

Message by

**H.E. Dr. Hossein Amirabdollahian
Honourable Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

On the occasion of "ECO Day 2023"

I would like to congratulate "the ECO Day 2023". This is an important day, a clear manifestation of our countries' persistent determination to have a robust, dynamic, meaningful and purposeful multilateral cooperation in the region and beyond.

We are commemorating the "ECO Day" at the time of deepest sorrow and grave concern about the loss of Palestinians in Gaza. The racist occupying Zionist regime has committed in the last two month all kind of crimes including genocide and crimes against humanity in Gaza. The Islamic Republic of Iran once again expresses its full support to and solidarity with brave Palestinians during these days of hardship.

ECO was established, and later expanded, based on the idea to create a strong and stable region through mutual respect and fortified economic ties. Having been successful so far, we need to do more to reach our desired goals and objectives by realizing the enormous untapped potential within the ECO Region.

In the past three decades, ECO has remained relevant and resolute to reach its new heights. Various activities, meetings and undertakings at

different public, private and stakeholder levels and in different fields in the ECO Region are vivid examples of such success.

There has been enhanced sense of ownership inside and increased visibility outside the ECO Region in the recent past. We are grateful to all Member States and the ECO Secretariat and Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri for such level of promising developments. The 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent was the latest manifestation of such achievements. I would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Republic of Uzbekistan for hosting the Summit. I would also like to thank Republic of Azerbaijan for its able ECO chairmanship during the year 2023.

The Islamic Republic of Iran will hold ECO chairmanship in 2024. We have designated “Enhanced and Resilient ECO region through Expansion of Intra-Regional Trade” as our chairmanship motto in 2024. Accordingly, we will be implementing some activities in coordination with other Member States and the Secretariat. Trade is our traditional chain of coherence in the region; therefore there is a need to focus more on such strengths with the aim of uplifting the ECO region, to a more stable, robust and resilient one.

As the upcoming ECO Chair, we welcome all ECO regional and international partners to assist this Organization fulfill its noble objectives.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is also the current chairman of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), an organization with 35 Asian Member States. We will utilize these two occasions (ECO and ACD chairmanships)

to further support and enhance multilateralism and spread its benefits and dividends.

I have instructed my colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to organize some events for Tehran diplomatic community aiming at increasing the awareness about these two important international intergovernmental organizations.

I conclude this message by assuring ECO Member States and the Secretariat of our full and unleashed support to the ECO and its activities.