

## JUDICIAL COOPERATION AMONG THE ECO MEMBER STATES

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) prioritizes judicial and anti-corruption cooperation among its Member States, in line with its programmatic document ECO Vision 2025, where the goals and objectives of promoting regional stability, development and sustainable growth are reflected.

As the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the importance of constructive judicial cooperation among its ten Member States is gaining importance year by year.

The ECO region features diverse legal systems, presenting challenges and opportunities for economic integration and trade.

This edition highlights ECO Member States' efforts to enhance judicial cooperation and develop common frameworks to deal with contemporary security challenges such as transnational crimes like drug trafficking, money laundering, cybercrime and others.

Judicial interaction in the ECO area has several tracks: cooperation among the Offices of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General, Interior Ministries, anti-narcotics agencies and others.

Owing to the joint efforts among the law-enforcements agencies of the ECO Member States judicial cooperation has taken a certain shape and framework. For example, the Charter of the ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen (RCCACO) came into force and now a work is ongoing on the establishment of its future Secretariat. The Plan of Interaction among the Offices of the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Attorneys/ Prosecutors General, which was adopted in Dushanbe on 16 May 2024 is an important document that leads to an increase of technical interaction in the field of judicial cooperation.

The meetings of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States have greatly contributed to the advancement of the goals and objectives reflected in the ECO Vision 2025. Up till now the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States have met five times since 2012. The upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting scheduled in Tashkent on September 25-26, 2025 is anticipated to discuss the prosecution's role towards judicial reforms, legislative priorities for environmental protection and combating corruption.

The following is the narration of the most recent activities of the ECO Member States aimed at strengthening regional judicial cooperation within the region.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States (Baku, Azerbaijan - September 14-16, 2023)

The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States was held in Baku, Azerbaijan on September 14-16, 2023. The meeting was attended by the representatives from Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as ECO delegation headed by Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Jandos Asanov. The meeting aimed to enhance regional cooperation and address modern challenges in the region.



The Honourable President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, in his message read out by Prosecutor General of Azerbaijan Dr. Kamran Aliyev, highlighted the need for strengthened collaboration among ECO Member States to address cross-border crimes and cyber threats collectively.

#### Discussions:

The meeting discussed various agenda items, including:

- Follow-up decisions of the last three Attorneys/ Prosecutors General Meetings,
- Judicial and other aspects of fighting against transnational crime, and
- Potential for enhancing operational collaboration to fight against human trafficking, drug smuggling, cybercrime and its legal challenges.

The Heads of delegation shared their experiences and best practices in addressing these challenges. The meeting also discussed the importance of international cooperation and information sharing in combating transnational crimes.

#### Key Points:

Some key points from the meeting include:

- Azerbaijan's efforts to combat drug trafficking and organized crime,
- Iran's experience in fighting against drug trafficking and money laundering,
- Kazakhstan's legislative and organizational measures to combat drug crimes,

- Kyrgyzstan's application of digitalization in criminal proceedings,
- Tajikistan's challenges and threats of international terrorism in the context of the Central Asian region,
- Türkiye's follow-up decisions in the field of criminal justice,
- Turkmenistan's commitment to internationally recognized norms and requirements, and
- Uzbekistan's efforts to strengthen the potential of educational institutions of the Prosecutor's Office.



#### Key Proposals/Recommendations:

The meeting proposed the following key proposals/recommendations:

- Building and developing ties with relevant institutions to realize effective collaboration,
- Improving the professionalism of officers of law enforcement bodies,
- Fostering mutual ties at regional and international levels to counter illicit drug trafficking,
- Detecting and limiting the use of web apps used in illicit drug trafficking, and
- Increasing effectiveness in mutual legal assistance on extradition and criminal cases.



#### Outcomes:

The meeting resulted in the following outcomes:

- Tasking the ECO Secretariat to develop a document for better collaboration in the field of judicial cooperation. Accordingly, the ECO

Secretariat prepared a draft Plan of Interaction and circulated amongst the Member States. Subsequently, the document was endorsed/ approved by the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Attorneys/ Prosecutors General (Dushanbe - 16 May 2024),

- Adoption of the Baku Declaration, and
- Agreement to hold the next meeting of Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States in Tajikistan.

The meeting concluded with a call for enhanced collaboration and cooperation among ECO Member States to effectively address modern challenges and promote peace, stability and security in the region.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States

(Dushanbe, Tajikistan - May 16, 2024)



The 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on May 16, 2024. The meeting was attended by delegations from 9 ECO Member States, including Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as the ECO Secretariat. The meeting was also attended by the Attorney General of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a guest.

The meeting adopted the Plan of Interaction among the Attorneys/Prosecutors General Offices of the ECO Member States.

The meeting began with a courtesy call on the Honorable President of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, who emphasized the importance of peace and stability in the ECO region for achieving economic development and people's well-being.

#### Discussions:

The meeting discussed various agenda items, including:

- Countering extremism, terrorism and transnational organized crime,
- Protecting entrepreneurs' and investors' rights,
- Enhancing international cooperation and judicial collaboration, and
- Implementing previous decisions and addressing legal challenges.



The Heads of delegation presented their statements, sharing their country's experiences and best practices in addressing these challenges. The Prosecutor General of Tajikistan emphasized the importance of strengthened cooperation within the ECO region to combat extremism, terrorism and transnational organized crime. Other speakers highlighted the need for effective judicial collaboration, information sharing and harmonizing legislation among the ECO Member States.

Key Points/Highlights:

- Some key highlights from the meeting include:
- Tajikistan's economic progress and favorable investment climate,
  - Azerbaijan's proactive approach to combating terrorism and extremism,
  - Iran's emphasis on international cooperation and information sharing,
  - Kazakhstan's experience in protecting entrepreneurs' and investors' rights, and
  - Pakistan's efforts to combat extremism, terrorism and transnational crimes.

Outcomes:

- The meeting resulted in the following outcomes:
- Adoption of the Plan of Interaction among the Attorneys/Prosecutors General Offices of the ECO Member States,
  - Approval of the Dushanbe Declaration,
  - Consensus to hold the next meeting of Attorneys/Prosecutors General Offices of the ECO Member States.

The meeting wrapped up with a strong emphasis on strengthened regional cooperation to tackle emerging challenges and advance peace, stability and security within the ECO region.

President of Tajikistan meets Prosecutors General of ECO Member States  
(Dushanbe - May 16, 2024)



On May 16, 2024, President Emomali Rahmon welcomed the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) at the Palace of the Nation in Dushanbe. During the meeting, President Rahmon emphasized Tajikistan's strong commitment to ECO cooperation and stressed the importance of peace and stability in the region for economic development and improved living standards.

He underscored the economic potential within the ECO and the vital role of prosecuting bodies in ensuring the rule of law and protecting democratic values. Addressing the global challenges, President Rahmon called for continued close cooperation among ECO members, particularly to combat organized cross-border crimes. He expressed hope that the 5th Meeting of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States would result in the further widening of cooperation in fighting crime and ensuring security and stability, which would contribute to expanding economic relations among ECO states. The meeting was also attended by ECO Secretary General as well as the Attorney General of Saudi Arabia, who was invited as a guest



Cultural Programme during the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States  
(Dushanbe - 16 May 2024)

During the 5th Meeting of Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 16 May 2024, the visiting delegates had the opportunity to engage themselves in the country's vibrant cultural landscape.

The participants of the Dushanbe gathering have been deeply impressed by visiting the historic and centuries old Hisar Fortress, Hydropower Plant Narak, Valley Tagab and the newly built complexes, such as Palace of the Nation, Kakh-i Nowruz, Kakh-i Saman and other places in the capital city. The cultural program has demonstrated rich heritage and legacy of Tajikistan in architecture, handicrafts, art, music and cuisine, which has been accumulated from the ancient history.



Session titled Mobilizing Law Enforcement for Enhanced Climate Action within the COP29



The Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan jointly with the United Nations Office on drugs and Crime (UNODC) on 15 November 2024 organized a session "Mobilizing Law Enforcement for Enhanced Climate Action" as part of the 29th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29).

This high-level event emphasized on the critical role of law enforcement in tackling environmental crimes, including illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, and marine pollution. It also explored strategies for reducing the carbon footprint of law enforcement through renewable energy adoption, energy-efficient practices, digital technologies, and integrating climate considerations into operations and infrastructure.



The event pursued the goals of integration with the Baku to Belem initiative, advancing towards COP30 and fostering synergies to enhance the role of law enforcement in climate action and implementation throughout this critical decade.

During this event ECO Secretary General Dr. Asad M. Khan had a bilateral meeting with the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan Dr. Kamran Aliyev in Baku. ECO Secretary General congratulated Azerbaijan on the excellent organization of the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29). While noting with appreciation the timely initiative of Azerbaijan to mobilize law enforcement for enhanced climate action, on the margins of the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Baku, he underlined the critical role that the prosecutors general can play in addressing environmental crimes.

Anticipated Outcome for the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States  
(Tashkent, Uzbekistan - 25-26 September 2025)



The upcoming 6th Meeting of the Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States is scheduled to take place on 25-26 September in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

This meeting will provide a unique opportunity to discuss the following;

- Role and Significance of the Prosecution authorities in Judicial Reforms within the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization,
- Key Priorities for Legislative Enhancement Pertaining to the Prosecution authorities in the domains of ecology, environmental protection and forestry, and
- Prevention and combating corruption in the Member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization: exchange of the best practices.



The meeting is also anticipated to further discuss the implementation of the Plan of Interaction among the ECO Member States as well as to underscore the importance of judicial cooperation as a vital tool in the fight against transnational organized crime. By working together, the ECO Member States can enhance their legal frameworks, improve mutual assistance and ultimately foster a safer and more secure region.

