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Ashgabat, 28 November 2021



YKDYSADY HYZMATDASLYK
GURAMASYNYN IS-NJI SAMMITI

THE 15th ECONOMIC COOPERATION
ORGANIZATION SUMMIT





Foreword



It is a great pleasure for me to present this special edition of the ECO Chronicle offering some of the highlights of the 15th ECO Summit held on 28th November 2021, in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

The 15th ECO Summit organized under the theme "Together into the Future", provided a special opportunity to renew our collective endeavours and partnership for enhanced regional cooperation and swift economic recovery during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. With the generous support of regional leadership especially under the compassionate guidance of President of Turkmenistan H.E.

Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the Summit gave a fresh momentum to the organization to become a leading attribute to transform the ECO's region into a developed economic community for the mutual well-beings of our people.

The Summit also adopted the "Ashgabat Consensus for Action" that offers a way forward towards realization of the principal goal of sustainable socio-economic development and prosperity in the ECO region. Another milestone achieved during the Summit was the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the ECO and UNESCAP for further institutionalizing the existing cooperative relations between the two organizations. With the aim to pave the way for the commercialization of the KTI (Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan - Iran) railway corridor, signing of MoU on establishment of the corridor management mechanism among the three en-route countries constitutes as one of the added highlights of the Summit.

In the end, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for its enduring support as the Chairman of the ECO in pursuit of the common agenda of the regional development in 2021. I shall particularly present profound tribute to the President of Turkmenistan, H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for his visionary leadership and patronage to the ECO in accomplishing its objectives and promoting regional cooperation among the Member States.

Khusrav Noziri
ECO Secretary General



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In The Name Of God

Front Cover



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15th



Turkmenistan holds the 15th ECO Summit in Ashgabat

The 15th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was hosted by Turkmenistan on November 28, 2021 in Ashgabat.

The event, organized under the theme of "Together into the Future", was chaired by the honourable President of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. The Summit was inaugurated by the honourable President of the

Republic of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan as the Chairman of 14th ECO Summit. The Heads of State and Government of 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, as well as the Secretary General of the ECO attended the Summit.

The President of





Turkmenistan after his election as the Chairman of 15th Summit Meeting made his opening statement. While referring to the dynamic and active role of Turkmenistan in the ECO, the President of Turkmenistan mentioned some of the key achievements of ECO during the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan in 2021.

He highlighted salient features of permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan and the cooperative relationship of Turkmenistan in international relations. He also attached importance to the strengthened cooperation among ECO Member States in the priority areas of the Organization such as Energy, Transport,

Trade and Investment. He assured that the support of Turkmenistan would be extended to the ECO for the fulfillment of its objectives.

He then invited the Secretary General of the ECO to brief the Heads of State and Government on the recent activities of the Organization.

Addressing the Summit, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri made a focused briefing concerning the Organization's key areas of cooperation particularly trade, transport, energy, tourism etc.

He mentioned that following the guidelines of the ECO's leaders, given during

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THE 15TH ECONOMIC COOPERATION
ORGANIZATION SUMMIT

ASHGABAT, TURKMENISTAN, NOVEMBER 28, 2021



the 14th Summit, the Organization made considerable progress to secure its developmental goals as envisaged in the ECO Vision 2025.

He emphasized that the Summit's theme is very significant in particular after the COVID-19's situation which has further enhanced the importance of collaboration and partnership among member countries during the time of crisis.

While noting the

importance of ECO's external relations with other regional and international bodies as most essential tool for achieving strategic objectives, the Secretary

General informed that during the 25th Meeting of Council of Ministers (COM) held a day before the Summit, an MoU between ECO and UNESCAP was signed for further institutionalizing the mutually developed cooperative ties between the two sides. He also reiterated ECO





Secretariat's commitment to accomplish the Organization's aims and objectives in line with its Vision 2025 and the Treaty of Izmir.

The Heads of State and Government of the ECO appreciated the Secretary General for his comprehensive statement, valuing the performance of the Organization especially to counter and manage the post-COVID impacts on the overall socioeconomic condition of the region.

They also agreed to expand and develop their trade and economic ties in the shared areas of interest including trade, transport and energy. While noting the

progress and implementation on some joint projects, the ECO leaders also put forward various initiatives and proposals for development of some innovative projects in diverse areas of collaboration. Moreover, they appeared poised to remain united and make consolidated efforts to address the impacts of the pandemic on ECO regional economy.

The Summit also adopted the "Ashgabat Consensus for Action", renewing the Member States' commitment for the shared progress, prosperity and development in the region, as well as promotion of ECO as a more effective regional economic organization.



Speech by H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan
the President of the

**Republic of Turkey
at the 15th ECO
Summit**



Honourable Heads of State and Government,
Esteemed Secretary General,
Distinguished Members of Delegations,
I wholeheartedly greet you on behalf
of my nation and myself.

I am very happy to be with you on the occasion of the 15th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I would like to thank our Turkmen brothers and sisters, first and foremost my brother H.E. Berdimuhamedov, for their hospitality.

As Turkey, we are handing over the Summit Presidency.

I wish success to the new Chairman, friendly and brotherly country Turkmenistan.

I pray to Allah that the Summit be beneficial for our countries and our region.

Once again, I wholeheartedly congratulate Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan on the 30th anniversary of their independence.

Esteemed Friends,
As whole humanity, we have been fighting with a global threat for about two years.
The pandemic, which has cost the lives of

more than five million people, continues to show its effects in every field, especially in economy, trade and tourism.

I hope that our Summit will be instrumental in further strengthening our cooperation and solidarity in the fight against the coronavirus.

As Turkey, we have endeavored to meet the requests for assistance we have received from all over the world during this difficult period.

So far, we have provided aid to 160 countries and 12 international organizations, including our Organization's Members.

We have also supported some members of our Organization by providing medical equipment export licences, purchasing permits and training and personnel support.

In addition, we have supplied vaccines to 11 countries.

We have recently applied for emergency use approval for our domestic vaccine, TURKO-VAC. Hopefully, when the process is completed, we will put our vaccine to the service of all humanity along with our nation.

Esteemed Brothers and Sisters,
Our summit is organized under the theme "Together into the Future".



It is important that we determine how we can take better advantage of our organization in terms of strengthening our economic cooperation.

The ECO Vision 2025 Document contains the necessary roadmap for us to achieve our common goals.

We also consider the Ashgabat Consensus for Action, which we will ratify today, as a document emphasizing our strong will in this direction.

We should take more advantage of the vast potential offered by our geography, which has a population of approximately 500 million in an area of eight million square kilometres.

We must intensify our efforts to raise our trade volume to the level of 100 billion dollars.

In this context, we must primarily put into force the Trade Agreement ECOTA, which is also among the strategic goals of the ECO Vision 2025 Document.

I believe that this agreement, which has unfortunately not been implemented for 17

years, is the main instrument which will enable intra-regional trade to reach the level it deserves.

ECO-Bank, which we host in Istanbul, can also fulfil more important functions in our development, with the participation of all Members of the Organization, by increasing its corporate and financial capacity.

The Educational Institute in Ankara has started to make serious contributions to humanitarian development by increasing cooperation between our Members.

The Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security, which continues its activities in Ankara, also plays an important role in ensuring food safety and developing the agricultural sector in our region.

Esteemed Brothers and Sisters,

The significance of regional and global transport networks has also become apparent once again during the pandemic.

Our efforts to develop the transport infra-

structure in our region and revive the Modern Silk Road continue unabated.

The Trans-Caspian East-West Middle Corridor Initiative led by Turkey and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway line are the most concrete manifestations of our efforts in this context.

The significance of Zangezur corridor, which will establish a direct road connection between Turkey and our region, is also obvious.

Likewise, "Marmarail", "Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge", "Eurasia Tunnel", "Istanbul Airport", "Marmara Motorway" and "Istanbul-Izmir Motorway", connecting Asia to Europe, are among our complementary projects.

Also, our endeavours regarding the projects "Filyos Port", "1915 Çanakkale Bridge" and "Çandarlı Port", which will contribute to the east-west connection, are underway.

We also welcome the efforts to make the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor operational and revive the Railway on the same route.

Accordingly, I believe that we should further embrace our Organization, continue the reform process and make it effective with a strong budget.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is essential to establish lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan, which faces a serious humanitarian and economic crisis, as soon as possible.

It is our common wish and goal to develop a sense of governance that will meet the expectations of all segments within the country.

We support the efforts to keep the fundamental state structures operational in Afghanistan, including critical sectors such as health and education.

We need to help the Afghan economy recover to prevent a refugee crisis that will affect our entire region.

Turkish Red Crescent and our non-governmental organizations increased their humanitarian activities against the growing danger of hunger and famine in this country.

Ending unilateral sanctions imposed on Iran, and the return of all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and reassuming

their obligations will contribute to the economic prosperity and stability of our region.

Our brother Azerbaijan's liberation of its occupied territories also enabled the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the region.

The successive projects by Azerbaijan to increase prosperity in the region are praiseworthy.

These steps will support the efforts for normalization in the region.

Turkey will continue to be on the side of Azerbaijan in this process.

It is of great importance that we are in full solidarity with Azerbaijan as an Organization.

Reaffirming the sovereign equality and equal international status of the Turkish Cypriot people is the key to a solution regarding the Cyprus issue.

I ask all friendly and brotherly countries to consider without prejudice the vision of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for a solution.

We encourage the development of relations in areas such as sports, culture, education and tourism, so as to alleviate the isolation of Turkish Cypriots who enjoy Observer Member status in our Organization.

Regional and international cooperation is vital in the fight against terrorism.

We must persist in our struggle without making exceptions for different terrorist organizations.

Peace, stability and economic development will also gain momentum as our region is cleared of bloody terrorist organizations such as the PKK-YPG, FETO, DAESH.

In this regard, it is vital that we act in solidarity against all forms of terrorism.

As I end my words with these thoughts, I once again greet you with affection and respect.

I would like to thank all the Member States and the Secretariat for their efforts for the success of our Summit, especially the Summit President and our host country Turkmenistan.

Now I leave the floor to my brother Mr. Berdimuhamedov to make his speech and preside over the Summit Meeting.



Speech by H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov
the President of

Turkmenistan at the 15th ECO Summit



Distinguished Heads of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization! Distinguished Members of Delegations!

First of all, allow me to express my deep gratitude to the leaders of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization for accepting our invitation to gather in the capital of Turkmenistan to participate in this Summit.

We rightly regard holding this forum as an important event designed to strengthen cooperation between our countries in the economic, trade and investment, cultural and humanitarian spheres.

First of all, I would like to emphasize that Turkmenistan, as a neutral state and a responsible member of the world community, is always open for broad cooperation with all interested foreign partners, including reputable regional and international organizations. Here I am pleased to note the progres-

sive dynamics of dialogue with the ECO, with which we have accumulated a solid experience of joint work. At the same time, Turkmenistan is successfully developing friendly and good neighborly relations with each member state of the Organization separately. This, I believe, is a good contribution to the multilateral partnership, enriches it and gives additional stability to our common activities.

While assuming the presidency in the Economic Cooperation Organization at the previous summit, Turkmenistan made every effort to ensure that the joint work acquired appropriate dynamics, and was filled with new constructive impulses. In accordance with the Concept of chairmanship, our country was active in putting it into practice. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all member states of ECO for their assistance to Turkmenistan in this period.

Turkmenistan regards the development of cooperation in the transport and energy sectors as one of the most important priorities of ECO. Today it objectively acts as a determining trend of global economic growth. I am



convinced that our common and important tasks for the foreseeable future should be to timely and effectively integrate into this process, using existing competitive advantages, ensure our role as a full and effective participant in the formation of new transport and transit corridors and energy routes.

I think that the Economic Cooperation Organization member countries understand the need to consolidate efforts in this direction. This is confirmed by the consistent support of member states for Turkmenistan's international initiatives, particularly for draft UN General Assembly resolutions proposed by our country on cooperation in the sphere

of sustainable transport and energy security. A number of ECO member states became co-authors of these documents. We are grateful for this support and consider it as a good basis for further practical steps.

Acting in line with practical implementation of these initiatives, our country, in partnership with a number of ECO member states, has launched major infrastructure projects in recent years. As is known, construction of power transmission lines along the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan route and a railroad from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan is currently under way. The construction of Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas

pipeline is progressing at full speed.

Turkmenistan pays special attention to enhancing transport and transit communication along East-West and North-South lines. In particular, we are talking about creating transport corridors Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Oman and Afghanistan-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey.

We are convinced that our joint possibilities are far from being limited to the projects listed above. Today we need additional energy and transport-transit corridors both between the countries of the ECO space and beyond it. In our opinion, the establishment of a goal-oriented dialogue with such interstate associations as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States is in demand in this context.

The implementation of major infrastructure projects with the participation of ECO member states, without exaggeration, means a qualitative breakthrough in shaping a new geo-economic space on the continent, opens up great prospects for cooperation, attracting major foreign investments, solving a number of important social problems.

I would like to emphasize the importance of Afghanistan's participation in these processes, which thus becomes a functioning subject, a valuable and integral participant in the economic partnership. In this, we see a strategic perspective for Afghanistan, its role in regional and global processes, the most important condition for achieving peace, harmony and development on the Afghan land. I am also convinced that we must provide urgent and effective humanitarian aid to the Afghan people during this difficult period.

We propose to study the use of logistics and infrastructure facilities in Turkmenistan itself in order to activate transport and transit communication between the regions of the Caspian basin and the Black Sea with access to Europe, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region. We are ready to provide our modern port facilities on the Caspian coast in the interests of partners in the Economic Cooperation Organization.

We see real prospects for implementing other infrastructure projects in the ECO space,

in particular in the field of road and rail transport.

We consider it necessary to activate the work of a special committee established within our Organization for the construction and reconstruction of roads and railroads, and to develop specific proposals by it.

Distinguished participants of the Summit!

The most important component of the partnership between our countries is the development of trade. According to last year's results, the total trade turn over between the ECO member states amounted to 49.8 billion U.S. dollars. Of course, this figure does not reflect the existing joint potential.

We need to give serious thought to the creation of effective mechanisms for a stable and dynamic growth of trade and investment partnerships, and make efforts to diversify them. I believe that we are entitled to expect a more active role for the business communities of our countries, including small and medium-sized businesses. We are talking about establishing various forms of cooperation in such segments as industrial production, agriculture, services, and in other areas.

We must help business to fully develop commercial ties, provide them with proper banking and financial support, and create, if necessary, a system of relevant benefits and privileges when carrying out trade operations.

Cross-border and regional commercial ties have an important role to play. Here our peoples have centuries-old traditions and accumulated valuable experience that must be revived, used and enriched taking into account modern realities.

In this regard, I consider it advisable to consider the creation of specialized business platforms of the ECO on the principles of public-private partnership, each of which could work in its own direction in the interests of developing and expanding trade relations between our countries.

Economic interaction with the use of, first of all, high digital technologies and extensive use of electronic trading platforms is a highly relevant topic today. This is demanded by modern requirements for the movement of goods

and services. I am deeply convinced that all states in our regions, without exception, have the potential for innovative growth. It is in our common interests to combine our efforts, which will allow us to confidently integrate into the highly competitive environment of the global economy of the new technological order.

I would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation in medicine and healthcare. The last two years have been a very serious test for everyone. It soon became obvious that any one country alone can achieve only temporary success in the fight against the pandemic. In this regard, we believe it would be advisable to start establishing systematic channels within the ECO to exchange experience, methods and best practices in combating dangerous infectious diseases in the very near future. We have a lot to offer each other.

Economic cooperation in the ECO space should be accompanied by the expansion of interaction in the cultural and humanitarian sphere. We believe it is expedient to begin making systematic plans for holding cultural events, arts festivals, including those involving children and youth groups, meetings of the creative intelligentsia of the ECO member states, and for developing joint tourism programs and organizing sports competitions.

Dear colleagues!
Dear participants of the Summit!

Turkmenistan notes the progressive nature of the work of the Economic Cooperation Organization and its positive impact on the course of regional partnership. Today the ECO is a respected, reputable international economic structure that is recognized throughout the world. Over the years of the Organization's existence, member countries have concluded various agreements and taken decisions on priority issues of interstate cooperation, and much work has been done to develop a viable strategy for the most effective use of joint potential.

The most important constructive factor in the work of our Organization has been that it has followed and continues to follow clearly the

principles and objectives laid down at its founding and in the years that followed, when the ECO was enriched with new members and formed in its current composition. I mean the fact that it maintains its focus as an instrument of economic cooperation. This should remain unchanged. It is also encouraging that the ECO is consistently expanding its external relations, interacting with other international and regional structures.

All these results we, the member countries, can rightfully include in our jointly accumulated positive legacy. But time does not stand still, it requires us to develop new approaches to the activities of the Organization, taking into account modern realities, trends in the world economy, the peculiarities of the progress and direction of regional processes. Under these conditions, the ECO is entrusted with special tasks, corresponding to its specificity and original geo-economic entity. I am convinced that all participants proceed from the unifying essence of ECO as a mechanism of economic partnership of states, connected by history and geography, traditions and values, as a natural format for the implementation of joint mutually beneficial projects on the basis of existing objective advantages and common interests.

Distinguished Heads of State!

Today's meeting is intended to further strengthen relations of friendship, good-neighbornliness and effective, mutually beneficial partnership between all member states, and to identify areas of joint work for the coming period. It is obvious that the current stage requires us to work out very concrete and realistic solutions. To create mechanisms and formats for cooperation that would meet the long-term interests of our countries, facilitate full integration of the ECO into the system of modern world economic relations, and promote the growth of member states' economies and the well-being of their peoples.

I believe that the existing potential of the ECO gives us a basis for achieving strategic goals and implementing large-scale joint projects.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretary General of the ECO, distinguished Mr. Khusrav Noziri, for the skillful and effective coordination of our activities.

Development of cooperation with major international and regional organizations is one of the priorities of our foreign policy. While chairing the Economic Cooperation Organization, our country drafted a Resolution on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization" and proposed it to the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly.

This Resolution was unanimously adopted on September 9, 2021 at the 102nd plenary session of the 75th UN General Assembly. Ten states co-sponsored this Resolution of international importance.

Allow me to congratulate all the participants on this important event, as well as on Day of the Economic Cooperation Organization, and to wish everyone new successes in strengthening our cooperation.

Distinguished Heads of the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization!
Distinguished Members of Delegations!

Thank you for your active participation in the 15th Summit of our Organization, for your informative and insightful presentations.

Today's meeting has demonstrated the willingness and determination of all member states to continue to move steadily along the path of cooperation and close interaction, strengthening our ties in the economy, trade, investment, high technology and humanitarian fields.

Numerous proposals, useful ideas and assessments were voiced, which will undoubtedly enrich the range of our partnership, defining clear guidelines for the future.

The discussions demonstrated that the potential of our Organization is huge, and that it can take an active and meaningful part in modern global and continental processes as a major and influential actor in international economic relations, contribute to strengthen-

ing stability and mutual understanding, and promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and progress.

The summit showed that the consistent strengthening of the ECO, increasing its economic potential, logistics capabilities, formation of effective schemes of industrial cooperation, joint development of projects in energy and transport - all this meets the genuine interests of the peoples of our countries, serves the goals of economic and social growth, improving the quality and standard of living of people.

I am convinced that together we are capable of solving the most difficult tasks. Today, amid the difficult situation in international relations and the crisis in the global economy, our countries are showing examples of mutual trust, good-neighborliness, responsibility, respect for each other, and a willingness to move forward hand in hand. This was clearly confirmed by this Summit.

Turkmenistan is firmly committed to further close cooperation within the framework of the ECO. We will continue constructive policy of partnership and mutual understanding with all member countries of the Organization, assist in increasing its role and reputation.

We are deeply satisfied with the results of today's meeting, and we highly appreciate the support provided to Turkmenistan during its chairmanship, as well as at all stages of preparation for this Summit.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you sincerely for the warm words addressed to Turkmenistan and Turkmen people, and for supporting our international initiatives. All this gives us additional confidence in the rightness of our choice in favor of broad and active cooperation within the framework of our Organization.

Once again, I congratulate all participants of the Summit on the Day of the Establishment of the ECO, I wish you success and new achievements for the benefit of our peoples and states, their progress and prosperity.



Statement of
H.E. Khusrav Noziri

ECO Secretary General at the 15th ECO Summit



Honourable President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, Honourable Heads of State and Government, Respectable Ministers, Excellencies,

I am privileged, indeed, to extend my sincere felicitations to Excellency Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the honourable President of Turkmenistan on your unanimous election as the Chairman of the 15th ECO Summit, as well as express my earnest gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for organizing this highest ECO event in the magnificent city of Ashgabat, which is coinciding with the ECO Day. I acknowledge with deep appreciation that during Turkmenistan's Chairmanship, patronized by His Excellency President Berdimuhamedov, the Organization has made considerable progress for the collective socio-economic wellbeing of the region.

I further take this opportunity to earnestly thank the honourable President of the Republic of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, for his commendable support,

guidance and patronage to ECO during Turkey's Chairmanship of the Organization. I would also like to extend my profound gratitude to the honourable ECO Heads of State/Government for their kind participation in this important event.

Excellencies,

The Summit is an event of highest significance for ECO as it brings a valued opportunity to gather our leaders to review the performance of the Organization and to guide its future strives. The 15th Summit, securing notable outcomes, provides us a special opportunity to renew our shared commitments and endeavours for enhanced regional cooperation. The theme of the Summit "Together into the Future" in particular reference to conditions developed due to the ongoing pandemic, defines the significance of collaboration and partnership in the time of crisis that is aimed at ensuring swift economic recovery of our region from the post-pandemic impacts.

Since the 14th Summit held in March this year, we have remarkably progressed in the

pursuit of our developmental goals particularly as envisaged in ECO Vision 2025. Following the guidelines of our leaders given during 14th Summit in special consideration of the pandemic, the ECO, under the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan, developed a roadmap of cooperation for accelerating its activities to meet its post-COVID targets.

Excellencies,

As you are kindly aware, trade is an engine of economic growth that plays crucial role for socioeconomic development of the nations. In order to expand ECO intra-regional trade and global exports, as set forth in Vision 2025, the 5th Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Economy organized in May 2021 looked into various ways and means of economic and financial cooperation to fully exploit the regional potentials for expanding the scope of multilateral economic collaboration in the region. Based on the outcomes of this meeting, the ECO Secretariat launched studies on some important projects, including for operationalization of ECO Trade Agreement concerning the reduction of customs tariffs and draft text of Free Trade Agreement regarding initiation of negotiations for comprehensive trade liberalization. The operationalization of ECO Reinsurance Company is also on our agenda to make the regional trade more secure and risk-free.

We have also carried out a feasibility study on Regional Payment System to facilitate financial transactions among selected commercial banks in our region, using local currencies to the possible extent, and the prospects of creation of ECO Clearing Union among Central Banks of the Member States to facilitate swift and economical trade related transactions by reducing time and cost involved in trade related payments on a multilateral basis. Harmonization of standards and developing quality management are the most important factors to improve smooth trade in our region. The ECO-RISCAM as the Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology in the region has followed its responsibility to achieve such goals.

Excellencies,

Connectivity is also an important element to boost intra-regional and global economic cooperation. ECO is striving to maximize regional connectivity by making ECO transport corridors commercially viable and operational, and transformation of the selected transport corridors into economic corridors that would integrate transport, energy, telecommunication and other links in the long-term perspective for the benefit of all Member States. We have achieved tangible results in operationalizing the long-awaited ECO-Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Corridor in October 2021 that involves less cost and time of operation than other means of transportation.

Another milestone is the finalization and signing of an MoU on establishment of the corridor management mechanism of the KTI (Kazakhstan - Turkmenistan - Iran) a day before yesterday in Ashgabat. The MoU will pave the way for the commercialization of the existing railway corridor between the three en-route countries and beyond.

Excellencies

Energy is another priority area of regional cooperation. ECO region is enriched with one-third of the global hydrocarbon resources and a key supplier of oil and natural gas to the world markets contributing to the international energy security. The ECO Vision 2025 lays down the long-term and mid-term regional objectives and expected outcomes in the energy sector. To address supportive policy environment for this vision and enhanced policy coherence, the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting held in June 2021 adopted fundamentally new ECO Strategy on Energy Cooperation and its Action Plan 2030.

ECO has also prioritized to uphold efforts of Member States in mainstreaming sustainable energy transition, particularly through institutionalizing regional framework which deals with needs and interests of Member States. In this vein, the ongoing joint ECO-UNIDO partnership on establishment of ECO Clean

Energy Centre and ECO-Energy Charter dialogue on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market continued to be our flagship energy projects.

Tourism is a major driver of the world economy, accounting for 7% of international trade. Globally, tourism generates directly or indirectly one in every ten jobs. ECO region represents a unique tourist attraction of modern times, as it possesses a great cultural-historical heritage, favourable geographical location, variety of natural landscapes and recreational zones. Relevantly, the sector is placed among one of the ECO's important areas of interest, prioritized for development under the Vision 2025. In this framework, Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan was declared the ECO Tourism Capital for 2020-2021 by the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism to celebrate the recognition of the merits of Dushanbe in the development of tourism in Tajikistan and in the ECO region.

As tourism continues to be one of the sectors deeply impacted by the pandemic and the outlook remains highly uncertain, ECO Member States have prioritized recovery of the sector and return it to pre-COVID level. The Secretariat has developed a regional Plan of Action on elimination of the pandemic consequences in this sector. We propose to adopt it at the 4th Tourism ministerial meeting to be held in Bukhara next year.

Excellencies,

Enhancement of ECO's external relations constitutes an important component of ECO's strategy to achieve its strategic goals and objectives. Our relations with the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and other international organizations have been growing. ECO's image in the international arena has enhanced. ECO enjoys cooperative relations with Organizations such as the United Nations, OIC, European Commission, IsDB, WTO, ASEAN, SCO, Turkic Council and a host of UN Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes, like UNIDO, UNESCAP, FAO, UNCTAD, and many others. ECO places high importance to its cooperation with the UN. I

am pleased to mention that cooperation between the ECO and the UN is further enhanced. The UN General Assembly, with the valuable contribution and assistance of Turkmenistan, has passed a fresh resolution on ECO-UN cooperation in September 2021 inviting, inter alia, its Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes to support ECO's activities. Yesterday in the presence of our Ministers, ECO and UNESCAP signed an MoU for further institutionalizing the existing cooperative relationship between the two organizations.

Excellencies,

With the aim of engaging the parliaments of ECO Members in the process of regional integration and to deal with the legislative barriers, ECO Member States decided to establish ECO Parliamentary Assembly ECO (PAECO) whose role is also instrumental to familiarize the people of the region with policies that are aimed to accelerate the realization of our shared interests and objectives. In this regard, I look forward to PAECO to be one of the strongest pillars of ECO in the years ahead for achieving our common developmental goals. The 2nd General Conference of PAECO organized in Pakistan in June 2021 under the theme "Promoting Parliamentary Partnership for Regional Integration", remained quite successful and constructive, securing tangible outcomes towards our intended aim.

Excellencies,

In conclusion, I reiterate ECO Secretariat's firm commitment to accomplish our envisioned goals in line with the ECO Vision 2025 and the Izmir Treaty. To this end, I look forward to Your Excellencies' continued patronage, support and guidance. I believe that this Summit is going to provide a strategic direction and a way forward through the adoption of "Ashgabat Consensus for Action" for achieving the Member States' common objectives and materializing the principal goal of sustainable socio-economic development and prosperity in the ECO region.

Thank you.



Speech by H.E. Ilham Aliyev
the President of the

Republic of Azerbaijan at the 15th ECO Summit



Heads of State and Government, Mr. Secretary-General, I would like to express my gratitude to my brother, President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Malikgulyevich Berdimuhamedov, for the hospitality and congratulate Turkmenistan with successful chairmanship in the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Azerbaijan is an active member of ECO. Our relations with the ECO Member States are based on friendship and mutual respect.

We also enjoy fruitful cooperation with the ECO Member States within international platforms, including the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Non-Aligned Movement.

During the 14th ECO Summit this March, the Charter of the ECO Research Center was signed. I express my gratitude to the Member States for supporting the initiative of the late President of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev. Azerbaijan will do its utmost for the efficient functioning of the Center based in our country. I invite the remaining Member

States to join this important initiative.

Over the past 18 years, the economy of Azerbaijan has developed rapidly, and the gross domestic product increased more than three times.

Azerbaijan has achieved a favorable investment climate as a result of large-scale reforms. Azerbaijan is placed 28th out of 190 countries in the World Bank's Doing Business survey. Around \$280 billion has been invested in Azerbaijan's economy, half of which is foreign investment.

Our strategic foreign exchange reserves exceed our external state debt by over six times. Azerbaijan's external debt accounts for only about 17.3 percent of its gross domestic product. By the end of 2030, we plan to decrease it to 10%.

During the last 18 years, the poverty rate in Azerbaijan has decreased from 49% to 6%. The unemployment rate in the country is around 6%.

Azerbaijan's achievements are highly appreciated by international institutions. The Davos World Economic Forum report ranks Azerbaijan in the 10th place for the long-



term government strategy and 5th in the world in terms of the leadership's commitment to reform. Azerbaijan ranks 2nd for electricity supply to the population, 11th for efficiency of railroad services, 12th for efficiency of air transportation services, 25th for efficiency of seaport services, and 27th for quality of road infrastructure.

As to the COVID-19, Azerbaijan has launched an immunization campaign since mid-January this year. Over 60 percent of the adult population in the country has received two shots.

So far, almost \$3 billion of the socio-economic stimulus packages have been released

to support COVID-affected people and businesses in the country. For the same purpose, \$ 1.6 billion of financial assistance packages will be allocated from the state budget in 2022. Azerbaijan is making significant steps to mobilize global efforts against the pandemic. We have been persistently stressed our firm opposition against "vaccine nationalism."

This year, upon Azerbaijan's initiative in its capacity as the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, resolutions on ensuring equitable access for all countries to vaccines were adopted at the UN Human Rights

Council and the UN General Assembly, respectively.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan has provided financial and humanitarian assistance to about 80 countries directly and through World Health Organization to support their fight against the coronavirus.

Distinguished colleagues,

In 2020, Azerbaijan put an end to nearly 30 years of occupation of its territories by Armenia. The 44-day-long Patriotic War resulted in Armenia's defeat and being forced to sign an act of capitulation on 10 November 2020. Azerbaijan restored its territorial integrity. Azerbaijan itself ensured the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions of 1993 demanding immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of armed forces of Armenia from occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

All cities and villages, including Azerbaijan's cultural and religious heritage sites, have been totally wiped out by Armenia during the occupation. In total disrespect and hatred to all Muslims, Armenia has destroyed and desecrated our mosques, including using them as stables for pigs and cows. 65 out of 67 mosques situated in the formerly occupied territories have been

destroyed, and the two remaining have been seriously damaged. Likewise, the graveyards have been vandalized.

We started large-scale reconstruction work immediately after the liberation, which has already yielded initial results. Azerbaijan is building new cities and towns from scratch, relying solely on its financial resources. To that end, \$1.3 billion has been released from the state budget this year. At least, the exact amount will be allocated for this purpose in 2022.

I announced the liberated Karabakh and Eastern Zangazur as Green Energy Zone. The liberated territories have the proven potential of 7200 megawatts of solar energy and 2000 megawatts of wind energy.

At the last ECO summit, I informed my colleagues about the Zangazur corridor. Today I can say that the Zangazur corridor is becoming a reality. This new transportation infrastructure will be an essential component of the East-West and North-South corridors. I am confident that the ECO Member States will benefit from this corridor.

Thank you for your attention.





Speech by H.E. Seyed Ebrahim Raisi
the President of the

Islamic Republic of Iran at the 15th ECO Summit



In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Dear Brother, Your Excellency Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, The Honorable President of Turkmenistan, At the outset, I would like to congratulate Your Excellency on your Chairmanship of the 15th ECO Summit.

I would also extend my thanks to the Government and honorable people of the friendly and brotherly country of Turkmenistan for hosting the Summit and for their generous hospitality.

I would also like to thank the distinguished Secretary General and his colleagues at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran for their preparatory work for this important regional gathering.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts of the Chairman of the 14th Summit, my dear brother H.E. Mr. Erdogan.

I avail myself of this opportunity to commemorate the 28th of November, the "ECO Day", and congratulate the 30th anniversary

of the independence of Central Asian and the Caucasian ECO Member States.

Mr. Chairman,
The Honorable Presidents,
The Honorable Prime Ministers,
Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

The current era is known as the "Asia era". Asia is a land of rich civilizations, cultures and values.

It's the cradle of the world's greatest monotheistic religions, and the origin of most of globally acceptable principles and rules, including pacifism, justice, mutual respect, wisdom, good governance, adherence to international commitments and treaties, and good neighborliness.

The Islamic Republic of Iran accords top priority to the economic cooperation and partnerships with Asian countries, especially our neighbouring and regional countries in South, West, and Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

I have also placed the policy of "maximum engagement" with our neighbours on my



government's agenda. This is why we devote great efforts and attention to strengthening the role and status of regional organizations as facilitators of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) represents one of importance examples of such organizations.

In addition to possessing the material sources of power such as a population of half a billion people, ownership of a third of the world's energy resources, a unique position as a link between Europe and China and Russia with the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and a young and powerful

workforce; the ECO Region also embraces the distinct identity of Islam.

We are not only some capable neighboring states, but we have inherited and are promoting a true identity derived from the Islamic culture, capable of guiding humanity's future in the best possible way and infusing spiritual prosperity into the body of our all-out cooperation. Over the past years, exemplary accomplishments and progress have been achieved in the ECO.

However, there is still a significant gap between the successes achieved with the potential capacities and capabilities of the Organization. For example, despite its high

trading potential, intra-regional trade continues to be less than 10%.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Islamic Republic of Iran pursues the policy of promoting cooperation in the ECO and upgrading the Organization's rank and status at regional and international levels. We believe that there are effective ways and means to advance the Organization; and in the light of collective efforts by the Member States, they can ensure the well-being of future generations and the growth and prosperity of their countries.

It is of course obvious that we need to take into account and pay attention to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, where we need joint intervention by our governments to eliminate the destructive effects of the covid-19 pandemic in the Region. We also need to upgrade relations and interactions among ourselves at an appropriate pace, building upon the experiences gained during the pandemic in the fields of health, education and pharmaceutical production.

Here, I want to draw your attention to the following requirements for successful cooperation in the ECO:

1- Seriousness in trade among ourselves: Many economic breakthroughs in the ECO will happen upon promotion of intraregional trade. The Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to play a more significant role in trade liberalization in the ECO Region. We would like to see all Member States to participate progressively, in line with their national economic conditions, in efforts for trade

liberalization in ECO Region. This can be done either in the framework of the ECOTA or in the context of free trade negotiations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to contribute to this process by granting appropriate preferential tariffs within the ECO frameworks.

2- Complementary Connectivity Network: Transport and transit networks in the ECO

Region are not only serve the intra-regional trade but help Member States, especially the landlocked countries, in their trade with the outside world. We believe that regional and trans-regional trade potential huge enough to, sooner or later, operationalize all potential corridors in the ECO Region.

The operationalization of Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road corridor after ten years is a testimony to this effect. For the ECO Region; the Khafah-Herat-Mazar-e-Sharif-Hairatan corridor is as important as the Hairatan-Mazar-e-Sharif-Peshawar corridor; the Rasht-Astara-Baku railway corridor is as essential as the Amirabad-Aktau sea corridor; the "Istanbul-Sarakhs-Almaty" corridor is as decisive as the "Bandar Abbas-Sarakhs-Almaty" corridor; the port of Chabahar is as important as the port of Gwadar. The Iranian ports in the north and the south provide required infrastructures for cooperation, prosperity, and brotherhood in the Region.

3- Energy and its commercial and development capacities: Completion of unfinished measures such as the establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market; creating a consortium of ECO energy companies, operationalization of ECO Clean Energy Center; and a mechanism for cooperation among ECO refining industries should be given priority.

In addition to serious cooperation in these areas, the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to continue to develop and organize training courses for ECO Member States in oil and gas sector.

We would also like to see projects for water transfer to interested countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the agenda of the ECO.

4- Digital Economy: The Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to cooperate in areas such as fiber optic connectivity among ECO Member States; creation of common digital platforms; technological, scientific and academic exchanges; establishment of common ICT regional markets; artificial intelligence

and virtual education, including sharing our experience in applying the SHAAD E-Learning platform.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is also prepared to serve as focal point for these areas of cooperation in the ECO and assist the Organization in holding annual meetings on cyber security and virtual training with the participation of the professionals from Member States.

5- New financial architecture in the ECO: The commercial capacities of the Region as well as the infrastructural and developmental requirements, and the limited access to financial resources from outside the region necessitate more effective mechanisms be crafted in the form of a new regional financial architecture. The ECO Trade and Development Bank should play a more significant role in financing trade transactions among Member States through regulatory and procedural reforms. The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to consider positively the increasing the Bank's capital.

We also consider the idea of creating an "ECO Joint Investment Fund", which has been introduced by Iran at the meeting of the ECO National Wealth Funds as a promising step, and here I announce that as soon as the preparatory work is completed and the Fund is established, the National Development Fund of the Islamic Republic of Iran will allocate its share for financing projects covered by the Fund.

The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the expansion of cultural interactions, as well as inter-university collaborations in the ECO with a view to benefiting from the capacities of academic society for the sake of ECO scientific diplomacy.

The Islamic Republic of Iran also supports any proposal that leads to the extension of ECO cooperation arrangements and mechanisms to all ECO Member States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to contribute to acceleration of other complementary efforts, including the establishment of the "ECO Police" (ECOPOL) and the "ECO Judicial Cooperation

Mechanism", and early operationalization of the " ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen" (based in Tehran).

Dear brothers;

Fortunately, ECO has taken a practical approach and position towards some international community's issues in recent years. The recent UN General Assembly resolution on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the ECO" indicates the practical cooperation of the two organizations on global issues with regional implications.

I would like to refer to one of the global topics of the day; namely climate change. ECO and its Environment subsidiary body (ECO-IEST) have long demonstrated Members' commitments towards this global agenda by developing climate change and global warming related projects; those which need to be implemented with serious attention.

Climate change is a global issue with far-reaching consequences that have affected all developed and developing countries.

The current situation results from the actions of industrialized and developed countries during the last two centuries, which have seriously endangered human life by increasing global warming through destroying natural resources and endless use of underground resources.

Industrialized countries must assume their responsibilities and take actions to finance and transfer relevant technologies to and build capacity in developing countries. The ECO Region should be one of the target areas for receiving such assistance.

Durable peace, sustainable development and public welfare depend on realizing the two principles of justice and spirituality. Achieving global justice requires redefining the relationship between developed countries and developing countries.

Existing relationships are the result of hegemonic policies. Monotheists emphasize on

the equality and brotherhood of all God's servants. The divine religions, especially the teachings of Islam, do not accept undue discrimination against any people, race, or nation.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Brothers, The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the regional countries themselves should handle the region's management.

The end of hostilities in the Caucasus region promises stability and the beginning of a new chapter of development and convergence in this region.

Now, it is our shared responsibility to work in this direction. The partnership and cooperation of the ECO Member States with the Caucasus can help deepen and enhance the role of the Organization.

Given the new conditions in the Caucasus region, we believe that the revival of traditional routes and the facilitation of the movement of goods and passengers in the region after three decades will contribute to the growth and development of the ECO Region.

We also believe that any change in the Caucasus region's political geography would not contribute to the region's stability and security, rather to potential tensions in the future.

Cooperation between the countries of the Caucasus based on mutual respect and the preservation of the territorial integrity of the countries and international rules will guarantee peace and stability and pave the way for the progress and development of the countries in the region.

Stability in the Caucasus region has also paved the way for trans-regional cooperation such as establishing the Persian Gulf-Black Sea International Corridor which will facilitate trade and economic relations between ECO Member States with other countries.

In recent decades, the ECO has established appropriate mechanisms to support Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic

development.

The ECO Summit message to the world should be the continued support for Afghanistan and its noble people in their efforts for economic reconstruction and development.

On the eve of winter and more than ever, the people of Afghanistan are in dire need for essential goods and fuel. But more painful than the cold weather is the fact that the financial resources of the Afghan people have been seized by the ex-American occupiers.

As always, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate and assist the people of Afghanistan, including in supporting the education of its talented women and girls.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for ECO and its activities is unconditional. The cruel US sanctions against Iran are too small to disrupt the Islamic Republic of Iran's will to pursue a policy of maximum engagement with its neighbors and the Region.

The United States showed that its interests are at odds with the collective interests of our region when it illegally withdrew from the JCPOA and re-imposed unilateral illegal sanctions pursuing the policy of "maximum Cruelty."

The interest of our region lies in the advantageous cooperation and brotherhood of our nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to do its utmost to achieve this humane and Islamic goal.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to thank our dear colleagues in the meetings of Senior Officials, the Council of Ministers, and the Council of Permanent Representatives for preparing the documents of the Summit.

I thank you once again, and I wish the Government and the distinguished people of Turkmenistan an ever-increasing happiness.



Speech by H.E. Askar Mamin
the Prime Minister of the

Republic of Kazakhstan at the 15th ECO Summit



Dear Heads of States!
Dear participants of the Summit!
First of all, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the President of Turkmenistan, dear Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for warm welcome, hospitality and high level of organizing today's event.

Throughout the year, our Organization has been working effectively under the chairmanship of brotherly Turkmenistan, for which I express my sincere gratitude.

I specially thank the ECO Secretary General, His Excellency Noziri on his appointment to a high post and wish him great success in his work.

Dear participants of the Summit!

I'm happy to note that our event is being held in contrast to coherent and steady recovery of our economies.

However, considering recent news with regard to increased risks due to pandemics, particularly, the emergence of a new, more aggressive variant of COVID-19, our countries

have a task to strengthen collaboration to adapt our economies to possible repeated outbreaks of pandemics and creation of new drivers for growth in the post-pandemic period.

First of all, we must spare no effort to enhance trade between our countries.

As mentioned in the latest WTO World Trade Report 2021 (as of 26th November, 2021) modern world trade system has the highest level of exposure to macro shocks like never before.

Top priority in fighting against such shocks is to prevent deglobalization processes and strengthen inter-country coordination with a view to search proactively for opportunities to build up sustainable production and trade processes.

This is especially relevant in the context of ECO.

I am pleased to emphasize that despite the pandemics Kazakhstan is working to increase trade with all countries of our Organization.

For nine months of this year, the total trade turnover of Kazakhstan with ECO countries increased by 31% (USD 8.2 billion).

This year trade turnover volume indices



between Kazakhstan and ECO countries also exceeded those of pre-pandemic year 2019 by 21.4% (\$6.7 billion).

Today, Kazakhstan like other ECO countries has the potential to significantly enhance the exchange of supplies for metallurgic, food, machinery, chemical, pharmaceutical and other industries.

Amidst the risks of pandemics we need to take joint and active measures for trade capacity building.

In this juncture, I propose to mandate the ECO Secretariat to develop a Roadmap for increasing trade flows within the Organization considering competitive advantages and specific capabilities of each country with the view of practical utilization of mutual trade potential of our countries in full.

Serious systematic analysis of opportunities for mutual enlargement of trade volume and diversification of its structure needs to be conducted.

Secondly, we must strengthen cooperation in food sector many-fold.

The key factor of food security and socio-economic stability in the society is to ensure a smooth flow of agro-industrial products.

I would like to note that, in spite of pan-

demics export of food products from Kazakhstan to the ECO countries increased by 26.6% in 2020.

However, the potential of cooperation between our countries in this field is yet to be fully realized.

As per the results of 2020 the share of trade in agro-industrial products in total volume of mutual trade turnover between ECO countries amounted to 20.2% only (USD 5.5 billion).

The need to utilize the potential of our countries in this area is vital given the ongoing growth of prices for food products. According to FAO global growth of prices for basic food commodities for twelve months reached more than of 31.3%.

In the context of renewed pandemic risks due to emerging variants of the virus, the likelihood of further increase in food prices is also high.

In this regard, I consider it necessary to formulate Food Security Program of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Within the framework of the Program, I propose to address measures to reduce the risks of shortage and imbalance in food markets, inter alia, by streamlining joint production processes in agro-industrial sector and improving coordination of product flows between our countries.

From this perspective, I also think it relevant to study the possibility of enhancing off-take agreement mechanisms for mutual trade in food products.

I believe that collaboration between our countries in agriculture should become more extensive and develop on the basis of complementarity and effective cooperation.

Thirdly, as part of the development of transport corridors and enhancement of transport connectivity, we need to continue working on the establishment of bankable and intercomplementary routes for our countries.

Around 883.2 thousand containers were transported through the territory of Kazakhstan towards Central Asia, Persian Gulf countries, Europe, Far East as well as along Trans-Caspian route during ten months of the current year which is 25% more than the same period of the last year.

This is 66.3% more than 2019 indices (531 thousand TEU).

Current trend to increase the importance of transcontinental transport routes creates great opportunities for our countries, the realization of which will lead to a multiplicative effect on almost all sectors of our Union's economy.

Therefore, the formation of intercomplementary rather than competing economic transit transport corridors across the Economic Cooperation Organization is becoming one of the key conditions to improve resilience and development of our economies in the future.

This is especially crucial in view of the fact that seven out of ten ECO Member States are land-locked.

Effective co-management of the network of transport and logistic corridors will drastically advance economic, infrastructural and cultural connectivity of countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Owing to the unique opportunity to transport people and goods, both to Europe and Southeast Asia within a short time, the economies of the ECO countries will receive a huge driver for development.

The glory of our countries at the peak of the Great Silk Road can be regained only by the restoration of the former economic and trans-

port corridors between Europe and Asia passing through the territory of the ECO Member States.

Therefore, I believe that in order to further develop the transport and transit potential of our Organization, we have to work on simplifying administrative barriers and deepening further integration of transport and logistic systems.

Given the importance of transport and logistic cooperation, we consider it necessary to create an Ad-Hoc Council of ECO Countries for high-level transport and transit policy, the decisions of such council will be the basis for generating a coordinated policy on key issues in this field.

Dear participants of the Summit!

The issue of improving the efficiency of ECO activities has always remained our common priority.

Current challenges underscored the importance of taking coordinated and joint steps to overcome them.

This task is especially vital in the context of news about increasing risks for global economy due to new COVID-19 variants, particularly Omicron.

In this regard, I propose to develop a Strategy for cooperative development of ECO economies considering challenges of COVID-19 and strategic objectives of post-pandemic period and include the initiatives of the Heads of delegations presented today.

I am confident that further activities of our Organization based on the principles of equality of all Member States will be nothing but beneficial for the entire ECO region.

Kazakhstan stands devoted to ECO principles and its own commitments and ready to make every effort to better the effectiveness of the Organization.

No doubts, good neighborly ties based on common traditions and history will further contribute to fruitful and constructive cooperation with a view to ensure sustainable development of ECO region.

I wish us all productive work.
Thank you for attention!



Speech by H.E. Sadyr Japarov
the President of the

Kyrgyz Republic
at the 15th ECO
Summit



Dear Chairman!
Dear Heads of delegations!
Dear Secretary General!
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen!

Allow me to congratulate all participants of today's meeting and thank President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for the excellent organization of the event and hospitality in accordance with the national traditions.

The 28th of November is an important day for all of us. Today we celebrate the anniversary of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the participants of the 15th Summit on this event and to wish you health, peace and prosperity.

Dear Chairman !

Distinguished heads of delegations!

Today's Summit creates a favorable environment for a broad exchange of views on topical issues on the agenda of our Organization, discussion of new proposals and ideas for the development of our countries, exchange of views on immediate responses to the coron-

avirus pandemic and climate change.

Our nations have all the potential necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the Organization, including economic opportunities, human and scientific resources, and vast natural resources.

Looking back at the work of the ECO over the past period and determining its future, we see that over the past few years, our countries have reached new heights, new levels of development, and are capable of meeting complex challenges.

At the same time, the consequences of the recent global economic crisis, which our countries are experiencing, as well as current challenges and threats in the international arena pose new issues to our Organization.

Distinguished participants of the Summit!

I consider it important to note about climate change, because this issue is a very serious global problem, and its solution requires immediate efforts of the world community.

We must intensify and strengthen cooperation on the reduction of carbon emissions and the orderly development of a cyclical economy. This will help to restore the "green economy" after the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as miti-



gate the effects of climate change in the ECO space.

Kyrgyzstan will strive to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Renewable energy sources are, first of all, hydropower - the engine of carbon-free development policy.

The utilization of the hydropower potential of Kyrgyzstan and other countries in the region through the introduction of energy-efficient and energy-saving technologies, including the promotion of certain UN Sustainable Development Goals under the CASA-1000 project, would help provide the entire Central Asian region with environmentally clean electricity. In this regard, I propose to establish mutually beneficial investment cooperation in the field of hydropower within the Economic Cooperation Organization based on public-private partnership principles, and I call for joint measures to adapt to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Dear participants of the Summit!

In order to achieve the goals outlined in the Economic Cooperation Vision 2025, ECOs must be prepared for the global challenges to expand activities on economic projects, develop and strengthen their institutions and promote their core principles through flexibility.

In order to adapt to modern conditions, it is necessary to reach a new level of quality through necessary and suitable solutions to optimize the activities of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I believe that for the implementation of regional cooperation in the trade and economic sphere, the time has come for large-scale reforms aimed at creating a realistic system of project financing in all ECO states.

Unfortunately, many projects within the Organization remain unimplemented. This has been repeatedly stated by heads of state at previous summits.

In our view, the ECO reforms should also be aimed at improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the Organization's Secretariat.

In the future, the Secretariat of the Organization should focus on the economic direction of its activities and implement projects that are a priority for all member states.

Dear participants of the Summit!

Increasing the efficiency of our Organization is more relevant today than ever, and this issue has been on the agenda of the conferences for many years.

We must be determined to develop and implement appropriate strategies in areas such as transport and communications, industry, energy, trade and investment, tourism and the environment, which are priorities for our economies in enhanced regional cooperation, economic growth and development in our region .

Significant attention should also be paid to the continuation of cooperation in agriculture, customs and health.

Dear participants of the Summit

The most important task of the Organization for the successful resolution of economic challenges is the creation and development of regional infrastructure. This should include a unified transport network, telecommunications, pipelines and the energy system. This is a prerequisite for effective intra- and inter-regional cooperation.

Kyrgyzstan, together with other ECO states, actively participates in the development of East-West and North-South transport corridors. This will allow Central Asian countries to access the Persian Gulf through Turkmenistan and Iran.

We also attach great importance to the promotion of the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China railroad project, which is included in the ECO Transport and Communications Development Action Plan for the ECO region.

The Kyrgyz Republic is actively working to increase the transit capacity of the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran transport corridor through the use of the Shahid Rajai port.

Cooperation between our countries in the field of tourism is also intensifying. Our region has great tourism and recreational potential

and many opportunities for the development of international tourism. Therefore, I suggest we take into consideration this area of cooperation as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We all understand that successful economic cooperation is impossible without peace and stability in our region.

As far as regional security is concerned, I would like to say a few words about the situation in Afghanistan, which has a direct impact on the ECO states.

The socio-economic situation in Afghanistan on the eve of winter is of great concern to us. Based on such humanitarian principles, we have delivered humanitarian aid by air to Kabul and by trucks for people in the distant Little and Great Pamirs. We also decided to continue issuing student visas to citizens of Afghanistan studying in the Kyrgyz Republic.

We all believe that we must make every effort to keep Afghanistan from plunging into the abyss of civil war. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan calls on the ECO member states to continue rendering humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people in order to prevent further aggravation of the situation in Afghanistan.

Dear participants of the summit!

In conclusion, I would like to note that our Organization's member states have great potential for economic development, but it is not used in full yet.

I believe that in order to reduce the gap between the levels of economic development of member states, we must take appropriate joint measures which will ultimately bring everyone closer together.

The Kyrgyz Republic is ready to make every effort to further strengthen multilateral relations.

The "Ashgabat Declaration" that we are adopting today meets the interests of all members of our Organization. I hope that this meeting demonstrates our common desire for concrete steps in mutually beneficial cooperation.

Only by working together can we achieve our goals!

Thank you for your attention



Speech by H.E. Arif Alvi
the President of the

**Islamic Republic of Pakistan
at the 15th ECO
Summit**



His Excellency Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan, Distinguished Heads of State, Secretary-General ECO, His Excellency Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, Excellencies, and Gentlemen,

Assalam-o-Alaikum!

Let me begin by congratulating my friend, President Berdimuhamedov, for assuming Chairmanship of the 15th ECO Summit. I am sure that under his wise guidance, we will be able to successfully realize the objectives of this ECO Summit.

I also thank my brother, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Secretary-General Noziri for successfully organizing all events of the 14th Summit during challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

Throughout history, trade and economic exchanges and interaction have propelled production, growth and prosperity. This historical process of economic integration will continue to accelerate, especially with the advent of the

digital age. To stay competitive, national and regional economies will have to move towards greater physical and virtual integration.

Such integration is an imperative for the ECO region. The theme you have chosen for this Summit -- "Into the Future Together" -- is thus most apt and timely.

The ECO region has all the elements needed for economic integration and rapid economic growth: rich resources, enterprising people, geographical contiguity, and a common culture and heritage. Yet, for historical reasons, the ECO is among the least integrated regions in terms of trade, investment, finance, infrastructure, regional value chains, labour mobility and social integration. The intra-regional trade among ECO members is only 8 percent of their total trade. Unlocking the potential for regional integration will provide significant impetus to growth and development in all ECO Member States.

We must ensure implementation of the objectives agreed in the ECO Vision 2025, and the Islamabad Declaration, adopted at our 13th Summit including: a free or preferential



trade arrangement; strengthening of regional institutions such as the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) and operationalization of the ECO Reinsurance Company (ERC).

However, the key to economic integration is connectivity, both virtual and physical. We should strongly advance the transport corridors the ECO has planned under the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA). I welcome the operationalization of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) road corridor.

The key to connectivity is peace in Afghanistan which we have all mentioned

today. Today, after 40 years, war has ended in Afghanistan. But a humanitarian crisis and the specter of economic collapse loom large over its people. The increasingly deepening liquidity crisis threatens a financial and banking collapse, with serious social and security implications. We must all join in preventing such a disaster, which could revive chaos and conflict and the threat from terrorism in Afghanistan. This could also lead to exodus of refugees from Afghanistan. For four decades, Pakistan has hosted nearly 4 million Afghan refugees. Besides urgent humanitarian assistance, we must render help to the Afghan people in the key sectors of health and education. Frozen

assets must be released to help alleviate the sufferings of the Afghan people. We must together promote economic stability and sustainability of Afghanistan as well as its early integration into the ECO and the international community.

We have all witnessed the negative impact of unilateral coercive sanctions in our region. Freezing of assets and banking restrictions worsen the human suffering and entail serious implications for regional peace, security and prosperity. The restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan will also enable the early implementation of our agreed infrastructure and integration projects: the TAPI gas pipeline; the CASA 1000 electricity grid from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and Pakistan; and construction of the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway line. In the absence of peace, there is a real danger of mass exodus of refugees.

Mr. Chairman,

All ECO economies have suffered severely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The developing countries, including some ECO Members, have suffered disproportionately, with double-digit economic contraction. Pakistan has been, by Allah's Grace, relatively fortunate. Our strategy of 'smart lockdowns', strategy of compassion, generous social protection, and strategic economic stimulus have saved lives and livelihoods and restricted the damage to our economy.

The COVID-related breakdown of supply chains has disrupted international trade and has triggered the global rise in commodity prices and inflation, upto 40 percent in some countries. Our consumers have had to face higher prices. The government is providing a massive package of targeted support to cushion the impact of inflation on the vulnerable sections of our population.

In part, the global inflation in prices has been generated by the \$ 27 trillion fiscal stimulus injected by the rich countries to revive their economies. Unfortunately, the developing countries have not been able to secure even a small fraction of the \$4.3 trillion they need to

recover from the COVID crisis.

The ECO should join other developing countries in promoting a common development agenda to return to the path of sustained and sustainable growth. As the next Chair of the Group of 77 and China, Pakistan will propose such a development agenda, including debt restructuring, redistribution of the 650 billion new SDRs to developing countries, larger concessional financing, mobilization of the \$100 billion in annual climate finance by the developed countries, ending the billions in illicit financial flows from the developing countries and the return of their stolen assets, and the creation of an equitable and open trading system and a fair international tax regime.

Mr. Chairman,

The ECO Member States are all Islamic countries and members of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC). We look forward to your participation in the next OIC Foreign Ministers Conference in Islamabad on 23 March next year - when Pakistan will celebrate 75 years of its independence.

The ECO must also contribute to realizing our critical objectives. We must all work to reverse the rising tide of Islamophobia which is rising and anti-Muslim hate in Europe, North America and South Asia.

I would like to take this opportunity to again congratulate President Aliyev on the recovery of Azerbaijan's territories from foreign occupation. Pakistan continues to rely on fraternal ECO and Islamic countries to support the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Jammu & Kashmir, they are in misery reeling under India's illegal occupation and facing unspeakable oppression.

I wish all success to Turkmenistan's Chairmanship of the ECO this year. Pakistan looks forward equally to Uzbekistan as the next ECO Chair. We are confident that under Uzbekistan's stewardship, ECO will continue its progress and emerge as a vital economic and political entity in the heart of Asia.

I thank you.



Speech by H.E. Emomali Rahmon
the President of the

Republic of Tajikistan at the 15th ECO Summit



Honorable Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the onset, I would like to congratulate brotherly Turkmenistan on the successful presidency over the Economic Cooperation Organization.

May I convey my deep gratitude to the President of Turkmenistan, His Excellency Gurbanguly Myalikgulyevich Berdimuhamedov for the invitation and for arranging the Summit at such a high level in the beautiful city of Ashgabat.

I wish to also extend my deep appreciation to the previous Chairman of the Organization - His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan for valuable contribution to strengthening our interaction within the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I am confident that this meeting, which is coinciding with the Day of the Economic Cooperation Organization, will serve as an important step towards further development

and strengthening of multifaceted interaction between our countries.

Tajikistan attaches great importance to cooperation in the framework of the ECO.

The Organization's member states have enormous labor and natural resources, and possess abundant potential in energy, transport and connectivity.

Joint effective use of this potential can contribute to the improved well-being and prosperity, as well as strengthening peace and security in our region.

There are favorable conditions created for mutual trade, free movement of people and transit and transport connectivity, cultural and humanitarian cooperation between our countries has gained further development.

Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the socio-economic development of all countries and regions of the world.

The efforts made to overcome the consequences of the pandemic at the regional and global levels have clearly demonstrated the need for close interaction of the international community during the emergence of global crises.

Dear colleagues,

Trade and investment cooperation is among the priorities of the Organization. Today, the share of ECO member states in the foreign trade of the Republic of Tajikistan accounts for nearly 40 percent of its total volume.

At the same time, mutual trade within the Organization accounts for only 8 percent of the total foreign trade of its members. This indicator certainly does not correspond to the existing opportunities and potential.

To increase our trade cooperation, we propose to promote measures removing the quarantine transport and transit restrictions introduced due to the pandemic, as well as tariff and non-tariff trade barriers.

The ECOTA, which has been promoted for many years with a view to increasing trade within the Organization, unfortunately, has yet to be operationalized.

In this regard, we invite the member states to develop a joint plan for the effective implementation of the trade potential of the ECO region.

There is no doubt that the transport connectivity would increase the mutual trade. In this regard, it is of particular importance to expand the network of transport corridors and ensure the free movement of goods and services between member states.

Therefore, we must attach priority attention to enhancing the transport and transit potential of the Organization's operation area. It is important to promote the development of projects for landline transport and connectivity corridors within the ECO.

In this context, we believe the transportation of goods by road along the corridor "Kyrgyzstan - Tajikistan - Afghanistan - Iran" (KTAI) tested last year was a significant step.

Dear colleagues,

Energy cooperation is essential for economic growth and sustainable development in the ECO region. We are eager to be proactively engaged in the implementation of the projects under development to connect and form regional energy networks, in particular, to create a Regional Energy Market.

We emphasize the importance of the timely and full implementation of the CASA-1000 project of a high-voltage power transmission line. Tajikistan is known for its vast resources of clean renewable energy.

Hydropower plants generate about 98 percent of Tajikistan's electricity. Tajikistan is in the group of six leading countries in the world in terms of the "green" energy share.

We propose to the Secretariat to initiate the development of the ECO Region Energy Sustainability Strategy. This strategy could facilitate an implementation of projects that focus on the increased use of renewable energy and the development of a "green" economy.

Tajikistan is interested in developing industrial cooperation with the ECO member states.

We in this regard do believe it is important to pay attention to expanding investment cooperation, as well as developing mechanisms for financing small and medium enterprises.

Ensuring food security as an urgent task requires active cooperation between the Organization's member states.

The need for such cooperation becomes even more urgent due to the need to overcome the socio-economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We invite the Secretariat to study the issue of developing an appropriate document aimed at coordinating the efforts of member states to ensure food security.

In this regard, in our view, it is important to develop a long-term plan for the development of cooperation in the field of agriculture within the Organization at the earliest.

Our countries remain vulnerable to the climate change risks. The persistent drought in recent years has had tangible impacts on agriculture.

Due to the accelerated melting, the total volume of glaciers in Tajikistan has decreased by almost a third.

Mudflows, floods, landslides and other natural disasters have become more frequent, which annually cause significant damage to the economy.

With these factors in mind, we believe it is

important within our Organization to give priority attention to climate change issues and, in this context, to reduce the risk of natural disasters.

I hope that the proposals previously voiced by Tajikistan to declare 2025 the International Year for Preservation of Glaciers and determine a specific date for the World Glacier Day, as well as to establish an International Glacier Protection Fund, will gain the support of our ECO partners.

Dear colleagues,

Tourism is an area of regional cooperation hardly hit by the pandemic. Elimination of the negative consequences of the pandemic and the restoration of international and domestic tourism in our region necessitates strengthening cooperation between member states in this area.

With a view to contributing to the solution of this issue within the framework of our Organization, Tajikistan hosted the International Festival "Dushanbe - the Tourism Capital of ECO" and the International Agri-tourism Forum in August this year.

We invite the Secretariat to facilitate the implementation of measures aimed at the full use of the region's tourism opportunities for the benefit of the sustainable development of our countries.

At the same time, the focus should be on the issues of enrichment and strengthening of cultural and humanitarian ties between our peoples.

We are pleased that the organization's project activities are consistently expanding and, in this regard, we emphasize the need to revitalize the activities of its specialized institutions.

Along with this, in our view, it is important to establish a broad dialogue with other international and regional organizations, as well as financial institutions in order to mobilize technical and financial assistance for the development and implementation of programs and projects in the ECO region.

In this context, I would like to note the sig-

nificance of the UN General Assembly Resolution on cooperation between the UN and ECO adopted on September 9 this year.

Tajikistan intends to further take an active part in the activities of the Organization in all six priority areas set out in the fundamental document "ECO Vision - 2025".

Dear colleagues,

We recognize the importance of Afghanistan as an integral player in the implementation of our joint trade and economic, and transit and connectivity projects and programs in the framework of the Organization.

The further promotion of all outlined plans in this area mainly depends on the normalization of the politico-military situation and ensuring security in this country.

In our view, the solution of the problems that have arisen in Afghanistan dictates the need for the earliest possible creation of an inclusive government in this country with the engagement of all ethnopolitical groups.

Afghanistan is currently on the brink of a humanitarian disaster. With the onset of cold weather, the situation may worsen even more, which will lead to famine. In this regard, we believe it is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan through the UN agencies and international humanitarian organizations.

I am convinced that the relevant activities on further strengthening of interaction within the Organization will continue in a constructive manner in the upcoming period of the presidency of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

I congratulate His Excellency President Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev on resuming the Organization's presidency by the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to the President of Turkmenistan, H.E. Gurbanguly Myaligulyevich Berdimuhamedov for the warm welcome and cordial hospitality.

I thank you for your attention.



Speech by H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev
the President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan
at the 15th ECO
Summit



Dear Gurbanguly Myalikgulyevich!
Dear Heads of Delegations!

I am very pleased to meet you in beautiful city of Ashgabat on the day when our Economic Cooperation Organization was established.

I echo the words of appreciation to Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for high level of organization of today's meeting and warm-hearted hospitality extended to all participants.

I would like to highlight successful Chairmanship of Turkmenistan in the Organization and its outstanding contribution to the expansion of multilateral practical interaction.

In particular, the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on Cooperation between the UN and ECO adopted in September this year was a significant step in this direction.

Dear participants of the Summit!

Our brotherly nations who share common history and religion, similar customs and traditions have had close trade and cultural ties since ancient times.

Since its establishment, the Economic Cooperation Organization has become a large regional structure with huge economic potential representing common interests of our countries.

All views and evaluations of my esteemed colleagues expressed today acknowledge the growing role and importance of the Organization in international arena, our common aspiration to strengthen mutual friendship, collaboration and ensure stability.

Uzbekistan, in turn, stands for the further development of inclusive relations within the Organization. We are committed to effective realization of our upcoming Chairmanship.

Distinguished of Heads of States and Governments!

Today we are witnessing increasing complications of international and regional situation.

Yet there is not a clear answer to questions like ***What are the trends in the development of world economy under the influence of ongoing pandemics?***

What new threats and challenges will the world community face?

We consider it necessary to combine our efforts in these rapidly changing conditions in the following priority areas.

First. We need to fully utilize significant potential of our countries which have a huge market with a population of 500 million people, in the field of trade and investments.

Based on adopted Vision-2025 it is recommended to further broaden trade, economic and investment ties between our countries and, above all, to achieve more tangible results.

In this regard, we believe that time has come to develop and adopt an updated and comprehensive Trade Agreement within our Organization.

This document should include removal of trade barriers, digitalization of customs procedures, as well as promotion of e-commerce, which is currently gaining more and more importance.

Moreover, today's requirement is to adopt Joint Action Plan targeted at increasing the flow of mutual investments and strengthening their high protection, intensifying industrial cooperation between our countries.

At the same time, we need to promote mutual trade, develop projects of regional importance and increase our overall competitiveness in the world market.

To this end, we propose to establish a

Center for Trade, Investments and Innovations within our Organization in cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Special Program for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) and to host the headquarters of this Center in Tashkent.

Second. More efficient use of existing transport corridors and creation of new ones in our region.

In this context, it seems foremost to find concrete solutions to a number of vital issues. First of all, it is creation of interregional transit hubs, development of modern transport and road infrastructure, optimization of transport and transit tariffs and provision of additional concessions, simplification of international freight and passenger transportation and digitalization of transport sector.

To implement these plans, it is worth preparing a regional strategy focused on the development of transport and communication links and transit capacity building for our states.

Third. We must mobilize and streamline our practical efforts to ensure "green development".

Nowadays, environmental problems and climate change challenges are increasing, which requires solutions for such urgent tasks on our agenda as effective use of best practices gained in our countries and abroad, dynamic joint promotion of "green economy", wide introduction of resource-efficient technologies in industrial sectors and achievement of carbon neutrality.

In view of this, we suggest to establish a Permanent Council on High-Level Dialogue consisting of foreign scholars and international experts in the field of environment.

Fourth. Restoration of tourism interchange.

During forthcoming Ministerial Meeting on Tourism in the city of Bukhara in 2022, we plan to initiate the adoption of Regional Program for the development of safe tourism in post-pandemic period.

Based on this, serious attention will be paid to promotion of "pilgrimage tourism" and other joint tourism products, expansion of air transportation geography and development of tourism infrastructure.

Dear participants of the Summit!

I would like to draw your special attention on difficult situation in one of Members of our Organization - Afghanistan.

This country is approaching a severe humanitarian crisis day by day.

People of Afghanistan will not be able to cope with these ordeals single-handed, without help of the international community, including its closest neighbors.

Therefore, we must combine efforts to develop common approaches and provide necessary assistance to the Afghan people.

We also support the consistent continuation of the implementation of major trade, transport and energy projects of regional significance jointly with Afghanistan.

Distinguished Heads of States and Governments!

I would like to touch on another important topic.

Today, there is a need to further increase international prestige of our Organization, establish its own agenda, which differs from those of other regional organizations, enhance synergy with leading international bodies and develop institutional mechanisms for our cooperation.

We are promoting the initiative of forming

High-Level Expert Group to prepare concrete suggestions and recommendations for further improvement of Organization's activities.

At the same time, based on the priorities and current focus of our cooperation, we consider it appropriate to establish the tradition of declaring each year as the year of development of any area.

By this, during the Chairmanship of Uzbekistan in the Organization, we propose to declare a Year of Strengthening Connectivity in our countries.

Distinguished colleagues!

We also support the adoption of the final document of our today's Summit - Ashgabat Consensus for Action.

Taking this opportunity, we sincerely congratulate new Secretary General of our Organization, His Excellency Khusrav Noziri with the responsible mission on this post and wish him every success.

I thank you all for sincere wishes due to shifting Chairmanship of the Organization to Uzbekistan for the first time in ECO history.

In conclusion, I would like to express my confidence that as a result of common aspirations and efforts, we will reach a qualitatively new level of multilateral and mutually beneficial cooperation within our Organization in near future.

It is my great pleasure to invite all of you to Uzbekistan to participate in our next Summit.

Thank you for attention.

The 25th ECO Council of Ministers (COM) held in Ashgabat

**ECO
CHRONICLE** As a part of 15th ECO
Summit, the 25th
Meeting of the ECO Council of
Ministers preceded by Senior Official
Meeting held in Ashgabat,

Turkmenistan on November 27, 2021.
The delegations of the Republic of
Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran,
Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz
Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan,





Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan (host) and Republic of Uzbekistan participated in the meeting.

The delegation of ECO Cultural Institute as well as the ECO Secretariat's delegation headed by the Secretary General also attended the Meeting.

The former Chairman of the ECO, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu congratulated Turkmenistan for their excellent chairmanship during the year 2021.

The Minister said that the Member States should benefit from ECO in order to provide integrated regional response to the current challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on regional economies. During the chairmanship of Turkey, the organi-

zation worked towards this goal and at the same time focused on increasing regional trading connectivity, he added.

His Excellency Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of the Ministers and the Minister of Foreign

Affairs of Turkmenistan, in his capacity as Chairman of Council of Ministers (COM), welcomed and extended warm greetings to the honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegation participating in the 25th meeting of the COM. While referring to the concept of Turkmenistan's

chairmanship that the country developed to lead the Organization, he emphasized on some key objectives given under their concept.

He particularly mentioned the intensification of investment activities in the Member States, creation of free trade





and economic zones, formation of new economic corridors and establishment of partnerships in the field of sustainable energy, including renewable energy sources. H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov also highlighted that the comprehensive support and promotion of cooperation in the fields of science, education, sports, scientific research as well as expansion of interaction in agriculture, food security and other fields, remained priority for ECO Member Countries. He acknowledged the important role of ECO Secretariat to meet such goals. Moreover, he thanked the ECO Secretary General H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri and his team for joint work during the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan and for preparation of the COM.

The Foreign Ministers/Heads of

Delegations in their statements stressed the need of further enhancement of regional socioeconomic cooperation to overcome the impacts of pandemic as well as other current challenges.

They desired more intensified collaboration amongst the Member States for creation of free trade and economic zones, formation of new economic corridors, expansion of interaction in fields of sustainable energy including renewable energy sources, science and technology, education, sports, agriculture & food security and tourism.

H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, ECO Secretary General, while extending his sincere gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan, especially His Excellency Mr. Rashid Meredov, the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister for Foreign



Affairs of Turkmenistan for hosting this important event, thanked the honourable Foreign Ministers as well as the heads of delegations for their active participation in this important meeting.

The ECO Secretary General acknowledged that under the ECO's Chairmanship of Turkmenistan during 2021 the Organization successfully maintained its momentum and activities to pursue the aims and objectives of the ECO Vision 2025 for greater regional integration.

He also thanked the former ECO Chairman His Excellency Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu, Foreign Minister of Republic of Turkey for excellently chairing the Organization, noting that during Turkey's chairmanship the ECO experienced a notable progress in the

pursuit of its noble goals for the collective socioeconomic developments of the Member States.

The ECO Secretary General also congratulated the Republic of Uzbekistan for their upcoming ECO's Chairmanship in January 2022. Assuring his full support and cooperation, he believed that under Uzbekistan's Chairmanship the Organization would plow ahead with further advancement to achieve expanded cooperation in the region.

The 25th Meeting of COM concluded its session by adopting several reports regarding the activities of the Organization as well as approved other important documents aimed at further development of the agenda of the Organization.



ECO and UNESCAP

signed a new Memorandum
of Understanding during the
15th ECO Summit

ECO
CHRONICLE

The ECO Secretary
General, H.E. Ambassador

Khusrav Noziri and the
Under-Secretary-
General of the United
Nations and Executive
Secretary of ESCAP, Ms.
Armida Salsiah
Alisjhabana signed a
Memorandum of
Understanding (MoU)
for further institutional-
izing the existing coop-
erative relations
between the two organ-
izations. The signing

ceremony of the MoU was organized
during the 25th Meeting of the ECO

Council of Ministers
(COM) held on 27
November, 2021 in
Ashgabat. The
Executive Secretary of
ESCAP, Ms. Armida,
participated in the cer-
emony through video
conferencing.

The new MoU
between ESCAP and
ECO will foster the
ongoing strategic part-
nership and long-term





collaboration in various areas of mutual interests. Through this MoU, ECO and ESCAP also reaffirm their commitment towards achieving internationally agreed development goals enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ECO Vision 2025.

In his remarks delivered during the ceremony, the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Khusrav Noziri underlined the significance of cooperative relations with ESCAP towards realization and advancement of common goals and objectives in the region. He stated that in order to boost regional economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a strong need to facilitate trade and investment activities in the region and in this regard the complimentary role of the two organizations is indispensable. While highlighting the significance of cooperation between the ECO and ESCAP in transportation sector, the ECO Secretary General mentioned that enhanced connectivity in the region is a pre-requisite for boosting intra and inter-regional economic cooperation and inte-

gration into the global economy.

The Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Dr. Armida Salsiah, highlighted the productive collaboration between ECO and ESCAP in the last 28 years especially in the areas of capacity building and supporting policy dialogue at the regional level. She further stated that with its overlapping membership in South, West and Central Asia, the two organizations could potentially connect these sub-regions as well as connect Asia with Europe.

While concluding the ceremony, Chairman of the ECO and the Chairman of the 25th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM), the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, expressed his great satisfaction on conclusion of the MoU between ECO and ESCAP and declared that the signing of the MoU is a historic moment towards enhanced regional economic cooperation. He encouraged both the organizations to strengthen their partnership for ensuring regional sustainable development.



ECO Secretary General and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan

hold Post

15th Summit Media Conference

ECO CHRONICLE On the conclusion of the 15th ECO Summit, the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Khusrav Noziri and Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Minister and Minister of

Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, held a joint media conference in Ashgabat. The ECO Secretary General, in his remarks, expressed his gratitude to Turkmenistan for the organization of the Summit and briefed the media about the significant outcomes of the Summit. He said that ECO attaches utmost respect and significance to

Turkmenistan as one of its key members and appreciated the recent lead role and support of Turkmenistan on ECO activities for strengthening regional cooperation.

The ECO Secretary General said that "the Ashgabat Consensus for Action" adopted by the 15th Summit provides a way forward towards realization of the principal goal of sustainable socio-economic development and prosperity in the ECO region.

He informed that the Memorandum of Understanding on establishment of the corridor management mechanism of the KTI (Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan - Iran) signed during the Summit will pave the way for the commercialization of the existing railway corridor between the three en-route countries and beyond.

While talking about the progress made in the field of external relations, Mr. NOZIRI particularly mentioned that during the Summit, with support of Turkmenistan, ECO and UNESCAP have signed Memorandum of Understanding for further institutionalizing the existing cooperative relations between the two organizations.

In return, the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of

Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan highlighted the importance of ECO for enhancing the regional trade and improving the economies of the Member States.

He emphasized on the implementation of the ECO projects fostering regional development in various fields. In the concluding remarks, H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov expressed his satisfaction on the conclusions and key decisions taken by the ECO leadership during the Summit in pursuit of the common agenda of the regional socio-economic development and prosperity in the region.





The 4th ECO Business Forum

held in Turkmenistan on
the sidelines of the
**15th ECO Summit in
ECO Region**

**ECO
CHRONICLE** On the
sidelines of
the 15th ECO Summit, the
4th Business Forum of the
ECO Member States was
held in hybrid format on
26th November, 2021 in

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The event was jointly organized by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan, ECO Secretariat, and ECO-Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI).

The Business Forum was attended by more than 300 the delegates from the ECO countries including Chambers of Commerce and Industry, high level rep-



representatives of different Ministries of Turkmenistan as well as representatives from the various International Organizations and International Financial Institutions.

The Forum was addressed by speakers from International Organizations, International Financial Institutions, Chambers of Commerce and Industries, Representatives of Government of Turkmenistan, ECO-CCI and ECO Secretariat.

The speakers highlighted the need for more regional integration to boost the intra regional trade within the ECO Member States through trade liberalization and greater connectivity.

The speakers apprised the Forum about the project oriented approach by the ECO Secretariat in order to meet the targets set in the ECO Vision 2025.

It was mentioned that the trade in the ECO Region has declined from US\$ 708 billion in 2019 to US\$ 661 billion in 2021, a share of less than 8 per cent in global trade.

The operationalization of ECOTA can provide an impetus to trade expansion. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Turkmenistan and Turkmenistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry for holding such a successful

event in these difficult times of Covid-19.

During the Forum, Director for Trade and Investment of ECO made a presentation highlighting various aspects for greater business integration to increase regional trade as well as ECO's share in the global trade.

It was emphasized that there is a need for greater competitiveness and diversification in the exports basket of the ECO region to create trade flows from the ECO to the rest of the world as well as within the ECO region.

Director of Transport and Communication of ECO briefly elaborated the Project on Commercializing the Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan- Iran Railway Corridor (ECO- KTI) aimed to convert the route into an economic corridor. The project comprising of three components started in 2017 and completed in 2021.

The project envisages establishment of a Corridor Management Mechanism (CMM) that will jointly administrate the operation on the corridor and coordinate all the activities to convert it to economic corridor.

The ECO Secretariat further highlighted and appreciated the Islamic Development Bank and UNESCAP as international partners of the Project and expressed interest to continue such collaborative relations.

Signing Ceremony

MoU on ECO- KTI Corridor

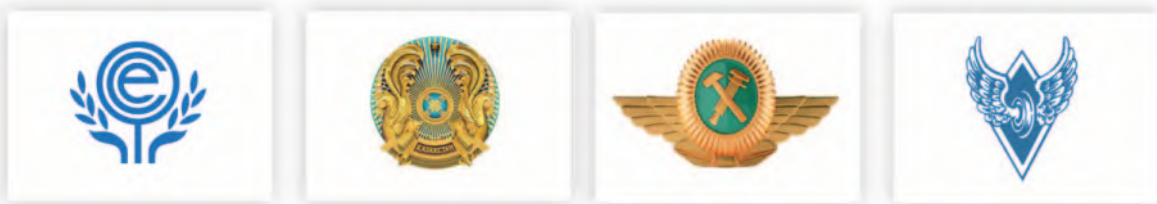
organized on
the sidelines of the
ECO Summit



The signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Railway

Administrations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the implementation of the Kazakhstan - Turkmenistan - Iran (KTI) Railway Freight Corridor





was organized on 26th November 2021 at the Chamber of Commerce of Turkmenistan on the sidelines of the 15th ECO Summit.

As per the MoU, a trilateral Corridor Management Mechanism (CMM) will be established to coordinate its operation and tariffs.

The MoU is the outcome of the Project on Commercializing the ECO- KTI Corridor that was conducted jointly by ECO, IsDB and UNESCAP.

The project included study on trade flow and marketing plan, physical and non-physical barriers and Corridor Management Mechanism.

The Representatives of ECO, IsDB and UNESCAP participated in the hybrid ceremony and delivered their statements on the important milestone and expressed their interest on joint cooperation for development of transport connectivity in the ECO Region.

The MoU will pave the way for coordination of the enroute countries to commercialize the railway through the Permanent Working Group comprising of the Heads of Railways of the three countries.



Joint Briefing for the Diplomatic Corps on Outcomes of 15th ECO Summit

 On November 29, 2021, H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri held a joint briefing for diplomatic corps on the outcomes of the 15th ECO Summit with participation of Ambassadors and other representatives of diplomatic corps and international organizations accredited in Ashgabat.

The briefing was opened by H.E. Rashid Meredov on deliberating the core decisions of Council of Ministers' Meeting and the Summit.

Particularly, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan emphasized the importance of decisions that have been made at both meetings on facilitating and promoting transit transport potential, mainstreaming sustainable energy development agenda, such as establishment of ECO Clean

Energy Center, addressing cooperation in tackling environmental challenges, and ways of increasing trade and economic ties in the ECO region.

The ECO Secretary General expressed gratitude for Turkmen hosts for making excellent arrangements and congratulated Turkmenistan on successful organization of the 15th ECO Summit. He noted that Turkmenistan by hosting this important regional Summit manifests its urge to perform lead role for regional cooperation under the umbrella of the ECO for achieving regional economic development and people's prosperity. He mentioned that the economic aspect of Turkmenistan's policy of permanent neutrality has tremendous potential for promoting economic cooperation at the regional level.

Ambassador Noziri also expressed satisfaction on achievements made under the great remarkable leadership of Turkmenistan. He further noted that adopted "Ashgabat Consensus for Action" will provide a way forward towards realization of the principal



goal of sustainable socio-economic development and prosperity in the ECO region.

The briefing participants have been informed on the key decisions and documents adopted at the 25th COM and 15th Summit events, such as holding ECO Business forum, MOU on railroad Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Tehran, ECO Vision 2025 Mid-term review, establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center, designation of ECO Awards and areas of cooperation within Ashgabat Consensus for Action dedicated to the conclusions of 15th ECO Summit.

While concluding the briefing, ECO Secretary General expressed gratitude to the Government and people of Turkmenistan for their enduring support to the ECO in pursuit of the common agenda of the regional

development. He particularly presented tribute to the President of Turkmenistan, H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for his visionary leadership, commendable support and patronage to the ECO for accomplishing its objectives and promoting regional cooperation among the Member States. At the event Ambassadors and other representatives of diplomatic corps and international organizations accredited in Ashgabat also shared their views on the outcomes of the 15th ECO Summit and expressed hope that adopted documents and programmes will further serve for greater socioeconomic development in the ECO Region.

15th ECO Summit

President of Turkmenistan announces the Winners of **ECO Awards 2021**

ECO
CHRONICLE

The prestigious ECO Awards are conferred upon eminent professionals of the ECO Member States on biyearly basis in recognition of their outstanding research work and/or achievements in any of the following fields of excellence:

- 1.Economics
- 2.History, Culture, Literature and Fine Arts
- 3.Science and Technology
- 4.Education
- 5.Agriculture and Environment

ECO Awards to the selected distinguished personalities are given in a special ceremony on the occasion of ECO Summits. In view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic,



the ceremony for the ECO Awards was not held during the 15th ECO Summit and the names of winners of the ECO Awards were announced by the Chairman of the Summit, H.E. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the President of Turkmenistan. On behalf of the Heads of State and Government of ECO Member

States, H.E. Berdimuhamedov offered felicitations to the winners of the ECO Awards and expressed his confident that this magnificent achievement will provide a strong encouragement and motivation for their future endeavours in the respective fields.

The following nine candidates out of seventy-three nominees were selected for the ECO Awards 2021.

Country	Winners	Field/Category	Present Position/ Occupation
Azerbaijan	Prof. Ms. Ulduz Fayizi Gizi Hashimova	Science & Technology	Director at Institute of Physiology of Azerbaijan National Academy of Science
Iran	Dr. Mitra Rahanejat	Economics	Assistant Professor of Law and Politics at Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran
Kazakhstan	Mr. Orazak Ismagulov	History, Culture, Literature, & Fine Arts	Chief Researcher/Head of the Laboratory for Physical Anthropology of the National Museum of under Ministry of Culture and Sports of Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz Republic	Ms. Mambetova Nazira Ismailovna	History, Culture, Literature, & Fine Arts	National Actress of the Kyrgyz Republic
Pakistan	Ms. Robina Farooq	Agriculture & Environment	Vice Chancellor Government Collage Women University, Faisalabad
Tajikistan	Mr. Nizomov Jahongir Nizomovich	Science & Technology	Head of the laboratory of the Institute of Geology, Earthquake Engineering and Seismology of the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan
Turkey	Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ocal Oguz	Education	Head of Turkish Folklore department at the Faculty of Literature of Ankara Haci Bayram University
Turkmenistan	Mr. Yazklych Orazklychev	History, Culture, Literature, & Fine Arts	Chief Researcher of the Magtymguly Institute of Language, Literature and National Manuscripts of the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan	Ms. Mastura Khalimova	Agriculture & Environment	Senior Researcher in the laboratory of Vegetable and melon crops breeding under Ministry of Agriculture

The 15th ECO Summit adopted the 'Ashgabat Consensus for Action'

ECO
CHRONICLE

The 15th ECO Summit was concluded with the adoption of the "Ashgabat Consensus for Action", renewing the Member States' commitment for the shared progress, prosperity and development in the region, as well as promotion of ECO as a more effective regional economic forum.

Following is the full text of the "Ashgabat Consensus for Action".

Ashgabat Consensus for Action

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization, gathering to attend the 15th ECO Summit for reviewing the progress and implementation status of the ECO programmes, activities and projects and to make an exchange of views on regional and international issues of the ECO's common interest aimed at fortifying the ECO as a vibrant organization, enhancing and expanding cooperation among its members as well as building on common values and shared interests, and while:





■ **Reaffirming** our commitment to the principles and objectives of the ECO enshrined in the Treaty of Izmir and realization of the goals of the ECO Vision 2025 for mutual economic development, peace and progress, prosperity and enhanced integration of the region;

■ **Recognizing** the multilateralism as an international legitimate framework and an imperative to promote and strengthen the sustainable development, peace and security among nations as well as; Stressing on the role of international and regional organizations in upholding and further promoting multilateralism as enshrined in the UN Charter;

■ **Highlighting** the importance of the UN General Assembly Resolution dated September 9, 2021 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization;

■ **Acknowledging** the significance of regional cooperation, integration and connec-

tivity as a vital way to fast-track economic and social progress, development and stability in the Region and; Adhering profound importance to the cooperation frameworks developed under the different agreements amongst the Member States;

■ **Noting** with appreciation the midterm review of ECO Vision 2025 under the Chairmanship of Turkmenistan that sets comprehensive and core principles as well as guidelines to further enhance ECO cooperation and revival in key areas;

■ **Encouraging** further collaboration amongst the Member States and emphasizing the imperative of accession to the existing ECO agreements and institutions by ECO Member States, and accelerate their implementation and functioning;

■ **Recalling** our commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, including in particular, the respect for political



independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of the states, development of friendly relations among the nations, and pacific settlement of disputes;

■ **Noting** the political, economic, cultural and technological developments that can facilitate the realization of the cherished objective of connectivity within the ECO Region and beyond, including the Trans-Eurasian connectivity; and welcoming operationalization of Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Road Corridor;

■ **Underlining** the significance of fully exploiting the complementarities offered by shared geography, history and culture, and the comparative advantages and diversity of resources of the Member States to bring about greater connectivity and economic integration in the ECO Region;

■ **Desiring** to stand side-by-side with each other to address the post-COVID repercussions on the region's economies for the

resumption of normal activities, particularly in trade, transit, transportation and tourism;

■ **Stressing** the importance of digitalization of transportation and border crossing procedures, as necessary measures in the context of international trade within the ECO region to ensure smooth and unhindered trade flows through fast, efficient and electronic customs and transport operations during pandemics;

■ **Recognizing** the need to increase the sustainability and resilience of the supply chains and cargo transportation, within the framework of a rule based approach, in order to carry out free, fair and uninterrupted trade as envisaged in ECO Vision 2025 and tackle the economic adversities of COVID-19;

■ **Acknowledging** regional connectivity and integration as cornerstone for mutual economic growth and a dynamic concept that encompasses multiple dimensions, including the digital infrastructure, e-commerce, energy, and transit and multimodal transportation systems;



■ **Encouraging** the establishment of a constructive dialogue on energy issues among producers, consumers and transit states in the ECO Region;

■ **Emphasizing** on the significance of enhanced energy security for economic stability and sustainable development and the need for close cooperation to realize major energy projects in this regard;

■ **Underscoring** the need for expanded efforts towards power/electricity market within ECO Region for harnessing benefits of larger integrated electricity systems;

■ **Reiterating** the importance of environment cooperation in the ECO Region as a crosscutting issue to all aspects of development in line with "ECO Vision 2025" and UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nation Framework on Climate Change as well as the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, based on national policies and circumstances of each Member State, especially for a sustainable

recovery from the COVID-19 in the Region;

■ **Recognizing** that just and equitable energy transition will be an important pillar of global and regional energy security in the coming decades;

■ **Appreciating** the efforts for increasing the share of the renewable energy sources in the national energy mixes of ECO members, and for enhancing sustainable energy production, energy efficiency and energy security;

■ **Commending** the growing interest of Member States to join ECO Trade and Development Bank and; Emphasizing the need for enhanced role of the Bank in supporting and financing ECO projects and programmes, including by forging cooperative ties with international development partners;

■ **Emphasizing** the need to strengthen educational, cultural and scientific linkages among the Member States and fostering the ECO's Specialized Agencies in these fields;



■ **Acknowledging** the important role of Parliamentary Cooperation in promoting greater collaboration among Member States in giving effect to the agreed frameworks;

■ **Noting** with concern the challenges in ensuring food security and agricultural development in the Region as a result of water shortages, land degradation, drought and other natural disasters;

■ **Underlining** the importance of enhanced regional cooperation in the field of agriculture aimed at addressing the food security challenges at global and regional level and; Emphasizing on supporting the efforts of ECO Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS) in this regard;

■ **Reiterating** the joint commitment to establish a free trade area in the ECO Region to ensure maximum intra-regional trade as an instrument of enhanced economic recovery, development, and growth in the Region;

■ **Acknowledging** the key importance of

the implementation of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) in achieving strategic objectives of ECO Vision 2025, including doubling intra-regional trade and increasing share in the global trade;

■ **Recognizing** the importance of moderation as an approach to counter all forms of extremism and promote dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and social harmony, thereby contributing towards the achievement of sustainable and inclusive development, equitable growth, stability and prosperity in the ECO Region;

■ **Acknowledging** the importance of peace and stability in Afghanistan for ECO Region and reiterating our continued support to the national, regional and global efforts for reconstruction and sustainable development in Afghanistan;

■ **Expressing** deep concern with the dire humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, emphasizing the importance of peace and stability in Afghanistan for ECO Region and reiterating

our support for an inclusive and representative political system that protect fundamental human rights of all components of the Afghan people, particularly women;

■ **Felicitating** the Central Asian ECO Member States on the occasion of their 30th Anniversary of Independence, and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Restoration of Independence;

■ **Congratulating** the Government and the People of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the liberation of its occupied territories and restoration of territorial integrity of the country; and Believing that this development will pave the way for sustainable peace and economic prosperity in the Caucasus region through establishment of good-neighborly relations;

■ **Being fully** cognizant of the constantly evolving global and regional environment and new developments that pose multiple challenges and opportunities as well as the need for enhanced regional economic cooperation in the ECO Region;

■ **Have agreed to:**

■ **1. Accelerate** the pace of existing cooperation amongst the Member States in all areas of shared interests, including to explore every possibility to achieve the aims and objectives of the ECO and to promote the ECO as an effectual regional organization;

■ **2. Reaffirm** our pledge for enhanced effective and efficient implementation of ECO Vision 2025 in its six key areas of cooperation that are trade, transport and connectivity, energy, tourism, economic growth and productivity, and social welfare and environment and; Re-emphasize realization of the core principles of sustainability, integration and conducive environment of

the Vision 2025 which are prerequisite to secure desired goals of the organization;

■ **3. Decide** to enhance mutual cooperation to fight against the COVID-19 for effectively, efficiently and jointly dealing with the impacts of the pandemic on the region's economies, inter alia, by sharing information and capacity building in prevention and vaccination as well as in order to revive the socioeconomic activities in the region for collective betterment of our peoples;

■ **4. Ensure** an accelerated implementation of the long-term sectoral priorities of ECO for development of transport and communication infrastructure; facilitation of trade and investment; effective use of the region's vast energy resources, economic integration and; Chalk out the ways and means to promote ECO's connectivity with other regions in these areas;

■ **5. Encourage** the Member States to accede to relevant agreements concluded within the ECO framework aimed at achieving the objectives enshrined in the Treaty of Izmir and the ECO Vision 2025 and; Task our relevant Ministers and authorities to consider joining these agreements;

■ **6. Decide** to increase the low intra-regional trade and increase our region's contribution in overall global trade by harnessing trade potential of the ECO region to achieve sustainable economic growth as stipulated in the ECO Vision 2025 through implementation of ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) and other ECO trade related arrangements and; Task hereby our relevant authorities to expedite removal of unnecessary technical and operational barriers, including due to the COVID-19 to effectuate these arrangements and to start trade negotiations with involvement of Member States in a position to do so for an ECO Free Trade Area;



■ **7. Enhance** ECO-wide connectivity in terms of transport and transit, trade and investment, telecommunications, digital infrastructure including cyber security and all forms of energy, as well as people-to- people exchanges, including through regional tourism arrangements;

■ **8. Commend** the operationalization of ITI Road Corridor, noting the successful cargo dispatch from Pakistan to Azerbaijan and Turkey through Iran under TIR Convention and; Take practical measures for the full implementation of other regional projects and transport corridors, as envisaged in the objectives of the Transit Transport Frame Work Agreement (TTFA) and Vision 2025, as well as consider expanding the network of transport corridors put forward by the member states of the Organization at the 14th ECO Summit;

■ **9. Stress** on the importance of strengthened and continued cooperation among all stakeholders to build and run information structures in order to bridge the digital divide in the Region;

■ **10. Strengthen** cooperation with other international organizations and relevant stakeholders in supporting the Member States in their efforts to digitalize transport, customs and border crossing procedures through implementing e-TIR/e-CMR and other relevant mechanisms with a view to creating digital transport corridors among the interested Member States;

■ **11. Cooperate** closely to harness the benefits and mitigate the negative impact of the ICTs and implement the decisions and outcomes of the Second ECO Ministerial Meeting on Information and Communications Technology in 2017, having in mind the importance of participation of all stakeholders to ensure unhindered and equal access to ICT benefits by all;

■ **12. Collaborate** strongly in such areas as e-government, digital economy, artificial intelligence, telecommunications and inter-operator interaction, as well as through national postal operators and technology parks of software products of the member countries of the organization;

■ **13. Assign** Tourism Ministers of the Member States to take urgent measures in coping with serious challenges of the ECO tourism industry arising from covid-19 pandemic in line with other regional and global post-COVID initiatives;

■ **14. Reinforce** cooperation in the field of environment and climate change, disaster risk reduction and education and; Unite the efforts of the ECO member states in the direction of creating concrete effective mechanisms of regional cooperation in this sphere.

■ **15. Intensify** the work on the creation and implementation within the Organization of a health care system for monitoring the epidemiological situation and advance planning of appropriate measures in the ECO region;

■ **16. Support** the initiative for the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Center and; Encourage the ECO Member States to take result-oriented steps for the full-fledged and optimum functioning of the Center as contribution to modern, affordable and reliable energy services in the Region;

■ **17. Encourage** cooperation among the ECO Member States and relevant international organizations on issues related to sustainable and clean energy, including the realization of renewable energy projects and green energy financing;

■ **18. Consider** the importance of the issue of ensuring food security for all ECO





member states, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and ECO-RCC, to expedite efforts in updating the ECO program in the field of food security; Task the ministries of agriculture of the ECO member states to prepare for their next meeting to develop measures for implementation of the ECO Program, once updated, to ensure food security in the ECO Region;

■ **19. Consider** the issues of cooperation in the field of industrial cooperation on the basis of the principle of complementarities of the economies of the member countries of the Organization. Task our relevant ministries and officials to develop a joint "Road map", including specific areas and projects;

■ **20. Enhance** the role of micro, small and medium size enterprises (MSMEs) in the economic growth of the Member States and the Region as a whole and; Task our relevant authorities to undertake necessary measures to strengthen the MSMEs and promote joint cooperation, including those that enhance

women entrepreneurship, innovation-driven and knowledge-based enterprises;

■ **21. Affirm** the need for collaboration in energy sector, including oil and gas, electricity, renewable energy, including hydro etc., focusing, inter alia, on energy efficiency, energy and renewable energy infrastructure development, as well as oil and gas pipelines, intra-regional energy trade; Stress on the establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) in the ECO Region for increasing energy trade and supplies, facilitating the electricity exports and imports and boosting economic growth, as well as contributing to the energy security of the Region;

■ **22. Be cognizant** of the changing global economic realities under COVID conditions and; Work towards developing medium and long-term economic development strategies for an inclusive growth and more resilient recovery in the Region;

■ **23. Set measurable** and quantifiable targets using effective and efficient project

tools, including monitoring and evaluations systems and techniques with the aim to ensure implementation of result-oriented projects and programmes in the Organization;

■ **24. Reaffirm** our commitment to implement the ECO activities, with the primary focus on executing the annual work plan, in a prioritized manner for enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization and attaining speedy outcomes towards higher welfare impact in our Region;

■ **25. Ensure** that the existing regional arrangements and programmes within ECO to combat the menace of drugs and different kind of transnational organized crimes, including, inter alia, trafficking in persons, drugs and arms, crimes committed through digital means and ICTs, as well as financing of terrorism and money laundering are in place and continue to function and that effective regional mechanisms for cooperation in law enforcement, judicial issues, and capacity building, as well as other relevant areas are established;

■ **26. Reject** unilateral coercive measures, sanctions and economic pressures as breach of the "Right to Development of the people", which hamper the stability and prosperity in our region, particularly during the pandemic situation and; Express support to the ECO Member States affected by such measures;

■ **27. Encourage** the Member States to explore the opportunities to invest in rebuilding and reconstruction projects in the liberated territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

■ **28. Renew** our strong desire for a secure, prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan and while appreciating the ECO Secretariat and the Member States for developing a comprehensive ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan (EAPA) and; Urge on the Member States and the international community to further strengthen EAPA and carry out developmental and assistance projects in Afghanistan;

■ **29. Express** support to international efforts to provide urgent humanitarian aid to

Afghanistan through effective, transparent and accountable mechanisms and take measures to protect the livelihoods of the Afghan people, as well as to show solidarity with countries, which are hosting large number of displaced Afghans and; Underscore the importance of political inclusivity, protection of fundamental human rights of all components of Afghan people, particularly women and to keep taking effective actions in counter-terrorism;

■ **30. Praise** the Member States and the ECO Secretariat for making progress on ECO reform process;

■ **31. Welcome** the new ECO Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, wishing him and his team success in accomplishing the important duties while tasking the Secretary General to undertake a comprehensive capacity building programme for the Secretariat and; in this regard, Encourage the CPR to assist the Secretary General in utilizing the existing and required resources from within and outside ECO;

■ **32. Appreciate** the ECO Secretariat and the former Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour for excellent management of the Organization's affairs, particularly during the ongoing COVID crunch;

■ **33. Express** our deep gratitude to the People and the Government of Turkmenistan for extending warm hospitality and making excellent arrangements for the COM and the Summit and; sincerely Thank H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the honorable President of Turkmenistan and the Chair of the 15th Summit for successfully presiding over the event;

■ **34. Welcome** the ECO Chairmanship of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2022 and; Express confidence that during its chairmanship the organization will be further strengthened and the regional cooperation will be further advanced, as well as the role of organization in the international arena will be promoted.



15th



ECO Summit

Ashgabat, 28 November 2011