



**Midterm Meeting of  
the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

**Report**

**July 28, 2021**

The Mid-term Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) was held virtually on July 28, 2021. The ECO MemberStates' delegations, including the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Republic of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan participated in the meetings. The Representatives of the Turkish Cypriot State attended the Meeting in the capacity of Observer. The ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour, Chairman of the CPR, H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Gurbanov and the concerned staff of the Secretariat also participated in the event. The list of participants is annexed as Annexure-I.

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

#### Opening of the meeting

2. While inaugurating the event, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour welcomed the event's participants. Highlighting the RPC's actual mandate, Dr. Soleimanpour noted that this particular midterm meeting would review and adjust the year 2021's activities and engagements of the organization in special consideration of the COVID-19 and the post-pandemic conditions that obliged a shift in the global and regional working methods. He also highlighted the need for ECO Work Program 2021, to comply with the important ideas and proposals expressed by our leaders during the 14th Summit for greater regional integration. ECO Secretary General's remarks annexed as Annexure-II.

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

#### Election of the Chairman

3. As per ECO's rules and procedures, H.E. Mr. Toyli Malikov, the Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan was elected to chair the Mid-term Meeting of RPC.

4. H.E. Mr. Toyli Malikov, the Chairman of Midterm RPC welcomed the participants to the meeting. He underscored that activities within the ECO had notably increased in recent years, bearing positive impact on ECO's efforts for expanded regional cooperation. Nevertheless, he emphasized on the significant potential of the region, especially in economic, trade, transport, energy and investment areas that he considered necessary to be utilized to attain the developmental goals of ECO Vision 2025. He further accentuated that maximized collective and sustainable efforts of the member states could help enable the regional economy to recover from the post-pandemic state of rigidity. Copy of Chairman's statement is annexed as Annexure-III.

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

#### Adoption of the Agenda

5. The Council adopted the following agenda of Midterm RPC Meeting:

- 1) Opening of the Meeting

- 2) Election of the Chairman
- 3) Adoption of Agenda
- 4) Report by ECO Secretary General on the Midterm progress of implementation of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021
- 5) Review of midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021 on Trade & Investment; Energy, Minerals & Environment; Transport & Communications and Agriculture & Industry
- 6) Review of midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021 on Tourism, Human Resources & Sustainable Development; Judicial and Parliamentary Coordination and EAPA; ECO's International Relations and ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional institutions/Affiliated Bodies; Economic Research and Statistics
- 7) Conclusion and adoption of reviewed ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021
- 8) Any other business
- 9) Adoption of the Report
- 10) Closing

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

##### Report by ECO Secretary General on the Midterm progress of implementation of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021

6. The ECO Secretary General H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour underlined that ECO was able to successfully hold several ministerial and experts group meetings of regional significance within the first half of 2021, particularly the 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit on March 4 at Ankara, as well as 2<sup>nd</sup> General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Countries (PAECO) on June 1-3 at Islamabad. He further stated that the 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit to be preceded by 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) would be held in the last week of November this year in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Citing the ECO's recently adopted project-oriented approach, he underlined that this outreach appeared to bear notable results, especially increasing the number of small-sized projects to gratify the concept of making the ECO a more project-and-result-oriented economic forum. He mentioned that the ECO Secretariat was further endeavouring to ensure smooth compliance of the useful ideas and proposals expressed by Heads of State/Government of the Member States during 14<sup>th</sup> Summit for a greater regional integration. Dr. Soleimanpour briefed the meeting about sector-wise implementation of some ECO projects, stressing that in the recent years the projects' execution rate has significantly increased. In this regard, he conveyed details of a few small-sized completed, ongoing and proposed projects, adding that efforts were being made to expand the scope and number of small-sized projects.

7. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour suggested that the RPC might take into consideration the Nexus Approach in designing future plans for ECO and the creation of Regional Production Chain to improve and enhance the regional productivity and facilitate movement of capital-technology-skilled workforce as well as easing barriers in market access. He expected that the Council/Member States would support the idea of expanding the scope and number of small-sized projects to be discussed by upcoming SOM/COM in Ashgabat. Copy of SG's statement is placed at Annexure-IV.

**Agenda Item No.5**

Review of midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021 on Trade & Investment; Energy, Minerals & Environment; Transport & Communications and Agriculture & Industry

8. In Consideration of proposals/suggestions/updates by the Member States, the Council reviewed the sector-wise midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021, prepared by the ECO Secretariat, in the areas of Trade & Investment; Energy, Minerals & Environment; Transport & Communications and Agriculture & Industry.

**Agenda Item No. 6**

Review of midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021 on Tourism, Human Resources & Sustainable Development; Judicial and Parliamentary Coordination and EAPA; ECO's International Relations and ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional institutions/Affiliated Bodies; Economic Research and Statistics

9. Based on the feedbacks of the Member States, the Council reviewed the sector-wise midterm progress of the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021, prepared by the ECO Secretariat, in the areas of Tourism, Human Resources & Sustainable Development; Judicial & Parliamentary Coordination and EAPA; ECO's International Relations and ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies; Economic and Research.

**Agenda Item No. 7**

Conclusion and adoption of reviewed ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the year 2021

10. Taking into account the deliberations under Agenda(s) No.5 & 6, the Council adopted the reviewed ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for the years 2021, which are annexed as Annexure-V and Annexure-VI.

**Agenda Item No. 8**

Any other business

11. The Representative of the Republic of Turkey, while appreciating the organization of the first midterm RPC meeting, highlighted the importance and format of regular sessions of RPC at the beginning of each year, under which all the

proposals/suggestion/programs are discussed and considered by the relevant sectoral committees of the RPC. He noted that since this midterm event is not based on the regular format of RPC, the ECO Secretariat may manage to incorporate in the Work Programme and Calendar of Events the views/proposals expressed by the esteemed Member States during the meeting. Furthermore, he requested the Secretariat to share the outcomes of meeting.

12. The ECO Secretary General emphasized that ECO Work Programme and ECO Calendar of Events for 2021, reviewed on the recommendations/suggestions of the esteemed Member States and duly adopted by Midterm RPC meeting, would be circulated amongst the Member States for their final views/comments to be received within a two-week's time. He however, noted that the said documents would be finalized after inclusion of the received inputs, if any. Furthermore, he requested the Council to authorize the Secretariat for organization of events reflected in the ECO Calendar of Events for 2021, which have yet to be decided.

13. As regards ECO Calendar of Events for 2021 and the proposal of H.E. ECO Secretary General thereon, the Council agreed that the ECO Secretariat might manage the organization of such events for which venues have yet to be decided (TBD).

14. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan while highlighting the investments opportunities in Afghanistan, including gold, cooper, gypsum, cement, marble, granite and other construction materials, encouraged the ECO Member States to take benefits from such investments opportunities that exists in Afghanistan.

#### **Agenda Item No. 9**

##### Adoption of the Report

15. The Council decided that the draft report of this meeting would be adopted through circulation process. The Council mandated the Secretariat to circulate the draft report for securing the final views of the Member States, giving a two-week response time, to this end.

#### **Agenda Item No. 10**

##### Closing

16. The Chair expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the ECO Secretary General and his team for making necessary arrangements for successfully organizing the online Midterm RPC Meeting and preparation of relevant documents.

17. The Council adjourned the meeting with a vote of thanks to the Chair for managing the meeting in a proactive, smooth and efficient manner.

\*\*\*\*\*