



**ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (ECO)
SECRETARIAT
(TEHRAN)**

Report of
The Third Meeting of the ECO Interior Ministers
(Istanbul, 24th December, 2010)

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**Report of
The Third ECO Interior Ministers' Meeting
(Istanbul, 24 December 2010)**

1. The Third Meeting of the ECO Interior Ministers was held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 24th December 2010. The meeting was attended by delegates of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey and Uzbekistan as well as the ECO Secretary General along with the relevant staff of the Secretariat. The list of participants is attached as *Annex-I*.

2. The Third Interior Ministers meeting was preceded by the Senior Officials' meeting on 23rd December 2010, which was chaired by His Excellency Mr. Osman Gunes, Governor, Undersecretary of Ministry of Interior of Turkey. In his welcoming remarks, Mr. Osman welcomed the participants and expressed the hope that the deliberations and decisions made during the meetings would contribute to enhancing regional cooperation among member states for the realization of ECO's objectives of economic growth and sustainable development.

Inauguration of the Meeting

3. The meeting was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr. Besir Atalay, Interior Minister of the Republic of Turkey. The Minister stated that phenomena such as drugs, terrorism, human trafficking, illegal migration, organized crimes, smuggling of weapons and ammunition, money laundering and cyber crimes are common problems being faced by all the Member States and there is a need to adopt a unified approach to curb these menaces. He noted that it is the collective responsibility of the Member States to consolidate the atmosphere of peace while taking necessary precautions enabling our people to live in a more secure and peaceful region and form sustainable stability and development for the promising future of our societies. Mr. Atalay emphasized the need for implementing bilateral/multilateral security cooperation agreements and supplementary protocols suggested by the UN in the field of trans-boundary organized crimes, terrorism and human trafficking. A copy of the statement is placed as *Annex-II*.

4. The ECO Secretary General, Mr. Muhammad Yahya Maroofi also made a statement during the inaugural session. He welcomed the delegates and thanked the Government of the Republic of Turkey for hosting the meeting and the other member states for their interest and participation. While apprising the meeting with the activities of the ECO-Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit, the Secretary General noted that a stable and secure environment is an important prerequisite to nurture and develop economies of our Member States. Mr. Maroofi dilated about the menaces of drugs, terrorism and trans-national organized crimes and emphasized the need for remedial collective measures encompassing strategy to eradicate the menace of organized crimes in all forms and manifestations. A copy of the statement is placed as *Annex-III*.

Agenda Item No. 1

Election of the Chairman and his statement

5. In accordance with ECO's Rules of Procedure, His Excellency Mr. Besir Atalay, Interior Minister of the Republic of Turkey was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Meeting. In his remarks, Mr. Besir Atalay thanked the participants for reposing confidence in him and expressed the hope that the outcome of the meeting would bring useful and beneficial outcome for the Organization.

Agenda Item No. 2

Adoption of the Agenda

6. The meeting adopted the following agenda, which had been reviewed/endorsed earlier by the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM):

A) Inauguration of the Meeting:

- a. Statement by His Excellency Mr. Besir Atalay, Interior Minister of the Republic of Turkey
- b. Statement by His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Yahya Maroofi, ECO Secretary General

B) Working Session:

- 1) Election of the Chairman and his statement
- 2) Adoption of the Agenda.
- 3) Statements by the Ministers/Heads of delegations
- 4) The Secretariat's report on implementation of the decisions of the 2nd Interior Ministers' Meeting.
- 5) Report of the First Experts Group Meeting (EGM) for preparation of a Plan of Action on Combating Trans-national Organized Crime (Ankara, 6 – 7 May, 2010).
- 6) Report of the First Meeting of Heads of INTERPOL of ECO Member States (Tehran, 29-30 June, 2010).
- 7) Report of the First Meeting of the Chiefs of Police of Anti Narcotics of ECO Member States (Tehran, 2 – 3 August, 2010).
- 8) Report of the First Meeting of Border Commanders of ECO Member States (Tehran, 19-20 October, 2010).
- 9) Report of the Second High Level Experts Group Meeting on Combating Drugs, Terrorism and Organized Crimes (Tehran, 1-2 November, 2010).
- 10) Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime(TOC) and their impact on security and stability of the region:
 - i) Drugs
 - ii) Terrorism
 - iii) Organized Crime
 - iv) Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration
 - v) Economic Crimes
 - vi) Weapons and Ammunition Smuggling

- 11) Preparation of a Regional Threat Assessment Report on Organized Crime and Terrorism
- 12) Establishing ECO Training Fund in Security Related Courses
- 13) Mechanism for cooperation against Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crime:
 - i) The Revised Joint Regional Strategy to combat Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crimes
 - ii) Border police cooperation
 - iii) Police Cooperation and considering the establishment of ECOPOL
 - iv) Exchange of information:
 - a) Establishment of a Data- bank on drugs, terrorism, organized crime, human-trafficking and money-laundering
 - b) Nomination of focal points by the Member States on Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crimes
 - c) Nomination of an ECO National Coordinator in the Ministries of Interior/Narcotics for exchange of information between the ECO Secretariat and the Member States
 - d) Cooperation between the Drug Liaison Officers of the Member States with the ECO-DOCCU
- 14) Implementation of the EU-funded project titled “Fight Against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan with the ECO Member States:
 - a. Expectations of the Member States from the project
 - b. Beneficiary countries during the 2nd phase of the project
- 15) Adoption of the Istanbul Declaration
- 16) Any other business
- 17) Date and venue of the next Meeting
- 18) Adoption of the Report of the Meeting
- 19) Vote of thanks and closing of the Meeting

Agenda Item No. 3

Statements by the Ministers/Heads of delegations

7. The Ministers/Heads of delegations delivered their statements, encompassing different issues related to terrorism and transnational organized crimes such as drugs, illegal migration, human trafficking, economic crimes, weapons and ammunition smuggling, and renewed their commitment for cooperation in combating these crimes. Copies of the statements are placed as *Annex-IV*.

Agenda Item No. 4

The Secretariat's report on implementation of the decisions of the Second Interior Ministers' Meeting

8. The representative of the Secretariat briefed the meeting about the activities undertaken by the Secretariat as well as the Member States since holding of the Second ECO Interior Ministers' meeting (Ashgabat, May, 2008). The meeting expressed satisfaction on the progress and the activities carried out during this period.

Agenda Item No. 5

Report of the 1st Experts Group Meeting for evolving a Plan of Action on Combating Trans-national Organized Crime (Ankara, 6-7 May, 2010)

9. It was briefed that the First Experts Group Meeting (EGM) for evolving a Plan of Action on Combating Transnational Organized Crime was hosted by the Turkish National Police on 6-7 May, 2010 in Ankara. The meeting appreciated the efforts of the EGM and approved its report along with the Plan of Action on Combating Trans-National Organized Crime (*Annex-V*). Member States were requested to take necessary steps for implementation of this Plan of Action.

Agenda Item No. 6

Report of the First Meeting of Heads of INTERPOL of ECO Member States (Tehran, 29 – 30 June, 2010)

10. The meeting considered and approved the report and declaration issued at the end of the First Meeting of Heads of INTERPOL of ECO Member States which was held in Tehran on 29-30 June 2010. The meeting appreciated active participation of all the Member States which included among others the Secretary General of INTERPOL and the INTERPOL Executive Committee Delegate for Asia. While welcoming the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 2nd Meeting of the Heads of INTERPOL of ECO Member States, the meeting emphasized the need for regular holding of such meetings. Member States were requested to expedite nominating their respective liaison officer/focal person to the Secretariat for follow-up of tasks and subjects to be exchanged among Police Departments of ECO Member States. As highlighted in the Declaration adopted by the Heads of INTERPOL Meeting and in order to have better and closer cooperation related with the criminal justice systems of the ECO Member States, the meeting requested the Secretariat to draft a convention on cooperation in criminal matters including extradition.

Agenda Item No. 7

Report of the First Meeting of the Chiefs of Police of Anti Narcotics of ECO Member States (Tehran, 2-3 August 2010)

11. The Meeting considered the report of the First Meeting of the Chiefs of Police of Anti Narcotics of ECO Member States which was hosted by the Anti Narcotics Police of Iran. The meeting approved the report of this meeting along with its Declaration. Keeping in view the importance of exchange of information among Anti Narcotics Police of the ECO Member States, the meeting emphasized the need for a more active role in anti narcotics police cooperation in the region on narcotics cross-border smuggling networks. The meeting welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to host the Second Meeting of the

Chiefs of Police of Anti Narcotics of the ECO Member States and agreed to hold such meetings on a regular basis.

Agenda Item No. 8

Report of the First Meeting of Border Commanders of ECO Member States (19-20 October 2010)

12. The meeting considered and approved the report of the First Meeting of Border Commanders of ECO Member States which was held in Tehran on 19-20 October 2010 along with its Declaration. In order to further improve border security, exchange of experience and bilateral and multilateral cooperation, the meeting requested the Secretariat to continue holding meetings of Border Commanders of ECO Member States on annual basis.

Agenda Item No. 9

Report of the Second High Level Experts Group Meeting on Combating Drugs, Terrorism and Organized Crimes (Tehran, 1 – 2 November, 2010)

13. The meeting considered and approved the report of the 2nd HLEG on Combating Drugs, Terrorism and Organized Crimes, which was held in Tehran on 1-2 November 2010. The meeting welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the following two events and decided to include them in the revised Joint Regional Strategy:

- i) The First Meeting of Attorney Generals of the ECO Member States
- ii) A Workshop on Terrorism

Agenda Item No. 10

Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime(TOC) and their impact on security and stability of the region:

i) Drugs

14. The participants agreed that cultivation, production and smuggling of drugs were the major security problems in the ECO region. Global contribution to combat this phenomena through financial and technical assistance to ECO members for fight against drug trafficking is necessary. The interaction of the ECO Member States with other countries or organizations such as EU and UN are among the new regional cooperation objectives of the present meeting. It was informed that the ECO-DOCCU is already implementing an EU-funded project titled Fight Against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan with the ECO Member States.

15. While considering drug trafficking as a common threat for all the Member States, the meeting discussed the ways and means to strengthen the Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit (DOCCU) of the ECO. It was emphasized that this institutional mechanism should be provided financial and professional expertise through further international assistance. The Member States were urged to make an effort to appoint Drug Liaison Officers (DLOs) in their respective Embassies/Missions at the earliest possible. The meeting requested Pakistan to propose an exact date for holding of the 2nd Senior Officials

Meeting (SOM) on Drug Control Matters, as enshrined in the Joint Regional Strategy approved by the 2nd Interior Ministers' Meeting.

ii) Terrorism

16. It was underlined that terrorism has been a major challenge for peace and international security all over the world in recent years. It poses a serious threat to economic development, national and regional stability. The Ministers reiterated Complexity of this challenge which requires collective and comprehensive approach to fight it jointly.

17. It was recalled that during the 2nd Interior Ministers Meeting (Ashgabat, 2008) an Experts Group Meeting comprising professionals and experienced officials dealing with terrorism was constituted to evolve a Plan of Action to implement the policies approved by the ECO Interior Ministers. As this EGM could not be held so far, the meeting requested the concerned authorities of Pakistan to propose an exact date for holding of this meeting so that the draft Plan of Action could be formulated and submitted for the approval of Interior Ministers.

iii) Organized Crime

18. The meeting emphasized the need for enhancing exchange of information and experiences among the Member States in the framework of their national laws regarding searching and interrogating people who are involved with organized crimes. The meeting noted with appreciation the efforts of the Secretariat and the Turkish authorities in successfully holding the First Experts Group Meeting (Ankara, 6 – 7 May, 2010) for preparation of a Plan of Action on Combating Trans-national Organized Crime.

iv) Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration

19. The meeting noted with appreciation signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Economic Cooperation Organization and the International Organization for Migration on 27th January, 2009. The representative of the Secretariat informed that as per decision of the 2nd ECO Interior Ministers' meeting, a Plan of Action for the implementation of this MOU was also prepared by the Secretariat and sent to IOM for finalization. The meeting instructed the Secretariat to actively follow-up the matter with the IOM so that further steps could be taken for the implementation of this Plan of Action.

20. Recalling the decision of the 2nd ECO Interior Minister's meeting, the Ministers tasked the Secretariat to continue follow-up with the International Organization for Migration so that the Experts Group Meeting (EGM) for preparation of a plan of cooperation against human trafficking and illegal migration could be convened in 2011.

v) **Economic Crimes**

21. The meeting emphasized the need for enhancing cooperation against money laundering by sharing domestic legislation already enacted by some member states. It was also noted that there was a need to prepare a joint strategy.

vi) **Weapons and Ammunition Smuggling**

22. The meeting discussed the issue and decided that, in order to curb violence in the Member States, smuggling of weapons should be strictly discouraged by sharing of information through focal points dealing with trans-national organized crimes.

Agenda Item No. 11

Preparation of a Regional Threat Assessment Report on Organized Crime and Terrorism

23. The meeting welcomed the idea for preparation of a Regional Threat Assessment Report on Organized Crime and Terrorism which is also a common practice by other international organizations working on security issues. It was agreed that this kind of report for the ECO region should carry strategic and future-oriented analysis in an effort to reveal the current threats and expected new trends of organized crimes. The main objectives of this report would be to help decision-makers at national and international level for proposing strategies to fighting organized criminality. In order to prepare this report the meeting further decided to hold an Experts Group Meeting to formulate related modalities of this report as well as financial implications, if any.

Agenda Item No. 12

Establishing ECO Training Fund in Security Related Courses

24. The meeting noted with appreciation holding of training programmes by the Member States. It was agreed that these training courses are providing an excellent opportunity for the responsible officers to share their experiences with each other. It was noted that on some occasions, these training courses have to be postponed only because of lack of funding to bear the related expenses. The meeting, therefore, recommended establishing the ECO Training Fund for Security Related Courses. The Secretariat informed the meeting that for establishing any Fund, only seed money could be provided by the Secretariat. The meeting requested the Secretariat to work out modalities for establishing this Fund. It was also proposed to approach the international organizations for financial assistance to materialize this Fund.

Agenda Item No. 13

Mechanism for cooperation among ECO member states against Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crime:

i) **The Revised Joint Regional Strategy to combat Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crimes**

25. The meeting agreed with the recommendation of the Second High Level Experts Group Meeting on Combating Drugs, Terrorism and Organized Crime (Tehran, 1-2 November, 2010), and approved the revised Joint Regional Strategy to combat Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-National Organized Crimes (*Annex VI*). The meeting requested those Member States who have not yet been able to hold meetings enshrined in the revised Joint Regional Strategy, to do so at the earliest.

ii) **Border Police Cooperation**

26. The meeting agreed that the security problems, growth of drug production and psychotropic medicines, human smuggling and increasing illegal immigration in the region necessitate holding regular meetings of joint border commissions. The meeting urged the Member States to introduce focal points for exchange of information and communication to facilitate identifying criminals. Through the focal points, Member States should develop cooperation to exchange border points used by smugglers of humans, arms and goods. It should also cover exchange of information and experience regarding prevention of drug-related crimes and border control.

27. Member States were encouraged to make the maximum use of the existing institutions in the region for exchange of information regarding drugs, terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crimes. The meeting noted with appreciation of holding of 1st Meeting of Border Commanders of the ECO Member States in Tehran and encouraged initiatives such as bilateral/trilateral cooperation among the Member States regarding border control, in particular, between neighbouring States.

iii) **Police Cooperation and considering the establishment of ECOPOL**

28. The Meeting agreed to establish Economic Cooperation Organization 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. The meeting welcomed the proposal of the Turkish Interior Minister to visit Iran and Pakistan to discuss the matter related to the Headquarters of ECOPOL. However, in order to realize its establishment, it was also agreed to hold an Experts Group Meeting in order to elaborate the structural issues such as ECOPOL personnel and budget. The ECO Secretariat was requested to exert efforts to formulate methods and modalities in this context. It was agreed that the institutional mechanism like ECOPOL would surely serve as a source for police cooperation with the assistance of not only the liaison officers posted at its headquarters but also through the data bank on drugs, terrorism, organized crime, human-trafficking and money-laundering.

iv) **Exchange of information:**

a) **Establishment of a Data- bank on drugs, terrorism, organized crime, human-trafficking and money-laundering**

29. The meeting agreed in principle establishment of the Data-Bank on drugs, terrorism, organized crime, human-trafficking and money-laundering, subject to the finalization of its mechanism and functional methodology. It was recommended that these details should be considered by the same Experts Group Meeting, established for consideration of ECOPOL.

b) **Nomination of focal points by the Member States on Drugs, Terrorism and Trans-national Organized Crimes**

30. The meeting took note of nomination of focal points each on (i) Drugs, (ii) Terrorism, (iii) Transnational Organized Crimes (TOC), (iv) Human Trafficking by the Member States which includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan. The concerned authorities of Afghanistan were requested to expedite sending nomination of focal points on all the above-mentioned issues as they had nominated focal point on terrorism and trans-national organized crimes only. Member States who have not yet nominated their respective focal points were requested to expedite sending this information to the Secretariat at the earliest.

c) **Nomination of an ECO National Coordinator in the Ministry of Interior/Narcotics for exchange of information between the ECO Secretariat and the Member States.**

31. The meeting appreciated nomination of National Coordinators from Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey. Other Member States were requested to send these informations to the Secretariat as soon as possible so that the 1st Meeting of National Coordinators of ECO Member States could be convened. The concerned authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran were requested to consider holding of this meeting in 2011.

d) **Cooperation between the Drug Liaison Officers of the Member States with the ECO-DOCCU**

32. The meeting appreciated the activities of the Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit of the Secretariat for accelerating its efforts in bringing together the Member States for cooperation on drugs, terrorism and organized crime coordination. Member States were requested to instruct their respective Drug Liaison Officers to cooperate actively in the future activities of the DOCCU. Referring to the postponement of 1st Meeting of Drug Liaison Officers of the Member States, the meeting was informed that this meeting is now being scheduled to be held in February 2011. The participants assured their participation in the DLO meeting.

Agenda Item No.14

Implementation of the EU-funded project titled “Fight Against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan with the ECO Member States:

33. Mr. Hossein Pourkarami, Officer In-charge of the ECO Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit highlighted about the main features of the EU-funded project titled “Fight Against Trafficking from/to Afghanistan with the ECO Member States”. He informed the meeting that the Secretariat signed an MOU with the European Commission on 3rd February, 2009 to implement this project. While explaining four components of the projects, he informed the meeting that under this project, the EC is contributing 9.5 Million Euros to strengthen the stability of the region and the security and health of people living in the countries along the heroin routes by supporting trans-regional cooperation in the fight against trafficking from/to Afghanistan. In the long run this project would enable ECO-DOCCU to fulfill the role of a regional coordination facilitator and technical cooperation platform and forum. He noted that the first component is regarding increasing the political and technical Capacity of Drug and Organized Crime Coordination Unit (DOCCU) and the second component is related to increasing the capacities of NCBS of the ECO Member States. The third one is about the Container Control and the fourth component is about the Forensic laboratories of Member States.

34. The meeting took note of the efforts of the ECO-DOCCU for implementing this important project and hoped that this project would be beneficial for the ECO Member States. The meeting requested the concerned authorities of the Member States to extend fullest support in implementation of this project

a) Expectations of the Member States from the project

35. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan requested the meeting to delete the name of Afghanistan from the title of this project as trafficking is a regional and global problem. The Secretariat, was, therefore, requested to approach the European Commission to rename the project, if possible.

b) Beneficiary countries during the 2nd phase of the project

36. While appreciating the European Union for funding this important project for the benefit of the ECO region, requested that there should be prior consultation with the beneficiary countries while preparing project proposal in line with their respective interests.

Agenda Item No. 15

Adoption of the Istanbul Declaration

37. The meeting unanimously adopted the Istanbul Declaration as recommended by the Senior Officials’ Meeting. The declaration illustrates the main issues and agreements reached during the meeting. The text of the Declaration is placed at *Annex – VII*.

Agenda Item No.16

Any other business

38. No issue was discussed under this agenda item.

Agenda Items No. 17

Date and venue of the next Meeting

39. The meeting welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the Fourth ECO Interior Ministers' Meeting. The Secretariat, in consultation with the concerned authorities, will decide the exact date and venue of the fourth Interior Ministers' meeting and inform to the Member States.

Agenda Item No. 18

Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

40. The meeting unanimously adopted its report.

Agenda Item No. 19

Closing of the meeting

41. The meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks by the participating delegations, expressing deep appreciation for the warm hospitality extended by the Government and Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Turkey and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting. They also expressed their warm appreciation to the Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Besir Atalay, the Interior Minister of Turkey, for guiding the deliberations to a successful conclusion.

42. The Minister also expressed thanks and appreciation to the ECO Secretary General and other members of the ECO Secretariat for preparation of the relevant documents and other valuable services to facilitate the work of the meeting.