

STATEMENT BY H.E. MEVLÜT ÇAVUŞOĞLU
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ECO 25. COM
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Mr. Secretary General, Dear Brothers,

-Let me thank, Brother Rashid Meredov for organizing the 25th Meeting of the Council of Ministers and hosting us here in beautiful Ashgabat.

-I also congratulate our new Secretary-General Ambassador Hüsrev Naziri and wish him every success.

Dear Brothers,

-Ashgabat Summit is taking place at a crucial time. We have been fighting Covid-19 for almost 2 years now.

-We always indicate effective multilateralism as the only way to countering global challenges. However, we are ineffective at translating this into reality. Therefore, we should benefit from ECO in having an integrated regional response to challenges such as the pandemic and the much-needed economic recovery.

—During our Chairmanship, we worked towards this goal. We focused on ‘Economic Cooperation in the aftermath of Covid-19’ at the 14th ECO Summit.

-Another key area that we focused on was increasing our regional trade and connectivity. Historic changes in global supply chains are taking place. Asia is rising not only as a manufacturing power-house but also as the largest consumer market. This offers important opportunities to us all. ECO should act as a bridge of commerce and economic cooperation between Asia and Europe. Hence, we must focus on transportation and logistics corridors. We can benefit further from global trade, only if we can improve regional trade and connectivity. Therefore, we welcome the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor, and also the decisions to establish rail and road connections in the South Caucasus, including and mainly Zangezur corridor.

Dear friends,

-Tourism is another area in which we should further our cooperation. ECO region has great potential to be a major tourist destination with natural and historic beauties. The ‘safe tourism’ initiative that we launched in Turkey has been quite successful. We also support the candidacy of Samarkand as the venue for the General Assembly meeting of the UN World Tourism Organization in 2023. I instructed our missions to campaign for Samarkand. Samarkand’s election will be a significant achievement for our region.

Dear colleagues,

-During our Chairmanship, we also worked to turn ECO into a more effective organization. We focused on solving budgetary problems and making personnel structure more balanced. I thank all of you and the Secretariat for the support.

Dear Friends,

-We need to work more to transform ECO into a result-oriented body. The implementation of the ECO Vision 2025 is vital for that. We agree with the assessments in the Midterm Review of ECO Vision 2025.

-Turkey has been fulfilling its commitments under the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) since the beginning. The agreement will be instrumental for reaching our 100 billion Dollar intra-trade target. We invite all of you to support it.

-ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECOBANK) is another important body that needs our support. We should increase the the institutional and financing capacity of ECOBANK. I invite all members to join the Bank.

-We also welcome the agreement reached on the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center in Azerbaijan, as part of the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centers of UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organization).

Dear friends,

-The Ashgabat Summit will take place on November 28. On that day 29 years ago, we welcomed seven new members. Today, we stand more integrated than ever. I believe that the documents we will adopt will reinforce our integration.

-Before concluding, I thank our Turkmen Brothers for their hospitality.

-Being in the heartland of historic trade routes and cultural centers, I believe that ECO should be more active and vocal. To achieve this, we should work harder.

Thank you.