

The Extraordinary CPR Meeting

Report

(*Tehran – Wednesday, 15 June 2005*)

No. CPR/Extra/2005/04

1. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held at the ECO Secretariat on 15th June 2005. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Mirzoev Ramazon Zaripovitch, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Permanent Representatives/Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 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 ECO Secretary General along with the relevant ECO Secretariat staff attended the meeting. (List of participants are attached as **Annex-I**).

Item No. 1

Adoption of the Agenda

2. The CPR adopted the following agenda for its Extraordinary Meeting:

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Adoption of the Draft Report of 99th CPR Meeting
3. Preparations for the 15th COM Meeting to be held in Astana on August 20, 2005:
 - a) Confirmation of Participation
 - b) Draft Agenda
 - c) Preparations
 - d) Any other business
4. Agenda Items which were included for the consideration/decision of the 1st Senior Officials Meeting (SOM):
 - a) Status of Implementation of ECOTA and TTFA
 - b) Fast Track Approach to the important regional projects including ECOTA
 - c) EPG's Recommendations
 - d) Draft ECO Vision 2015
 - e) Status of unpaid contribution to the budget of ECO Secretariat
 - f) Elaboration of New Mechanism of Staff Rotation at ECO Secretariat
 - g) Designation of Coordinating Countries for Important Projects
 - h) Observer/Dialogue Partnership Status
 - i) Consideration of the level of participation of the member states in the approved events of the Organization and realization of the events mentioned in the Calendar of Event.
5. Any other business
6. 100th CPR Meeting to be held in Qeshm Island on 25-26 June 2005

Item No. 2

Adoption of the Draft Report of 99th CPR Meeting

3. The CPR adopted the report of the 99th CPR meeting which was circulated among member states by the Secretariat vide its note No. SG/EPG-CPR/2005/0960 dated June 01, 2005. The Secretariat circulated the adopted report among member states vide its note No. SG/CPR/2005/1083 dated 16th June 2005.

Item No. 3

Preparations for the 15th COM Meeting to be held in Astana on August 20, 2005:

a) Confirmation of Participation

4. The CPR was informed that so far Islamic Republic of Pakistan has confirmed that their Foreign Minister will attend the 15th COM meeting to be held in Astana on August 20, 2005. During the meeting, Representatives of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan also confirmed that their countries will attend the aforesaid meeting. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed that the Islamic Republic of Iran will also participate in the meeting.

5. The CPR requested the other member states to confirm their participation in the 15th COM meeting along with the composition of delegations.

6. The CPR also requested the member states to also convey the names of their delegations for the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) which will be held on 18-19 August 2005, prior to the 15th COM meeting, along with flight schedule, enabling the host authorities to make necessary arrangements well in time.

b) Draft Agenda

7. The CPR appreciated the Non-Paper on the draft Agenda of the 15th COM Meeting which was prepared and circulated by the Secretariat vide its note No. SG/15th COM/2005/0983 dated June 02, 2005. Furthermore, the CPR requested the Secretariat to circulate the draft agenda of the aforesaid meeting at the earliest possible.

c) Preparations

- **Focal Point in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

8. The CPR requested the Republic of Kazakhstan to designate Focal Points both in Almaty and Astana in its Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that ECO Member States through their respective Missions in Kazakhstan may contact them for any assistance with regard to reservation of seats from Almaty to Astana and back or any other assistance to be required for logistics, hotel reservations, etc.

- **International/Regional Organizations**

9. The CPR approved the list of international/regional organizations proposed to be invited to the inaugural session of the 15th COM meeting. (*Annex-II*)

- **Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions**

10. No views/comments have been expressed on the Secretariat's proposal circulated vide Secretariat's note No. SG/15th COM/2005/0951 dated 30th May 2005. Therefore, the Managing Director of ECO-CEC will be invited to present Annual Report on the activities of ECO-CEC to the 15th COM Meeting to be held in Astana on 20th August 2005.

d) Any other business

11. The CPR did not discuss any issue under this agenda item. .

Item No. 4

Agenda Items which were included for the consideration/decision of the 1st Senior Officials Meeting (SOM):

a) Status of Implementation of ECOTA and TTFA

12. The CPR deliberated on the issue at length and requested the member states, who had signed the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), to expedite ratification of the agreement as soon as possible so that the agreement could be operationalized at the earliest and urged other non-signatory member states to look into the possibility of signing ECOTA so that all ECO member states could integrate into a real economic entity. As there will be a meeting of ECO Trade/Commerce Ministers in Istanbul on 5-7 July 2005, they may take this opportunity to sign the aforesaid agreement.

13. The CPR also requested the member states to ratify Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA), which had already been signed by nine member states, to ratify this agreement at the earliest so that it could be operationalized.

b) Fast Track Approach to the important regional projects including ECOTA

14. The CPR agreed to the need of fast-track approach to the important regional projects including ECOTA. The CPR requested the signatory member states of ECOTA to also sign optional Protocol on Fast-Track Approach at the earliest.

c) EPG's Recommendations

15. While appreciating the hard work done by the Working Group, the CPR endorsed the Report of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), reviewed and revised by the Working Group, with the exception of Section 'C', for submission to the 15th COM meeting for consideration/approval.

16. The CPR instructed the Working Group to review Section 'C' of EPG's Report, taking into account the fresh proposals/comments presented by the member states and the Secretariat with regard to the new proposed organizational chart, recruitment policy of the Secretariat and rotation of posts among the member states and submit its recommendations to the CPR in this regard. Furthermore, the CPR requested that the interested member states may submit their proposals/comments with regard to the above issue so that the meeting of the Working Group could be convened at the earliest.

d) Draft ECO Vision 2015

17. The CPR appreciated and commended the hard work done by the Working Group to prepare the revised draft ECO Vision 2015. During the deliberations on the issue, the Republic of Uzbekistan presented its comments/views with regard to some of the Sections of ECO Vision 2015 such as Trade & Investment and Transport & Communications. The CPR requested the Secretariat to circulate the Uzbek comments/views on the subject and requested the other member states who had shown reservations as indicated against a few paragraphs of the revised text which was circulated vide Secretariat's note No. PR/WG-EPG/2005/1070 dated 14th June 2005 to submit their views at the earliest and asked the Working Group to convene its meeting and finalize the text of revised draft ECO Vision 2015 so that it could be endorsed by the CPR for submission to the 15th COM meeting for adoption as Basic Reference Document instead of usual Communiqué. The CPR further observed that no more views/comments against the already agreed/finalized paragraphs could be entertained.

e) Status of unpaid contribution to the budget of ECO Secretariat

18. The CPR appreciated the member states who had paid their budget contributions of the current year as well as arrears of the previous years and requested the other member states to do so at the earliest as the ECO Secretariat only depends on the financial contributions of the member states for its functioning. The Secretary General informed the meeting that he has written letters to the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan in this regard.

f) Elaboration of New Mechanism of Staff Rotation at ECO Secretariat

19. As the issue was already covered under item 4(c) above, therefore, no discussion was held under this item.

g) Designation of Coordinating Countries for Important Projects

20. As the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan was still awaiting instructions from its capital with regard to the designation of coordinator for Passenger/Container Trains, therefore, the CPR did not take any decision in this regard and deferred the issue to its next meeting.

21. The CPR once again requested the member states to communicate their interest for the remaining two projects. The CPR also requested the Secretary General to take up the matter with the member states to persuade them to accept the responsibility of coordinating the following two projects:

1. Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA)
2. Feasibility Study on Interconnection of ECO Countries' Power Systems funded by the Islamic Development Bank

22. Furthermore, the CPR was informed that the Secretariat has already prepared and submitted to the respective countries the draft Plan of Action within the perspective of Terms of Reference elaborating the assignments of the designated coordinator countries with regard to the implementation of the following agreements/projects:

S. No.	Name of Project/Agreement	Designated Country
1.	Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for the Businessmen of ECO Member States.	Islamic Republic of Iran
2.	ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA)	Islamic Republic of Pakistan
3.	ECO Trade & Development Bank	Republic of Turkey

h) **Observer/Dialogue Partnership Status**

23. In the course of deliberations on the item, two points of view emerged. According to one, ECO was entering the implementation phase of important regional projects and it was an appropriate time to absorb technical and financial assistance of the organization's development partners in order to support this endeavour and inject new energy to regional cooperation by establishing institutionalized relationship with such partners. Seeking the instruction of the COM and preparation of the relevant regulations would be the first attempt in this regard.

24. The other view held that ECO should continue to focus on expanding its present cooperative relationship with other regional and international organizations and institutions. They believed that the issue was politically sensitive and divisive and, therefore, under the present circumstances it would not be beneficial for the organization to further deliberate on it.

25. In view of the divergent views among the member states, the CPR decided to defer the issue to its next meeting for further consultations among the concerned member states.

i) **Consideration of the level of participation of the member states in the approved events of the Organization and realization of the events mentioned in the Calendar of Event.**

26. The CPR was informed that in accordance with the decision of the 99th CPR meeting, the Islamic Republic of Iran submitted its proposals, in writing, on the aforesaid subject and the Secretariat circulated among member states the aforesaid Iranian proposals vide its note No. SG/CPR/2005/1040 dated 9th June 2005.

Item No. 5

Any other business

a. **3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce/Foreign Trade**

27. The Secretary General informed the CPR about the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce/Foreign Trade scheduled to be held in Istanbul, Republic of Turkey, on July 5-7, 2005 and requested the member states, through the CPR, to confirm their participation along with the composition of delegations and flight schedule, so that the host authorities can make necessary arrangements well in time.

b. ECO Calendar of Events

28. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the CPR that the Meeting of Board of Trustees of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) was proposed to be held some time in October 2005 in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which has already been included in the ECO Calendar of Events/Meetings for 2005. Prior to that meeting, the Preparatory Meeting of Experts will be held in August 2005 in Tehran which has not been included in the Calendar of Events/Meetings for 2005. He stated that the expenditures on air-tickets, boarding and lodging with regard to the aforesaid Experts' meeting will be borne by Iran. As this meeting had not been included in the ECO Calendar of Events/Meetings for 2005 which was approved by the 15th RPC Meeting, the CPR was requested to revise the ECO Calendar of Events/Meetings for 2005 by including the aforesaid event.

29. The CPR agreed that upon receipt of the written confirmation from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with regard to the aforesaid proposal, the Secretariat may include the aforesaid event in the ECO Calendar of Events/Meetings for 2005.

Item No. 6**a. 100th CPR Meeting to be held in Qeshm Island on 24-25 June 2005**

30. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran briefed the meeting about the arrangements being made with regard to the 100th Commemorative CPR meeting to be held in Qeshm Island on 24-25 June 2005. He requested the Permanent Representatives, who has not yet conveyed the names of two delegates (Ambassador/Cd'A + accompanying delegate), to communicate the information urgently so that the arrangements with regard to issuance of air tickets, hotel bookings, etc. could be made well in time.

b. 101st CPR Meeting

31. The CPR decided to hold its 101st Meeting on Tuesday, 12th July 2005, at 10:00 hours at the ECO Secretariat.

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