attended by Permanent Representatives/Representatives of Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan**, Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, **Kyrgyz** Republic, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, Republic of **Turkey** 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**. The Meeting was convened, taking care of necessary health protocols adopted in the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic.

2. **H.E. Ambassador Derya Ors, the Chairman** welcomed the delegates and expressed his greeting to all participants for attending the 245th session of the Council of Permanent Representatives. While highlighting the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in the region, he wished God Almighty's mercy upon the deceased and speedy recovery of all people who are under treatment. The Chairman congratulated the H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi, Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran for his appointment as Permanent Representative of Pakistan to ECO and newly appointed Ambassador Jandos Asanov (from Kazakhstan) as Deputy Secretary General in ECO Secretariat.

3. **H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour, ECO Secretary General** thanked the distinguished delegates for their participation and while congratulating H.E. Ambassador Rahim Hayat Qureshi for assuming the responsibilities as Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives and Amb. Jandos Asanov as new ECO Deputy Secretary General, made his remarks to open the CPR's proceedings (**Annexure-II**).

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

4. **The Council adopted** the following Agenda of the 245th CPR Meeting for deliberations:

Draft Agenda

1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 245th CPR Meeting
2. Adoption of the Draft Report of the 244th CPR Meeting
3. Submission of 30th RPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme 2020 and Calendar of Events 2020 to the upcoming COM for

approval; Consideration of the prioritized/categorized list of Calendar of Events 2020.

4. "ECO Guidelines "on Cross Border Facilitation Measures under conditions of COVID-19
5. Administrative matters:
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 - Report by the Secretariat on the development regarding the draft proposals on the Budgetary Reform of the Organization and Administrative Matters of the Secretariat
6. Any other business
7. Date of the next CPR Meeting

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 244th CPR Meeting

5. The **Council adopted** the Draft Report of the 244th CPR Meeting circulated by the Secretariat to the Member States on January 15, 2020.

Agenda Item No.3

Submission of 30th RPC Meeting Report along with Work Programme 2020 and Calendar of Events 2020 to the upcoming COM for approval; Consideration of the prioritized/categorized list of Calendar of Events 2020

6. The **Chair** briefed that the 30th RPC Meeting was held on January 14-16, 2020 in the ECO Secretariat. The RPC's Report, ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for 2020 were circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Notes Verbale dated January 21, 2020 and May 12, 2020.

7. The **Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan** requested the postponement of 7th Ministerial meeting on Agriculture and 6th High Level Experts Meeting on Agriculture scheduled to be held this year in Uzbekistan as per Calendar of Events-2020, adding that the same event may be held sometime in 2021.

8. The **Representative of the Republic of Turkey** informed that relevant authorities in Turkey would shortly convey some suggestion in regard to Calendar of Events 2020 to facilitate its implementation under the special circumstances forced by COVID-19.

9. The **Chair** desired that the Secretariat might brief the Council for prioritized/categorized list of meetings/events and conferences/seminars /workshops/ training courses mentioned in Calendar of Events-2020.

10. **ECO Deputy Secretary General (T&C, HRSD & CFU)** briefed the Council that due to the current situation caused by COVID-19, impacts of the outbreak on socio-economic conditions in the ECO Region, and with a view to achieving the targets/goals reflected in the ECO Work Programme 2020, the Secretariat decided to prioritize/categorize the list of meetings/events and conferences/seminars /workshops/training courses mentioned in the Calendar of Events-2020 in three categories, which was circulated to the Member States on May 12, 2020.

11. **Considering the remarks of the Turkey and Uzbekistan, the Council endorsed** the submission of the 30th RPC Meeting Report along with ECO Work Programme 2020 and ECO Calendar of Events-2020 to the upcoming COM for approval, and **decided** to follow up the above mentioned prioritized/categorized list for the current year.

Agenda Item No.4

"ECO Guidelines "on Cross Border Facilitation Measures under conditions of COVID-19"

12. As desired by the **Chair**, the **Director (T&C)** briefed the meeting that "ECO Guidelines" on cross border facilitation measures under conditions of COVID-19 were circulated amongst Member States on April 11, 2020, seeking updated information of their measures taken at Border Crossing Points (BCPs) as well as valuable views/comments on the circulated guidelines. He underlined that the proposed guidelines abstracted from TTFA are aligned with the measures currently being taken by the United Nations and International Road Transport Union (IRU), conveying that the main purpose of such guidelines is to keep the ECO regional border crossings open for freight supply chains of medicines and foods to support regional livelihoods. Furthermore, he underscored that these guidelines would provide specific technical guidance with "practical steps" to be taken at BCPs of ECO's main transport routes and corridors. He informed the Council that the Secretariat has received feedbacks from the Member States (*except Islamic Republic Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Turkmenistan*), requesting them to their responses.

13. While informing the Council that the proposed guidelines are under consideration/evaluation at capital, the **Representative of the Republic of Turkey** requested to postpone the agenda item for the next meeting of CPR.

14. The **Secretary General** invited all the Member States to actively participate for enriching the proposed guidelines and to have a fruitful discussion in the next CPR, with a view to making substantive progress to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization regarding transit transport and connectivity issues in ECO region.

15. Taking into account the views of the Member States and briefing of the Secretariat, the **Council decided** to postpone the agenda item for discussion during next meeting of the CPR.

Agenda Item No.5

Administrative matters:

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

16. The Selection Panel met on June 24, 2020. The Meeting was coordinated by ECO Deputy Secretary General (Admin, EME and IR) and chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey. Other participants of the meeting included the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Turkey.

17. The Selection Panel made the following recommendation(s) for consideration by the CPR:

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

The matter has been deferred for discussion in the extraordinary session of Selection Panel, which will be held shortly.

Legal Adviser (Category-II, P3)

The tenure of service in respect of Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser (**Iranian National**) may be extended up to June 06, 2021.

Program Officer for Energy, Minerals & Environment (Category-II, P2)

Mr. Ukubaev Mamatmus Mamatazizovich (**Kyrgyz National**) may be appointed for a full term of four (04) years with effect from the date of his joining.

18. The **Council approved** the above extension/appointment/deferral, as recommended by the Selection Panel.

19. The **ECO Secretary General**, additionally, recommended that the Member States may take necessary measures for nominations against their vacant posts in ECO Secretariat, which have already been delayed due to the ongoing crisis forced by COVID-19.

- Report by the Secretariat on the development regarding the draft proposals on the Budgetary Reform of the Organization and Administrative Matters of the Secretariat

20. The **ECO Secretary General** briefed the Council that the draft proposals on Budgetary Reform of the Organization and Administrative Matters, for their further application as a part of budgetary and regularity reform of the Organization were circulated amongst the Member States on June 1, 2020 and the Member States were asked to provide the Secretariat with their views by June 15, 2020. He clarified that the proposed drafts covered a range of issues from modifying the budgeting method to consideration of equal remuneration for international civil servants holding the equal posts in ranking and status. He underlined the draft proposals have been designed to create the changes as of 2021 onwards for the coming generation taking up the responsibilities of administering the Organization. It was noted that the proposal on alteration of budgeting method made in line with the observation of the Audit Report for the last year and based on the repeated assertion of COM for making the organization more project-oriented. He also highlighted the idea of exploiting the method of virtual meetings for materializing some of the events in line with the Organization's Calendar of Events which were also reflected in the draft budgetary reforms proposal. He continued that up to the expiry of the suggested date for receiving the views of the Member States, the Secretariat was provided with the views only from the Republic of Turkey, which were circulated amongst the Member States.

21. The **Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan** conveyed their position regarding submission of written views through Note Verbale on the issue and recommended that the agenda item may be discussed after consideration of their views.

22. The **ECO Secretary General** suggested that the Working Group on ECO Reforms may take on the task of evaluation of the views/comments received from the Member States on draft proposals on the Budgetary Reform of the Organization and Administrative Matters of the Secretariat.

23. While deferring the sub-agenda item for the next meeting of CPR, the **Council agreed** to revive Working Group on ECO Reforms, established by 220th Council of Permanent Representative on June 30, 2017.

Agenda Item No.6

Any other business

24. The **Representative of the Republic of Turkey** requested for updates on job descriptions of ECO Staff, as mandated to the Secretary General/Secretariat under the decision of 24th meeting of the Council of Ministers.

25. The **Secretary General** informed that the creation/updating of the new/existing job descriptions for ECO Staff is under process, adding that the draft

job descriptions relating to Directing Staff (*Deputy Secretary General, Director and Head of Section*) would be shortly circulated amongst the Member States for consideration.

26. The **Secretary General** while bringing the attention of the Council over the affects of COVID-19 in region, particularly the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, informed that the Secretariat was considering the ways and means for ECO Member States/ECO Secretariat to assist/support the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, especially in health sector in the specific backdrop of Coronavirus, control of its spread as well as to recover from associated damages. He said that the outcome of such consideration would be shared with the Member States in due course. However, he requested the Member States to support the said idea and convey their valuable proposal(s).

27. The **Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan** expressed his gratitude to the Secretary General for his humanitarian notions for the people of Afghanistan.

Agenda Item No.7

Date of the next CPR Meeting

28. The **Chair** expressed his sincere appreciation and thanked to the delegates for their active participation in the Meeting.

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

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Abdulmukaddas Hadi, Counsellor
- Ms. Zahra Badaghi, Administrative Assistant

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 the Republic of Uzbekistan:

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

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpur, Secretary General
- Mr. Kanan Nazarov, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Dr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Ahmad Saffari, Director, Transport and Communications
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Head of Section (CFS)
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Muhammad Ahmed Raza, Steno-Secretary
- Mr. Amjad Saeed Abbasi, Steno-Secretary
- Ms. Aynur Mammadova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Ms. Nurgul Duissenova, English-Russian Interpreter/Translator
- Mr. Amir Javaheri, English-Persian Interpreter/Translator
