



ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (ECO)

Istanbul Declaration
adopted by
the Third Meeting of the ECO Interior Ministers
(Istanbul, 24th December, 2010)

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WE, the ECO Ministers/ the Heads of the delegations of Interior participating in the third ECO Interior Ministers Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey on 24 December, 2010,

RECOGNIZING that terrorism poses a serious threat to the peace and stability of our region; and expressing deep concern at the continuing scourge of drug trafficking, terrorism and organized crime afflicting the region which has caused extensive loss of human life, destruction and damage to property;

CONCERNED about the pernicious effects of transnational crime, such as terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering, human-trafficking, illegal migration, piracy and cyber crime on regional stability and development, the maintenance of the rule of law and the welfare of the people of the region;

CONDEMNED all kind of terrorist attacks in ECO region, specially a recent horrible one in Chabahar, Iran which claimed the lives of a number of innocent women and children;

CONDEMNED all kind of terrorist attacks including the suicidal bombing which is un-Islamic.

EMPHASIZED the need for ECO Member Countries to take measures to de-radicalize the extremist mind-set and share the action with the Member States;

RECOGNIZING the need of clear and effective regional modalities to combat all different forms of crimes, especially on the aspect of information exchange, legal cooperation and policy coordination;

TAKING NOTE of the fact that peace and harmony, stability and prosperity of the region are being threatened by terrorism and various forms of transnational organized crime, especially those committed in occupied territories and other uncontrolled areas within ECO region;

NOTING the decisions of the First and Second ECO Interior Ministerial Meetings (IMM) in Tehran in November, 2006 and Ashgabat in May 2008 emphasized the need to focus attention on issues including Drug, Terrorism, Organized Crime, Economic Crimes, Human Trafficking, Illegal Migration and all different form of Crimes which transcend borders and affect the lives of the people in the region, and the urgent need to manage such transnational issues so that they do not affect the long term viability of ECO Member States;

APPRECIATING the outcomes of the First Experts Group Meeting (EGM) for evolving a Plan of Action on Combating Transnational Organized Crime in Ankara in May, 2010, in particular, the draft Plan of Action and recommended that the Member States take action on its implementation.

APPRECIATING the outcomes of the First meeting of Chief of Anti Narcotics of the ECO Member States held in Tehran, emphasized the need for more cooperation with a result-oriented approach between the law enforcement agencies of the Member States including Customs and Border authorities in order to better tackle smuggling of narcotics and psychotropic substances within the region and beyond;

NOTING with satisfaction working of the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) for exchange of intelligence information among Anti Narcotics Forces of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, urged other Member States to consider utilizing the existing capacity and benefit by cooperating with this Cell.

APPRECIATING the outcomes of the first meeting of Heads of INTERPOL of ECO Member States held in Tehran, agreed to encourage maximum use of the existing institutions in the region for exchange of information regarding drugs, terrorism and transnational organized crimes, in particular INTERPOL, National Central Bureaus, and emphasized the need for holding annual meetings of the Heads of Interpol National Central Bureaus to enhance police cooperation among the ECO Member States.

APPRECIATING the outcomes of the first meeting of Border Commanders of ECO Member States held in Tehran on 18-19 October, 2010, agreed that in order to have effective border controlling system there is a need to have expeditious exchange of information among the Border Control Forces of the Member States. Each Member State will strengthen its own data-base system to identify criminals especially on border check-points. Further recommended that once the data-bank for identifying criminals by each country is improved at national level and legal formalities are also cleared only then the idea for the establishment of a regional data-bank may be considered in future meetings of the Border Control Commanders.

APPRECIATING the outcomes of 2nd High Level Experts Group Meeting on Combating Drugs, Terrorism and Organized Crime held in Tehran on 1-2 November, 2010, welcomed the idea for establishment of data-bank titled ECO-Organized Crimes & Terrorism Prevention International System.

CONVINCED that the continuity of existing global framework against transnational crime rests on consolidated regional action in the institutional and operational spheres:

HAVE RESOLVED TO CONFRONT THE PROBLEM OF TRANSNATIONAL CRIME THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

1. **Strengthen** the commitment of Member States to cooperate at the regional level in combating the transnational crime;
2. **Convene**, at least once a year, ECO Interior Ministers Meeting in order to coordinate activities of relevant ECO bodies, such as the Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Control Matters and the Meeting of Chiefs of National Police;

3. **Hold** discussions with a view to signing mutual legal assistance agreements, bilateral treaties, memorandums of understanding or other arrangements among the Member States;
4. **Establish** ECO Police (ECOPOL) which will coordinate regional efforts against transnational crime through intelligence sharing, harmonization of policies and coordination of operations via liaison officers posted in its premises;
5. **Encourage** networking of the relevant national agencies or organizations in Member States dealing with transnational crimes to further enhance information exchange and dissemination;
6. **Expand** the scope of Member States' efforts against transnational crimes such as terrorism, illicit drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering, traffic in persons, illegal migration and piracy and to request the ECO Secretary-General to include these areas in the work programme of the ECO Secretariat;
7. **Emphasized** the need for preparing Plans of Action each on Terrorism Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration.
8. **Emphasized** the need for identifying suitable training facilities for capacity building and enhancement of professionalizing law-enforcement officials involved in combating drugs, terrorism and transnational organized crimes.
9. **Agreed** to appoint Drug Liaison Officers (DLOs) in their respective Embassies/Missions as far as practicable but not later than 2012.
10. **Agreed** to enhance Control Delivery Practices and Mutual cooperation on drug control measures within the national legal frameworks of Member States.
11. **Agreed** to enhance cooperation on Drug Demand Reduction Initiatives and sharing best practices in their respective States.
12. **Explore ways** by which the Member States can work closer with relevant agencies and organizations in Dialogue Partner States, other countries and international organizations, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies, Colombo Plan, INTERPOL and such other agencies, to combat transnational crimes;
13. **Strengthen** the Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit (DOCCU)'s capacity to assist the Member States in initiating, planning and coordinating activities, strategies, programmes and projects to combat transnational crimes.
14. **Encouraged** Member States who have not signed the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by land, sea and air, supplementary to Palermo Convention, 2000 and Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in person, especially women and children supplementing the UN Conventions Against Transnational Organized Crimes to sign the Protocol and also enact domestic legislations against illegal migration, human trafficking, if not legislated already.

15. **Cooperate** in curbing smuggling of rare species of animals/plants as well as historical relics/artifacts.
16. **Welcomed** the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the Fourth ECO Interior Ministers Meeting in Islamabad.
17. **Expressed** sincere thanks to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for its warm welcome, generous hospitality, and excellent managements for the Meeting.