

EİT 27. BAKANLAR KONSEYİ TOPLANTISI HİTAP TASLAĞI
(10 Ekim 2023, Şuşa)

Honourable Chair,

Dear Colleagues, Mr. Secretary-General,

It is a **distinct pleasure** to get together with you in the 27th Ministerial Meeting of Economic Cooperation Organization.

At the outset, let me express **our heartfelt condolences** due to devastating earthquakes in Afghanistan.

As always, we will continue to **stand resolutely with** the Afghan brothers and sisters.

Upon instructions of **President Erdoğan**, we dispatched emergency medical staff as well as search and rescue personnel, together with urgent humanitarian **assistance**.

Dear friends,

I feel privileged to be here in Şuşa today.

Being able to hold this meeting **in ancient Şusa** is an immense source of happiness and pride.

We applaud our Azerbaijani brothers and sisters for indefinitely ending **three decades of occupation** and repairing a **historical injustice**.

Now it is time to focus all efforts on **lasting peace, stability and security** in the South Caucasus, which lies at the strategic core of the ECO geography.

Events unfolding in the world these days deem this pursuit more important than ever.

The incidents taking place in **Palestine and Israel** were indeed **unprecedented but not totally surprising**.

We condemn **attacks on civilians** and attach high importance to the **restoration of calm** in the region.

In our contacts with all parties, we underline the need to **avoid any further geographical escalation** that would spark aggravated insecurity and instability at a global scale.

What we are living through, is yet **another manifestation** that the two-state solution remains the **only way** for sustainable and just peace in Middle East.

Dear friends,

This is **an age of geopolitical shifts and tensions.**

The **geo-economical landscape** too, changes accordingly.

While globalization is drifting, regional dynamics and regional integration gained greater importance.

ECO serves this purpose.

It has proved itself as a successful platform for **regional cooperation, economic growth, stability, and prosperity.**

In this new period, collective efforts to **promote economic integration, facilitate trade, and enhance connectivity** would be instrumental.

What is equally crucial is to **reduce barriers, streamline customs procedures, and promote investments.**

In this vein, the **ECO Trade Agreement, ECOTA**, is a strategic instrument in our hands for enhancing **intra-regional trade.**

We must work collectively to ensure its **full implementation.**

Enhancing connectivity is pivotal for our region's growth.

Türkiye remains committed to infrastructure development, including the further development of the Middle Corridor as well as the **Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad railway** and the **ECO fiber-optic project.**

These initiatives aim to facilitate the **movement of goods and people**, unleashing the economic potential that lies within our borders.

Given the **new dynamics in South Caucasus**, we must also catch the momentum and make the **Zengezur Corridor** a reality for the benefit of all members of ECO.

Dear Friends,

We believe, there is **ample potential for cooperation under the ECO umbrella** in the areas of renewables and energy efficiency.

Today, I will sign the **Charter of ECO Clean Energy Center.**

Türkiye has made **significant achievements** in the last decades.

The energy we produce from **renewable sources** has reached **55%** of our installed power.

Türkiye announced our net-zero emissions target for **2053** and our **Green Development** reform.

Last but not least, Türkiye's **Zero Waste Project**, which became a UN policy, will undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

Dear brothers,

Our organization is **stronger with its observers**.

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, under the name “the Turkish Cypriot State” is among the three **Observers** of ECO.

It is, in fact, the **most active observer** in its contributions to our joint work.

We strongly believe that **observers** should be invited to **all ECO meetings and summits**, and be allowed to make statements.

In this vein, we are confident that the **Turkish Cypriot State** will be **invited** to the upcoming **ECO Summit in Tashkent**. (9 November)

Dear colleagues,

Today, let us recommit ourselves to the principles of solidarity and mutual support that underline **ECO's vision**.

Türkiye will continue to do its part to make ECO **attain its true role and share** in the world economy.

I extend my **gratitude** once again to Azerbaijan for hosting this historic meeting.

I also thank **Secretary General Noziri** and the **Secretariat staff** for a successful year of work.