



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

### **Report**

*June 22, 2021  
ECO Secretariat*

## Report

The 254<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting was held on June 22, 2021 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, Ambassador of **Turkmenistan** to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Permanent Representative to ECO. The meeting was attended by the Permanent Representatives of Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, the Republic of **Turkey** and Republic of **Uzbekistan** as well as Representatives of Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan**, Republic of **Azerbaijan** and **Kyrgyz** Republic. The ECO Secretary General and the relevant staff of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as **Annexure-I**.

2. **H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, the Chairman** cordially welcomed the distinguished participants and initiates the proceedings of meeting.

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

#### Adoption of the Agenda

3. The **Council adopted** the following Agenda of the 254<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting for deliberation:

- 1) Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 254<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting
- 2) Adoption of the Draft Report of the 253<sup>rd</sup> CPR Meeting
- 3) Review and follow-up of outcomes of virtual 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit (*continued*)
- 4) ECO Small Sized Project Implementation Status Overview (*continued*)
- 5) Appointment of new Secretary General (*continued*)
- 6) Renewal/extension of observers status of the relevant states/organizations
- 7) Administrative matters:
  - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
- 8) Any other business
- 9) Date of the next CPR Meeting

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

#### Adoption of the draft Report of the 253<sup>rd</sup> CPR Meeting

4. The **Council adopted** the draft report of the 253<sup>rd</sup> CPR Meeting, circulated by the Secretariat on May 30, 2021.

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

#### Review and follow-up of outcomes of virtual 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit (Continued)

5. **The Chair** reminded that the High Level Committee (HLC) established under a decision of 252<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of CPR for follow-up of outcomes of virtual 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit as well as mid-term review of ECO Vision 2025, held series of meetings and requested the HLC's Co-chairs to update the Council on the developments and progress.

6. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** (*Co-Chair of the HLC*) informed that the Committee held several meetings and developed a structure of

the draft report. While the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the republic of Uzbekistan have forwarded their comments to be incorporated in said report, views of other Member States are yet to be received in this regard, he noted. The Committee is further reviewing the ideas and proposals of the honourable ECO Heads of States/Governments expressed during the 14<sup>th</sup> Summit for appropriately incorporating in the report, which will be shared with the Member States soon. With regard to the proposal made by the honourable President of Kazakhstan relating to the distinction between founding and non-founding members, he suggested that ECO Secretariat may develop some feasible criteria/modalities to address such concerns.

7. The Permanent Representative of Republic of **Kazakhstan** while supporting the suggestion of Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iran on proposal of Kazakhstan's President, recommended that based on the experiences of other regional/international organizations like ASEAN, SCO, EU etc., which do not adhere to any such provision of founding/non-founding members in the structure of their formation, the Secretariat may develop some preliminary proposals to be considered for equalizing the status of Member States.

8. The ECO **Deputy Secretary General** (Tourism, PM, JPC and EAPA) informed that according to the deliberations/discussions made during of HLC's meetings and feedbacks of the Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, the ECO Secretariat is preparing the draft document which will be shortly submitted for kind perusal of the Chair and Co-Chair(s) of the HLC.

9. The **Council** expressed satisfaction over the progress of HLC and urged the Member States to convey their formal inputs/suggestions to the Secretariat for insertion/inclusion in the document(s) under preparation. The **Council also tasked** the Secretariat to develop the draft modalities concerning the implementation of the proposal made by the Republic of Kazakhstan and conveyed it to Member States for their views/comments.

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

##### ECO Small Sized Project Implementation Status Overview

10. Recalling their last session's discussions and decisions, the **Chair** requested the Secretariat to update the Council in the matter.

11. The ECO **Deputy Secretary General** (Tourism, PM, JPC and EAPA) informed that report of 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of Project Monitoring Group (PMG) held on June 14, 2021 would be circulated amongst Member States shortly. Furthermore, he highlighted that the Project Management Section of the Secretariat, while currently working on 46 projects, had completed 11 projects including 7 small sized projects. Referring the decision of the 31<sup>st</sup> RPC held in January, 2021, he solicited the approval of the CPR for expansion of the scope of the small sized projects to feasibility/pre-feasibility study, allowing 10 more projects to be implemented annually with the cost of US \$ 10,000/- as well as the recruitment of the requested A level staff for Project Management Section.

12. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** appreciated the Secretary General for his efforts to transform the ECO into a project oriented

organization. While mentioning their identical approach, he underscored that Turkey had always actively participated for ensuring the implementation of small sized projects. However, he requested deferral of the agenda including recruitment of an A level staff for Project Management Section considering that the response/feedback of their Capital was yet to be received in this regard. He also requested the Secretariat for updates on preparations of the mid-term RPC.

13. The ECO **Secretary General** noted that based on the COM's mandate the Secretariat had been endeavouring to ensure prompt execution of the idea of transforming the ECO into a project and result oriented organization. Underlining that the Key Project Performance Indicator increased by 42% during last year with contribution of Member States, he said that the proposal was made to facilitate the work of new Secretary General. However, considering delay in finalization of the matter due to technical and bureaucratic procedures, the issue may be discussed at the SOM level in order to save the time of CPR which is already occupied in dealing with other unavoidable and important tasks.

14. The ECO **Deputy Secretary General** (T&C, HRSD and In-charge CFU) informed that the Secretariat was in process of finalizing the progress report on the Work Programme and Calendar of Events for 2021 adopted by the 31<sup>st</sup> RPC, and would be circulated shortly. Furthermore, he explained that the exact date(s) of the mid-term RPC to be organized virtually would be shared with Member States on receipt of confirmation from ECO Chair.

15. Taking into account all aspects of deliberations, the **Council agreed** to defer the issue of expanding the scope of small sized projects, as well as recruitment of an A level staff, for discussion at a later stage.

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

##### Appointment of the new ECO Secretary General

16. Referring discussions made in the matter during 253<sup>rd</sup> session of CPR, the **Chair** informed the Council that majority of Member States conveyed their formal consents as regards appointment of H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan as next ECO Secretary General. He requested the Council to resume deliberations in the matter.

17. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Turkey** informed that their support for the appointment of Tajikistan's candidate as new Secretary General was conveyed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan through Turkey's Embassy in Dushanbe.

18. The Representative of **Turkmenistan** expressed their support, in principle, to the candidature of the Republic of Tajikistan for the post of ECO Secretary General and informed that their formal concurrence, in this regard, would follow shortly.

19. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** conveyed their no objection to Tajikistan's candidature and supported the adoption of a two-week's

silence procedure to secure approval of the COM for appointment of the new Secretary General.

20. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** informed that during interactions in Dushanbe a high-level delegation of Iran already conveyed their support to Tajikistan's candidature. He also recommended adoption of the prescribed silence procedure for COM's approval in this regard.

21. Having no objections raised by the Member States, the **Council decided** that a two-week's silence procedure may be adopted to secure the COM's approval for appointment of H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri as next ECO Secretary General, whose term of office to be commenced on August 13, 2021.

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

#### Renewal/extension of observer status of the relevant states/organizations

22. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General** (Administration, EME and IR) informed that the ECO Observer status of International Energy Charter was expired, adding that the ECO Observer status of Turkish Cypriot State and Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States will be expired in October, 2021. The formal requests for renewal/extension of their observer status, received from all them were circulated amongst the Member States along-with a detailed background paper vide ECO Secretariat's Note Verbale No. IR/Observer/2021/554, dated May 30, 2021. According to the *"Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at the ECO"*, the observer status may be granted to States/Organizations for a period of three years which may be extended or renewed for next three years upon receipt of a request from the observer concerned. He requested the Council to consider and recommend three years extension/renewal of observer status in respect of all three ECO observers by securing the COM's approval through adoption of two weeks silence procedure.

23. The Permanent Representative of Islamic Republic of **Iran** conveyed their consent for the requested extension/renewal of the observer status of International Energy Charter and Turkic Council through the prescribed silence procedure. As regards renewal/extension of observer status in respect of Turkish Cypriot State, he requested to defer the case for discussion by next meeting of CPR considering that the consent of relevant Iranian authorities are yet to be received.

24. The Permanent Representative of Republic of **Kazakhstan** considered the views of his Iranian counterpart, suggesting a two-week silence procedure for extension/renewal of the observer status of International Energy Charter and Turkic Council.

25. **The Permanent Representative of Turkey** stated that the Delegations were given enough time to consider the request for extension of observer status of Turkish Cypriot State. He also stated that the Turkish Cypriot State's request has been timely brought to the agenda of CPR. He therefore insisted on putting the approval of such

request to the silence procedure at the present CPR together with other two Observer's extension requests.

He further elaborated that singling-out one of the Member State, namely Turkish Cypriot State, which holds such a status for a long time and actively participates ECO meetings, would send a negative signal to this State. While stating that Turkey is ready to support any formula that may avoid the Council to set any bad precedence, he called the Council to approve such request as soon as possible and at the next CPR, at the latest, if no consensus reached at today's meeting. Therefore he invited other Delegations to put forward their own comments on the matter.

26. The **Legal Advisor** explained that in case of being provided with a request from an observer whose status was already expired for its participation in ECO Meetings, such request could not be proceeded due to lack of the status based on which the request could be made.

27. In consideration of the views and comments expressed during the deliberations, the **Council** (i) recommended three years' extension/renewal of observer status of International Energy Charter and Turkic Council through adoption of prescribed silence procedure to secure the COM's approval and; (ii) deferred the matter related to extension/renewal of the observer status of Turkish Cypriot State till next meeting of CPR.

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

##### Administrative matters:

##### - Recommendations of the Selection Panel

28. The Selection Panel met on June 22, 2021. The Meeting was coordinated by ECO Deputy Secretary General (Administration, EME and IR) and Chaired by the Representative of the Embassy of Turkmenistan. Other participants of the meeting included the Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan.

29. The Selection panel made the following recommendations for consideration of the CPR:

##### **Head of Section for Coordination and Follow-up (Category-I, D1)**

The tenure of service in respect of Mr. Kiromov Salohiddin (**Tajikistan National**) may be extended until the joining date of his successor.

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

##### **Head of Section for Administration and Management (Category-I, D1)**

Mr. Mojtaba Ramezani Ahmadabadi (**Iranian National**) may be appointed for a full term of three (03) years with effect from the date of his joining.

30. The **Council approved** the above recommendations of the selection panel.

## **Agenda Item No.8**

### Any other business

#### **i) Deteriorating Healthcare condition in Afghanistan**

31. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan** informed that the third wave of COVID-19 pandemic overstretched the healthcare system of Afghanistan, deteriorating the health conditions in the country gravely. To control the tragic spike of the death toll in Afghanistan due to COVID-19, he persuaded their earlier/formal request for urgent assistance of ECO Member States in providing Afghan healthcare system with Oxygen Balloons and Portable Oxygen Generators. He also sought allocation of some financial assistance from ECO General Reserve Fund to support the Afghanistan's health care system.

32. The Permanent Representative of Islamic Republic of **Iran** stated that they started the supply of oxygen to Afghanistan from last week. He further recommended the Council to consider the request of Afghanistan seeking financial support for their healthcare system from ECO General Reserve Fund or ECO Fund for Afghanistan.

33. The Permanent Representative of Republic of **Uzbekistan** informed that the Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan had handed over 1000 Oxygen Balloons to the relevant authorities in Mazar-e-Sharif on humanitarian basis. He also supported the request of Afghanistan regarding the financial assistance from available funds of organization.

34. Considering this a quite humanitarian issue, the ECO **Secretary General** emphasized on shared responsibilities to address the needs and requirements of Afghanistan. Relevantly he made following proposals:

- i. To speed up the process for equipping with appropriate facilities one hospital in Afghanistan dealing specifically with COVID-19, by preparing relevant TOR and necessary financial assistance in this regard through the ECO Fund for Afghanistan; and
- ii. Afghanistan Special Committee at the Secretariat level with participation of representatives of interested Member States may elaborate and suggest concrete proposals for consideration of Member States.

35. Considering the above, the **Council mandated** the Secretariat to work in the matter based on the above proposals/recommendations of the ECO Secretary General.

#### **ii) Participation of the Turkish Cypriot State in the 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy**

36. The **Deputy Secretary General** (Administration, EME and IR) informed that Turkish Cypriot State formally requested for participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy scheduled for June 24, 2021 in the capacity of ECO Observer, which may kindly be approved.

37. The **Council approved** the participation of Turkish Cypriot State for attending the 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy in its capacity as "Observer" according to the Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status of ECO.

**iii) ECO-ASEAN Cooperative partnership**

38. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General** (Administration, EME and IR) informed about the receipt of a proposal from Permanent Representative of Cambodia to ASEAN concerning a joint ECO-ASEAN virtual meeting with participation of their Tehran and Jakarta based Ambassadors. He proposed the following for consideration of the Council:

- i. Revitalization of the "ECO-ASEAN joint Ministerial Meeting and in this regard the 15<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN joint Ministerial Meeting may be organized on the sidelines of the 76<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly's annual session;
- ii. Regular interactions between ECO-ASEAN Ambassadors based in Tehran or Joint Meeting of the Permanent Representatives of the two organizations to deliberate the following matters:
  - a) Reviewing the existing MoU and Work Programme between ECO and ASEAN as per the recent developments and new priorities in the last 15 years.
  - b) Prospects of organizing Joint events/projects.

39. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** while supporting the proposals of the Secretariat suggested to convene a Special CPR meeting with Tehran based Ambassador of ASEAN Member States or informal meeting prior to the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN Joint Meeting on the side-lines of 76<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly Session with the view to preparing necessary ground for holding of such a high-level event.

40. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Iran** endorsed the Secretariat's initiative for revitalizing the interaction with ASEAN and proposed that Turkmenistan, in capacity of current Chair of ECO, may consider inviting the ASEAN Secretary General as well as the ASEAN's Chair to join the 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit in Ashgabat.

41. With a view to reinvigorate the collaborative engagements with ASEAN, the **ECO Secretary General** proposed to:

- i. initiate negotiations with ASEAN to revise MOU between the two sides;
- ii. include separate agenda item in the next CPR to evaluate the draft MOU and concept paper;
- iii. invite Tehran based Ambassadors of ASEAN to join ECO in one of the next CPR meetings;
- iv. explore the possibility for organizing the joint virtual meeting between the Permanent Representatives of ASEAN at Jakarta and ECO in Tehran;
- v. proceed for having joint Ministerial meeting on the sidelines of 76<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Session; and
- vi. consider some source of engagements with ASEAN during 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit in Ashgabat by inviting the Secretary General of ASEAN as well as the current Chair of the organization subject to the host's concurrence.

42. Taking into account the comments of the Member States and proposals made by the ECO Secretary General, the **Council tasked** the Secretariat to pursue the matter in line with the recommendations of the ECO Secretary General.



**Agenda Item No.9**

Date of the next CPR Meeting

43. The **Council decided** to convene its next (255<sup>th</sup>) CPR Meeting on **July 26, 2021** at ECO Secretariat.
44. The **Chair** adjourned the meeting and expressed gratitude to all participants.

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## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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

- Mr. Abdul Ghani Farahi, Second Secretary

**The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- Mr. Abbas Jabbarov, Counsellor
- Mr. Subhi Ismailzade, Third Secretary

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

- H.E. Mr. Sayed J. Alavi, Permanent Representative
- Mr. Khosravi, Attaché, 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:**

- H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureishi, Ambassador
- Mr. Mian Azmat Farooq, First Secretary

**The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:**

- H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, Ambassador
- Mr. Ismoilov Salohiddin, Attache

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

- H.E.Mr. Derya Ors, Ambassador
- Mr. Mehmet Zahit Uzun, Counsellor

**The Embassy of Turkmenistan:**

- H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, Ambassador
- Mr. Bairamov Atamirat, First Secretary
- Mr. Mulkiev Bairam, Third Secretary

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

- H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullayev, Ambassador
- 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. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Salohiddin Kiromov, Head of CFS
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Ms. Bayan Adilbekova, Heas of PMS
- Mr. Raza Muhammad Ahmed, Steno-Secretary
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