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**ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

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# Executive Summary

1. Nearing fifth decade into existence, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) with its ten member states, landmass of eight million square kilometers and population around 550 million people, is one of the oldest and most recognized intergovernmental organizations in the region. ECO is a dynamic, vibrant and fast evolving organization. Limited to merely three members initially, the Organization expanded to ten in 1992 after the inclusion of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The 30th Anniversary of ECO Expansion was celebrated on December 11, 2022. Today, ECO comprises ten member states, three specialized agencies, three observers and numerous regional and affiliated bodies.
2. ECO has collaborative relations with numerous regional and international organizations to advance sustainable socio-economic development in the region. The United Nations and its specialized agencies, funds, and programs have been long-established partners of ECO. The latter enjoys observer status in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and participates regularly in its regular sessions in New York. The United Nations General Assembly adopted, without vote, biennale resolution entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization” during its 77th Session on August 25, 2023.
3. ECO has expanding relations with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Developing-8 Organization of Economic Cooperation (D-8), the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Asia Cooperation for Dialogue, etc…
4. The ECO Secretariat also liaises with regional and international organizations including the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) , and the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP),the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the European Union (EU) to promote sustainable development in the region.
5. ECO aims at upscaling its visibility internationally. The Organization of Turkic States granted observer status to ECO during the recently-summoned 10th OTS Summit in Astana, Kazakhstan. Besides, ECO has applied for observership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; the matter is under consideration amongst the SCO Member States. Similarly, ECO observership in the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is under process.
6. ECO has a time-honoured tradition of recognizing its invaluable human resources. ECO Awards are presented biennially to researchers, scholars, historian and academicians, and scientists to acknowledge their extraordinary contributions in five fields of excellence: science & technology, agriculture & environment, history, culture, literature & fine arts, education, and economics. ECO Awards 2023 were presented during the 16th ECO Summit on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent.
7. The ECO Secretariat regularly publishes ECO chronicles, which highlight key activities undertaken by the Organization in mandated fields of cooperation. The chronicle is issued biannually. So far 31 issues of chronicles have been published. The 31nd and last edition of the chronicle, highlighting activities between July-December, 2022, was issued on November, 2023. Besides, the Secretariat also publishes special edition of chronicles dedicated to Member States, important ECO days and events.

# Relations with United Nations System

1. ECO has observer status in the United Nations General Assembly and several agencies/entities/conventions of the UN namely the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Trade Organization (WTO).
2. ECO has been steadily growing its relations with the United Nations specialized agencies, funds, and programmes, including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Economic Commission on Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Children Fund and United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), etc…
3. ECO features in the UNGA regular sessions as an observer organization. Interaction with UN specialized agencies and several other regional and international organizations on the sidelines of the UNGA session provide ample opportunities to excel ECO’s visibility and deepen ties with those organizations. ECO Delegation to the 78th UNGA Session was led by the ECO Secretary General, Amb. Khusrav Noziri (September 18-23, 2023). The Secretary General held bilateral meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Cypriot State Mr. Tahsin Ertuğruloğlu, the Director of UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UN-OSSC) Ms. Dima Al-Khatib, and the Secretary General of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue H.E. Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana.
4. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Economic Cooperation Organization share history of 29 years of collaboration on exchanging knowledge, capacity-building and encouraging policy dialogue at sub-regional and regional level. The MoU between two organizations was signed in 1994 and renewed virtually during of the 25th ECO Summit in Ashgabat in 2021. Besides, UNESCAP has agreed to provide technical support to develop feasibility study on the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM). Apart from this, participation in each other’s activities is a common feature of ECO-UNSCAP relations. The ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri had a bilateral meeting with the UN Undersecretary General and the Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, H.E. Ms. Armida Salasiah Alisjahbana on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Samarkand on September 15, 2022.On December 7, 2022. At the invitation of UNESCAP, the ECO Secretariat attended ESCAP expert working group meeting on energy connectivity on December 7, 2022. On November 20, 2023, the ECO Secretariat received invitation for 80th Session of ESCAP, scheduled for April 22-26, 2023 in Bangkok.
5. ECO has partnership relations with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Clean Energy Centre in Baku is a joint ECO-UNIDO project. The latter is also partner and co-sponsor in ‘Feasibility Study on Setting and Implementing Energy Efficiency Targets in the ECO region’. In 2022, the ECO Secretariat approached UNIDO for implementation of the Fourth Phase of ECO-UNIDO Project. UNIDO has also suggested some seed money for this project.
6. ECO has close relations with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The ECO Secretariat attended the 65th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held on March 14-18, 2022. The Secretariat also attended virtually the Paris Pact Initiative's Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting on Cross-border Cooperation on October 5-6, 2022. The ECO Secretariat was also invited to the Senior Official Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting, jointly organized by the International Relations Office of the Drug Control Headquarter and the Environment and Sustainable Development Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the UNODC Country Office in Pakistan and the UNODC Country Office in Iran on June 13-14, 2023 in Tehran.
7. The MoU between the World Customs Organization and the Economic Cooperation Organization was signed on March 17, 2003 in Brussels. ECO intends to renew the MoU with the World Customs Organization (WCO). In the light of the decision of the Eighth Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA), held on November 13-14, 2017, the MoU was reviewed and Secretariat was tasked to take up the revision in MoU with WCO after legal examination. The WCO and ECO exchanged views on final draft MoU and the draft is under consideration of the WCO.
8. ECO has collaborative relations with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The ECO Regional Program for Food Security (ECO-RPFS) was prepared with the technical assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to ensure food security in the region. The draft Program for upgrading the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security was updated and finalized with the technical assistance of the FAO and approved at the Seventh ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture on July 6, 2022 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Another joint project with the FAO is support for the transformation of the ECO Regional Coordination Centre for Food security (ECO-RCCFS) from a programme-based organization into a self-sustainable institution, which has been funded by the Government of Türkiye under the FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programme (FTPP-II) on Food and Agriculture.
9. ECO has maintained strong linkages with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The MoU between ECO and UNCTAD was signed on November 4, 1999. ECO-UNCTAD Collaboration is taking place in Investment Policy Review of the ECO Member States. The ECO Secretariat initiated process of compiling the investment policies and approached UNCTAD; the latter has drafted and shared a project proposal which is under consideration for Investment Policies’ Review (IPRs). The project will be pursued once resources are allocated by UNCTAD and other development partners.

# Relations with Regional/International Organizations

1. ECO enjoys interactive relations with the Association of South East Asian Nations. The MoU between the ECO and ASEAN was signed on January 18, 2006. The 15th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, convened on the sidelines of the 78th United Nations General Assembly Session in New York on September 22, 2023, was held after a long hiatus of nine years. During the meeting, both Organizations finalized and adopted the Framework of Cooperation to implement the MoU. The ECO Secretariat also intends to propose to ASEAN Secretariat to convene Joint ECO-ASEAN Ambassadorial Meetings in Tehran and Jakarta.
2. The MoU between the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was signed in 2008. In order to implement the MoU, a draft Joint Plan of Action was prepared by the ECO Secretariat and is under consideration amongst SCO Member States. Besides, participation in each other’s events is a notable feature ECO-SCO relation. The ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri attended the 21st Jubilee Summit of the Council of Heads of State/Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) held on September 17, 2021 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The ECO Secretary General also met his SCO counterpart H.E. Mr. Zhang Ming on the sidelines of the Second Dushanbe Water Conference, held on June 7, 2022. At the invitation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the ECO Secretary General attended the 22nd SCO Summit in Samarkand on September 15-16, 2022. Apart from this, the ECO Secretary General attended Shanghai Cooperation Organization Council of Heads of Government Meeting, held under the Chairmanship of the People’s Republic of China in video conference format on November 1, 2022. The SCO Secretary General H.E. Mr. Zhang Ming visited the ECO Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization on March 7, 2023.
3. ECO also enjoys good relations with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building measures in Asia (CICA). The ECO Secretary General attended the Sixth Meeting of CICA Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Sixth CICA Summit held on October 11-12, 2021 and October 12-13, 2022, respectively, in Astana, Kazakhstan. CICA also participates in the high-level events organized under ECO framework; the Secretary General of CICA attended the 26th and the 27th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers, held in Tashkent and Shusha, respectively.
4. ECO intends to further its ties with the Developing-8 Organization of Economic Cooperation (D-8). The MoU between the two Organizations was signed 12 years ago. The Secretary General D-8 Economic Cooperation Organization also paid an official visit to the ECO Secretariat on June 17, 2022. At the invitation of the D-8 Technology Transfer and Exchange Network, Pardis Technology Park, the ECO delegation participated in the Fifth Mostafa Prize Award on October 2, 2023 in Isfahan, Iran. Moreover, the ECO Secretariat also participated in the Panel Discussion on “Technology Transfer and Role of Regional/International Organization, held in Pardis Technology Park on October 4, 2023.
5. At the invitation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the former Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), H.E. Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour participated in the 2nd OIC Summit on Science and Technology, held virtually on June 16, 2021. The OIC Secretary General underlined the importance that the OIC attached to the ECO as a brotherly organization and expressed his desire for further close cooperation between the two organizations for benefit of the common Member States. At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in the 17th Extraordinary Session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM), held on December 19, 2021 in Islamabad.
6. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is an important regional organization. On October 22, 2022, the Secretary General Economic Cooperation Organisation, H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri, participated in the International Conference on “Iran & IORA: Prospects and Opportunities”, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran. The ECO Secretary General highlighted commonalities between IORA and ECO especially in the fields on Trade & Investment, Disaster Management, and Tourism and opined that with the assistance from Iran which is member to both Organizations, the ECO and the IORA could come into collaborative partnership with each other via signing a Memorandum of Understanding. On October 24, 2022, H.E. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) was received by H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General of Economic Cooperation Organization at the ECO Secretariat. During the meeting, it was agreed that the focal persons would start working on exploring options for cooperation in areas of mutual interest and put efforts for institutionalization of relations between the two Organizations.
7. On the sidelines of the Second Dushanbe International Water Conference, held on June 7, 2022, the ECO Secretary General met the Secretary General of the Asia Cooperation for Dialogue (ACD) Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana. Many ECO Member States are also members of the ACD. On August 25, 2023, Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana visited the ECO Secretariat and held a bilateral meeting with his ECO counterpart. The meeting concluded with agreement on exploring opportunities to establish cooperation between the two Organizations and institutionalizing ties by inking Memorandum of Understanding. The ECO Secretary General also met his ACD counterpart on the sidelines of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 22, 2023.
8. Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) is an important organization in the region. At present, ECO has not institutionalized ties with BSEC. On May 30, 2022, the Secretary General of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), H.E. Mr. Lazar Comansecu, visited the ECO Secretariat. The Secretary General of the BSEC expressed keen interest in the activities and projects of ECO in different sectors and expressed willingness to establish formal cooperation between the BSEC and the ECO. Following the in-depth exchange of views, both sides agreed to initiate the process for developing cooperative relations for future cooperation in the areas of mutual interest for the realization of common goals and objectives. On April 18, 2023, the Ambassador of Romania to the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mrs. Mirela-Carmen Grecu visited the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization. She expressed desire to foster institutionalized ties between the two Organizations. The two sides also discussed potential areas of cooperation and commonalities between the two Organizations. Ambassador Noziri proposed preparing a Memorandum of Understanding to be a basis of cooperation between the two Organizations. Afterwards, the Secretariat prepared draft MoU and shared with the BSEC Secretariat; the MoU is under consideration amongst BSEC Member States.
9. Non-Aligned Movement is one the oldest and recognized platforms in the developing world. In the early 21st century the Non-Aligned Movement counted 120 member states. It accounts for 60% of the United Nations overall membership. Observer status in the NAM has been granted to 18 states and 10 organizations. ECO regularly features in the high-level events organized under NAM framework. The ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri participated in the Summit-level Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Contact Group on Post-Pandemic Global Recovery, held on March 2, 2023 in Baku. The ECO Deputy Secretary General Mr. Kashif Zaman participated in the Non-Aligned Movement Conference on ‘Advancing Rights and Empowerment of Women’ on November 21, 2023 in Baku.
10. ECO and the International Renewable Agency (IRENA) have been collaborating since 2014. Nine ECO Member States are also members of IRENA. In 2022, ECO invited IRENA to consider partnering in the ECO Clean Energy Centre and supporting it in its preparatory and operational phases as well as for conducting study on establishment of Clean Energy Corridor in the region that could target the identification of potential coherence, synergies and complementarities among the CECECO Project, ECO-REM and the possible establishment of ‘Clean Energy Corridor’ in the region. Both sides also expressed willingness to design and implement joint on-demand and tailor-made bankable projects that could contribute towards energy transformation and supporting member countries in renewable energy financing and risk mitigation efforts. IRENA invited ECO to support the process of implementation of the ‘Regional Action Plan unlocking Renewable Energy Potential in Central Asia.
11. The Secretariat works closely with International Road Transport Union to establish ECO-TIR Associations Consultative Group (ECO-TIRACG). The ECO Secretariat jointly with the IsDB, UNECE and IRU implemented the project on promotion of e-TIR and e-CMR in the region. The Secretariat is working with the IRU to establish ECO-TIR Associations Consultative Group (ECO-TIRACG) to involve the private sector in the negotiations of the relevant meeting of the TTCC. ECO and the IRU are also working to further institutionalize bilateral relations and expand cooperation.
12. ECO has active partnership with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)/international financial institutions. The former approached the latter for financial assistance vis-à-vis Fourth Investment Conference in Islamabad. However, the Conference has been postponed and rescheduled for 2023. Currently, the ECO Secretariat is working with the UNECE and the IsDB for commencing ‘creation of a comprehensive GIS database and related maps, including the maps of ECO Region, for displaying regional and sub-regional transport networks and geo-mapping of infrastructure projects along these networks’. The IsDB allocated financial contribution to ECO for implementing the ECO Gate project. The latter is following up the necessary arrangements for the new joint ECO-UNECE-IsDB project on the “Application of Unified Railway Law in the Routes”. The ECO Secretariat jointly with the IsDB, UNECE and IRU implemented the project on promotion of e-TIR and e-CMR in the region and cooperating to further conducting joint projects for promoting digitalization of transit transport in the Region particularly through implementing e-CMR and e-TIR and any other digital technologies.

**ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions & Affiliated Bodies**

1. Article-X of the Treaty of Izmir envisages the establishment of the Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions in specific fields of cooperation. In order to deepen and expand the scope of cooperation amongst Member States, ECO has established a number of Regional Institutes, Affiliated bodies, and Specialized Agencies. These bodies work for social, economic and cultural cooperation. These units cooperate in areas such as science, education, culture, trade, banking, agriculture, environment, economic research, etc... Presently, the number of such bodies stands around 20. These bodies are located in Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. While most of these bodies have already been established and are functional, some are in the process of being established.
2. The Specialized Agencies of ECO include ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) Tehran, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) Islamabad, and ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) Ankara. As per the Treaty of Izmir, Specialized Agencies are classified as the organs of ECO that have been established by the decision of the Member States and have legal personality and autonomy in management to promote close cooperation among themselves in social, cultural, technical and scientific fields in coordination with the ECO Secretariat.
3. Regional Institutes include the ECO Consultancy & Engineering Company (ECO-CEC) Lahore, the ECO Research Center (ERC) Baku, the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) with its rotating headquarters currently in Tehran, the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ECO-TDB) Istanbul, and the ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM) Tehran. Regional Institutes, according to the Treaty of Izmir, are defined as the economic, commercial and financial organs of ECO having self-sustained budget, legal personality and autonomy in management and that have been established to promote economic growth of ECO region through provision of financial and commercial facilities and investment of funds within the region.
4. ECO Affiliated Bodies include the ECO College of Insurance Tehran, the Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Countries (PAECO), the ECO Seed Association (ECOSA), and the ECO Postal Staff College.

# ECO Specialized Agencies

**ECO Cultural Institute**

1. The ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) is one of the important specialized agencies of ECO. The ECI Charter was signed during the Third ECO Summit held at Islamabad on March 14-15, 1995. The ECI is headquartered in Tehran.
2. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Türkiye have signed and ratified the ECI Charter. The Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan have signed but not ratified the Charter. The Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan are not signatories of the Charter.
3. The aim behind establishment of the Institute was to bind peoples of the region together through cultural cooperation. The ECI hosts literary and cultural events, organize exhibitions, undertakes measures to promote regional cooperation through organizing major sports events, publishes materials in English and other major languages of the region on the common cultural heritage of its Member States to promote further understanding amongst people, stimulates the interest of the people of its members towards the existing cultural, educational and social problems of the region and disseminates information on the cultural events of the Region.
4. Dr. Saad S. Khan is the new president of the Institute. He assumed responsibilities on October, 2023. Dr Saad S. Khan is an officer of Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS).
5. The major challenge faced by the ECO Cultural institute is lack of comprehensive membership. The Institute will be more relevant, more diverse, and more functioning if patronized by all member states. The Cultural Institute also faces severe budgetary challenges. Resultantly, the Institute undertakes limited number of activities promoting cultural cooperation in the region.

**ECO Science Foundation**

1. The ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)is another Specialized Agency of ECO. The ECOSF Charter was signed in Islamabad in March 1995 by all ECO Member States. Additional protocol to the Charter was approved during the 17th Meeting of ECO Council of Ministers (COM), held in Herat in 2007. Subsequently the Foundation was established in Islamabad, Pakistan on December 20, 2011.
2. The Foundation plays an active role in engaging key stakeholders and partners to bring meaningful impact on economic development through scientific and technological cooperation amongst Member States. It serves as a platform to promote Science and Technology Policy & Research as well as the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education through the implementation of Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) pedagogy with an end goal to strengthen the science base for future generations. The ECOSF undertakes a number of programmes and initiatives to augment STI activities with the help of partners to boost regional cooperation, socio-economic potential and cultural integration through science education and literacy in the region in line with ECO Vision 2025 and the SDGs.
3. The key objectives of the ECOSF are development of human resource capacity in science, Technology and Innovation as well as science education, strengthening institutional capacity in scientific research and technological development, Scientific, Technological and Research collaboration and cooperation, exchanging/ disseminating of Information on Scientific and Technological Research and Development through workshops, conferences and meetings etc.
4. The ECOSF Host Country Agreement has finally been signed between Government of Pakistan and ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) on December 15, 2021. The ratification of the ECOSF Charter and its Additional Protocol have so far been undertaken by fine Member States; Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The non-ratifying Member States have been requested to ratify the ECOSF Charter and its Additional Protocol.
5. So far, only two ratifying Member States (Pakistan and Iran) have been contributing the mandatory share of budget of the Foundation. Pakistan has been contributing consistently and paid budget contribution for the years 2012-2017; however from 2018 onward, Pakistan is contributing around 75% of its mandatory contribution because of undervalued currency exchange rate. The Islamic Republic of Iran has paid for the year 2012 and partial for the years 2013, 2017 and 2018 as support to ECOSF events in Iran. However, Islamic Republic of Iran has not made any contribution since 2019. Other three ratifying members: the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have not made any budgetary contribution so far.
6. The ECOSF has been compelled to scale down its core activities and appointed less than 50% staff. The Foundation finds it extremely challenging to manage its day-to-day affairs including the payment of staff salaries including President ECOSF.

**ECO Educational Institute**

1. The ECO Educational Institute is one of the three Specialized Agencies of the Economic Cooperation Organization. It is headquartered in Ankara, Türkiye. It was established in 1998 in the wake of the decision Eighth Meeting of ECO Council of Ministers (COM), held in Almaty on May 9, 1998.
2. The ECOEI was founded to broaden cooperation among ECO countries in the field of education and training along the principles, aims and spirit of the Treaty of Izmir. The ECOEI promotes educational cooperation and strengthens academic and training activities amongst the member states.
3. Eight ECO Member States have ratified the ECI Charter. Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan have signed the Charter; Kazakhstan is yet to ratify the Charter.
4. The ECOEI acquired the legal status of a diplomatic mission in May 2022 when the procedures for the ratification of “The Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Türkiye and Economic Cooperation Organization Educational Institute (ECOEI) relating to the Rights, Privileges, and Immunities of the ECOEI” were completed.
5. Following the decision of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Educational Institute on August 5, 2023 in Istanbul, Prof. M. Akif Kireçci has been reappointed as the President of the Institute for the tenure of three years.
6. The ECOEI has so many accomplishments to its name. It has undertaken excellent initiatives in the field of education. The Institute has established strong footprints on digital platforms and designed professional equipment and items to augment its visibility. The Institute frequently liaises with its counterpart specialized agencies.
7. The ECOEI does not operate without confronting challenges. At first, there is much to be desired about general membership of the Institute. Secondly, the Institute does not receive full budgetary contribution from Member States, which greatly impedes the Institute to fulfill its responsibilities efficiently, effectively and smoothly. Administratively, some member states are yet to nominate Academic Council members and Focal Points.
8. The financial and technical support of Member States is vital for successful execution of planned operations by the ECOEI. It would be more efficient Institution if is supported by all Member States.

# ECO Regional Institutions

1. ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) is a multilateral development bank for the purpose of initiating, promoting and providing financial facilities to expand intra-regional trade as well as furthering economic development in the region. The Host Country Agreement of the ETDB was ratified by the Republic of Türkiye in July 2007 and the Bank started its operations in December 2008. The bank is headquartered in Istanbul and it has representative offices are in Karachi and Tehran. Pakistan, Iran, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyz Republic are six members of the ETDB. The unit of account of the ETDB is ECO Unit (EU), which is equivalent to one Special Drawing Right (SDR) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The authorized capital of the Bank is SDR 1,089,100 thousand. The ECO Secretary General attended the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of ECO Trade and Development Bank on June 23, 2023 in Republic of Türkiye, where he encouraged the ETDB to finance ECO projects aimed at developing regional infrastructure. He also underlined the efforts of the ECO with regard to expanding membership of the bank. On the sidelines of the meeting, the Secretary General had a bilateral meeting with ETDB’s President Mr. Yalçin Yüksel.
2. ECO Research Center (ERC) is to be headquartered in Baku. The Republic of Azerbaijan proposed establishment of the ECO Research Center (ECO-RC and this was reflected in the Baku Declaration of the 9th Summit of ECO held on May 5, 2006 in Baku. The Charter of the ECO Research Centre was put forward for signing at the 14th ECO Summit held virtually in March 2021. So far three countries have signed the Charter of the Economic Cooperation Organization Research Centre: Azerbaijan, Türkiye and Pakistan. The major goal of the Centre is to conduct economic research on proposals and make recommendations on sustainable socio-economic development.
3. ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECOCCI) was founded by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines, and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, in 1990, in order to promote commercial, industrial and economic cooperation among member states. It has all ten ECO Member States as its member countries. It aims at creating common policies, delivering suggestions and paying efforts to increase the contacts among relevant institutions of its member countries. It has rotating headquarters, which is currently based in Tehran. ECO delegation headed by Ambassador Khusrav Noziri attended the 29th Executive Committee and 19th General Assembly of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry on March 7, 2022 in virtual format.
4. ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM), headquartered in Tehran, harmonizes national standards of the Member States; it facilitates trades through harmonization of standards. It enhances quality and safety of products, environmental and consumer protection. The establishment of the ECO-RISCAM Institute was approved at the 3rd Meeting of ECO Industry Ministers in Lahore, Pakistan in 2008. RISCAM has four technical management boards: Standardization Technical Management Board (Turkey), Conformity Assessment Technical Management Board (Iran), Accreditation Technical Management Board (Turkey), and Metrology Technical Management Board (Pakistan). So far Iran, Turkey and Pakistan and Afghanistan have signed and ratified the Statute of ECO-RISCAM. On July 20, 2020, consultative meeting was held at the ECO Secretariat to discuss the ways and means for early operationalization of ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM). The First Joint Meeting by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey on activation of Technical Management Boards of ECO-RISCAM was virtually held on March 10, 2021. On November 11, 2021, the Representatives of RISCAM paid a courtesy call on the ECO Secretary General at the ECO Secretariat. The ways and means for early operationalization of ECO-RISCAM and other important issues were discussed during the meeting. The 9th High Level Expert Group (HLEG) Meeting of RISCAM was held virtually on November 21, 2023, jointly organized by Iran National Standards Organization (INSO) and the ECO Secretariat.

# ECO Affiliated Bodies

1. ECO College of Insurance was established in 1991 by reviving the former RCD International School of Insurance. The college is under the supervision of Ministry of Science, Research and Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The statute of the college was approved by the ECO Council of Ministers in 2007 in Herat. The main purpose of establishment of the College is to train expert human resources for insurance industry, provide enabling environmental research studies required in the insurance industry. The College is active in the two areas of Insurance Management and Regional Studies. Having 11 experienced and renowned faculty members, the College is currently offering relevant degree programmes in the Bachelors, Masters and PhD levels to interested students and researchers. The College is multi-cultural and students are annually admitted from as diverse countries as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Iran.
2. Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO Countries (PAECO) has its Secretariat permanently headquartered in Islamabad. The 2nd General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO) was hosted by the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan from June 1-2, 2021 under the theme “Promoting Parliamentary Partnership for Regional Integration”. The 3rd General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO) was hosted by the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku on May 16-18, 2022; the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri attended the conference.

# ECO Observers

1. Observership in ECO is open to regional and international organizations, states and institutions. Turkish Cypriot State (2012), Organization of Turkic States (2014), and International Energy Charter (2017) are three ECO Observers.
2. Turkish Cypriot State became observer of the Economic Cooperation Organization in 2012. On the sidelines 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the ECO Secretary General had a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of the Turkish Cypriot State. The honorable President of Turkish Cypriot State also held a bilateral meeting with the ECO Secretary General on the margins of the 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent. Turkish Cypriot State regularly features in the high-level events organized under ECO framework.
3. The Organization of Turkic States (OTS) became Observer in the Economic Cooperation Organization in 2014. Observership to ECO in the OTS was granted during the recently-summoned 10th OTS Summit in Astana on November 3, 2023.
4. The International Energy Charter became observer of the Economic Cooperation Organization in 2017. The ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) has been identified as an area for possible area of cooperation between the two organizations and is expected to be implemented through joint consortium. The International Energy Charter participated in the Fourth ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting, held virtually on June 24, 2021. The Meeting approved the Charter on Establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre and the roadmap for realization of ECO Regional Electricity Market Project.

# MoUs/Agreements between ECO and other Regional and International Organizations

1. In order to develop meaningful cooperative relations with regional and international organizations, ECO has signed more than 40 MoUs and agreements with the UN system as well as other organizations. The list of key MoUs/Agreement is given below:
2. MoU between ECO and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Istanbul, 7th July, 1993.
3. MoU between ECO and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Istanbul. 7th July, 1993.
4. MoU on Cooperation between ECO and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Tehran, 25th January, 1994.
5. Relationship Agreement between ECO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Tehran, 25th January, 1994.
6. MoU between ECO and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), New York, 30th September, 1994.
7. MoU between ECO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), New York, 4th October, 1994.
8. MoU between ECO and United Nations International Drug Control Program (UNDCP), Islamabad, 15th March, 1995.
9. MoU between ECO and United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Islamabad, 15th March, 1995.
10. MoU between ECO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) 8th December, 1997.
11. MoU between International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Aleppo, Syria, 8th June, 1999.
12. MoU between ECO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 23rd November, 1999.
13. MoU between ECO and the International Union of Railways (UIC), Tehran, 31st January, 2001.
14. MoU between ECO Secretariat and the International Trade Center UNCTAD/WTO, 8th March, 2001.
15. MoU between ECO and the Organization for Cooperation of Railways (OSJD), Warsaw, 17th March, 2001.
16. MoU between ECO and the World Custom Organization (WCO), Brussels, 17th March, 2003.
17. MoU between ECO and the Colombo Plan (1 Version), 13th May, 2003 (Joint Communiqué of 24th November, 2009, Tehran, .MoU between ECO and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 24th June, 2004.
18. MoU between ECO and UNEP, Tehran, 18th August, 2004.
19. MoU between ECO and WMO, Geneva, 10th December, 2004.
20. MoU between ECO Secretariat and the Secretariat of ASEAN, 18th January 2006.
21. MoU between ECO and the UN International Strategy for Disasters Relief (ISDR) Tehran, 9th May, 2007.
22. MoU between ECO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ashgabat, 11th December, 2007.
23. MoU between ECO and International Road Transport Union, Istanbul, 15th May, 2008.
24. MoU between ECO and the Conference of Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Almaty, 25th August, 2008.
25. MoU between ECO and the Universal Postal Union (UPU), Bern & Tehran, 20th November, 2008
26. Technical Assistance Agreement (Grant) between ECO and the Islamic Development Bank, 7th January, 2009.
27. MoU between ECO and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva, 27th January, 2009.
28. MoU between ECO and the and The European Commission (EC) on Implementation of EC-financed project under the Instrument For Stability on “Fight Against Illicit Drug Trafficking from/to Afghanistan” with ECO Member States, Tehran, 3rd February, 2009.
29. MoU among ECO, ESCAP and the Islamic Development Bank on Transport Development Bangkok & Tehran, 9th March, 2009.
30. MoU between ECO and Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), Istanbul, 9th June, 2009.
31. MoU between ECO and the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission (TRACECA)), Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan, 16th June, 2009.
32. MoU among Economic Cooperation Organization, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on Transport Development on 9 March 2009 (signed through an exchange of letters in March 2009, as per article XI (b) this MOU was renewed in 2012 and expired in March 2015 ).
33. Protocol between ECO and Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) on reconstruction, 5th August, 2010, at Tehran.
34. MoU between ECO and International Rail Transport Committee (CIT), 30 August, 2010.
35. MoU among Economic Cooperation Organization, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Concerning Transport Development in Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Region, 30 March 2011.
36. MoU between ECO and D8, 6 October 2011.
37. MoU between ECO and Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States signed on 23 September 2014.
38. Agreement between ECO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (contribution of ECO to provide support to the “Seed Sector Development in Countries of the ECO” (Project)) Signed through an exchange of letters in May 2015).
39. MoU between ECO and UNOSS, signed: September 2017.
40. MoU between ECO and SESRIC signed on 16 January 2018 at the ECO Secretariat.
41. MoU between ECO and WIPO concluded between the Parties on 22 January 2018.
42. MoU between ECO and TEPAV signed in Ankara on 12 February 2018.
43. MoU between ECO and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), 2021.

# Chronology of ECO International Relations (2023)

* ECO attend NAM Conference on Women (November 21, Baku)
* Delegation of Finland Visited ECO (November 19, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [TCS President Meets ECO Secretary General](https://eco.int/tcs-president-meets-eco-secretary-general/) (Nov 8, 2023, Tashkent)
* [ECO Participates in the World Hafez Week](https://eco.int/eco-participates-in-the-world-hafez-week/) (Oct 7-12, Shiraz)
* [President of the ECO Cultural Institute Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/president-of-the-eco-cultural-institute-visits-eco-secretariat/) (Oct 12, ECO Secretariat, Tehran)
* [ECO Participates in Panel Discussion “Technology Cooperation and Role of Regional Organizations”](https://eco.int/eco-participates-in-panel-discussion-technology-cooperation-and-role-of-regional-organizations/) (Oct 4, Pardis)
* [ECO Attends Mustafa (PBUH) Prize Ceremony](https://eco.int/eco-attends-mustafa-pbuh-prize-ceremony/) (Oct 2, Isfahan)
* [Farewell Ceremony for Outgoing President of ECI](https://eco.int/farewell-ceremony-for-outgoing-president-of-eci/) (Sep 27, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* ECO Secretary General Holds Bilateral Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Cypriot State (Sep 22, New York)
* ECO Secretary General Holds Bilateral Meeting with President of Mongolia H.E. Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh (Sep 22, New York)
* ECO Secretary General Holds Bilateral Meeting with Secretary General of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (Sep 22, New York)
* [The Fifteenth ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting](https://eco.int/eco-asean-ministerial-meeting/) (Sep 22, New York)
* [ECO Attends the 100th Anniversary Celebrations of the National Library of Azerbaijan](https://eco.int/eco-attends-the-100th-anniversary-celebrations-of-the-national-library-of-azerbaijan/) (Sep 22, Baku)
* [ECO Secretary General Meets with UN-OSSC Director](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-meets-with-the-director-of-un-ossc/) (Sep 21, New York)
* ECO Secretary General and UN High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries Meeting (Sept 19, New York)
* [ECO Delegation Attends 78th UNGA Session](https://eco.int/eco-delegation-attends-the-un-general-assembly-and-the-sdg-summit/) (Sep 19, New York)
* [Ibn e Sina Commemoration Event](https://eco.int/ibn-sina-commemoration-event/) (Aug 29, Tehran)
* [UN General Assembly Adopts Resolution on UN-ECO Cooperation](https://eco.int/un-general-assembly-adopts-resolution-on-un-eco-cooperation/) (Aug 25, New York)
* [Secretary General of Asian Cooperation Dialogue Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/secretary-general-of-asian-cooperation-dialogue-visits-eco-secretariat/) (Aug 25, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General Inaugurates Panel Discussion on “The Multilateralist Iran”](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-inaugurates-panel-discussion-on-the-multilateralist-iran/) (Aug 8, IPIS Tehran)
* [Secretary General Attends Fourth ECO Educational Institute Board of Trustees Meeting](https://eco.int/secretary-general-attends-fourth-eco-educational-institute-board-of-trustees-meeting/) (Aug 3, Istanbul)
* [ECO Secretary General Meets ECOEI President](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-meets-ecoei-president/) (Aug 3, Istanbul)
* [Bolivian Ambassador Visits ECO](https://eco.int/bolivian-ambassador-visits-eco/)(July 11, ECO Secretariat, Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General Holds Meeting with ETDB President](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-holds-meeting-with-etdb-president/) (June 22, Istanbul)
* [IOM Regional Director Visits ECO](https://eco.int/iom-regional-director-visits-eco/)(June 21, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [Serbian Ambassador Visits ECO](https://eco.int/serbian-ambassador-visits-eco/)(June 19, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [Pakistan Foreign Secretary Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/pakistan-foreign-secretary-visits-eco-secretariat/)(June 18, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [IFRC Delegation Visits ECO](https://eco.int/ifrc-delegation-visits-eco/) (May 14, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [IOM Chief of Mission Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/iom-chief-of-mission-visits-eco-secretariat/) (May 4, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General Participates in the Constitutional Referendum of Uzbekistan](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-participates-in-the-constitutional-referendum-of-uzbekistan/) (April 30, Tashkent)
* [Romanian Ambassador Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/romanian-ambassador-visits-eco-secretariat/) (April 18, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [Bulgarian Ambassador Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/bulgarian-ambassador-visits-eco-secretariat/) (April 5, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General and ECI President jointly Inaugurate a Nowruz Ceremony](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-and-eci-president-jointly-inaugurate-a-nowruz-ceremony/) (March 13, ECI Tehran)
* [SCO Secretary General Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/sco-secretary-general-visits-eco-secretariat/) (March 7, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [Tajik Diplomats Visit ECO](https://eco.int/tajik-diplomats-visit-eco/) (March 5, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General Participates in the NAM Meeting](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-participates-in-the-nam-meeting/) (March 2, Baku)
* [Khwarizmi International Award Ceremony](https://eco.int/khwarizmi-international-award-ceremony/) (Feb 27, Tehran)
* [Japanese Students Visit ECO](https://eco.int/japanese-students-visit-eco/) (Feb 28, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO Secretary General Attends Meeting of the ECO Science Foundation in Isfahan](https://eco.int/eco-secretary-general-attends-meeting-of-the-eco-science-foundation-in-isfahan/) (February 14, Isfahan)
* [Chinese Delegation Visits ECO Secretariat](https://eco.int/chinese-delegation-visits-eco-secretariat/) (Feb 1, ECO Secretariat Tehran)
* [ECO and OTS Secretaries General Meet in Tashkent](https://eco.int/eco-and-ots-secretaries-general-meet-in-tashkent/) (Jan 24, Tashkent)
* [ECO and CICA Secretaries General Meet](https://eco.int/eco-and-cica-secretaries-general-meet/) (Jan24, Tashkent)
* [ECO and D-8 Secretaries General Meet in Tashkent](https://eco.int/eco-and-d-8-secretaries-general-meet-in-tashkent/) (Jan 24, Tashkent)
* [SG Receives President of the ECO Educational Institute](https://eco.int/sg-receives-president-of-the-eco-educational-institute/) (Jan 17, ECO Secretariat Tehran)

# Follow-ups of Recommendations of 33rd RPC Meeting

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| **Recommendation** | **Action Taken** |
| a) **INTER-REGIONAL ECO ACTIVITIES**   1. **ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies** | |
| **ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)** | |
| The Council requested the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Republic of Uzbekistan to expedite ratification process with regard to the ECOSF Charter. | The Foundation approached the Ambassadors of Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Kyrgyzstan to follow up on the matter of ratification. The President of the Science Foundation also paid a visit to Türkiye and Azerbaijan and held the meetings with relevant ministries to pursue the matter of ratification. |
| The Council took serious note of the financial Problems faced by the ECOSF due to non- payment of the annual contributions by Member States and encouraged urgent payment of mandatory annual budgetary contributions to the foundation along with arrears. The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to devise mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of  arrears. | The Science Foundation is of the view that the mechanism for transfer of the funds is already exists. |
| The Council took note of the 5th Meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) of ECO Science Foundation on 14 February, 2023 in Esfahan, Iran. The Council also encouraged the Member  States to participate actively in the meeting. | The Fifth Meeting ECOSF BoT was hosted and successfully held in Isfahan, Iran on 14 Feb 2023. |
| **ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI)** | |
| The Council requested the non-signatory and non-ratifying ECO Member States to sign and  ratify the ECOEI Charter | President ECOEI invited Deputy Minister of Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan to become a full member during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the 4th ECOEI BoT on 5 August 2023 in Istanbul. No changes to the membership as of 2 November 2023. |
| The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye to accord legal status to the ECO Educational Institute by singing Host Country Agreement and requested the Republic of Türkiye and the ECO Educational Institute to expedite working on the use of the rights and privileges granted under the Host Country Agreement. | The process of searching for and allocating a separate building to the Institute is underway as per the commitments made by the Turkish Government. |
| The Council requested the Member States to pay annual budgetary contributions to the Institute in a regular and timely manner. | Islamic Republic of Iran deposited approximately two years of membership fees to the Institute’s bank account on 26 October 2023. |
| The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran on activating Olympiad Diplomacy through exchange programs among Member States to enhance their capacities on international Olympiad. The Islamic Republic of Iran can facilitate in coordination with the ECOEI based on its rich experience and hosting special workshops for the students of the  Member States. | The Islamic Republic of Iran’s proposal concerning Olympiad Diplomacy has been integrated into the ECOEI Work Program 2023-2026, which has been adopted by the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Educational Institute. |
| The Council requested the Member States to consider extending their project proposals for inclusion in the future **“ECOEI Work Program”** to be discussed at the next ECOEI Board of Trustees Meeting. The relevant information may be sent to the ECOEI including the objective/s of the activities, time, venue and participants, cost-sharing if any, and other necessary information. | Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Türkiye have sent formal proposals to be included in the ECOEI Work Program 2023-2026. All of the proposals sent by Member States have been discussed, adopted and included into the ECOEI Work Program at the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Educational Institute. |
| **(ii) ECO’s External Relations** | |
| The Council appreciated ECO Secretariat’s commitment to expand mutually beneficial relations with the United Nations System, International Organizations and non-ECO countries. | ECO Secretariat does it utmost to expand its sphere of relations with regional and international organization as well as non-ECO Member States. In 2023, the Japanese and Chinese delegations visited ECO Secretariat and were briefed on activities of ECO. Moreover, ECO delegation attended 78th Annual Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. On the sidelines of the Session, 15th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting as well as the 25th Informal Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers were held. Apart from, many Ambassadors of numerous countries in Tehran visited ECO Secretariat. |
| The Council expressed deep satisfaction over the efforts of the ECO Secretariat to deepen its ties with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and supported the ECO initiative for obtaining Observer Status in the SCO on reciprocal basis. | ECO Secretariat has formally expressed its desire to obtain observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The matter is pending with the SCO Secretariat. |
| The Council took note of the under-process draft Joint Action Plan for Implementation of MoU between the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation  Organization. | ECO Secretariat made amendments to the draft shared by the SCO counterpart. The matter is pending with the SCO Secretariat. |
| The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECO Secretariat to revive the forum of Joint  ASEAN-ECO Ministerial Meeting on the sidelines of UNGA Session in New York. | The 15th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held on the sidelines of the 78th Annual Session of the UNGA in New York. |
| The Council took note of the under-process Draft Framework of Cooperation between the  ASEAN and the ECO. | Framework of Cooperation was adopted during the 15th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held on the sidelines of the 78th Annual Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. |

# Recommendations

# Extending Observership in ECO

1. ECO Brainstorming Session at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers was held in 2022. It recommended enhancing visibility of ECO internationally. One way of gaining visibility is to seek observership in inter-governmental organizations on the basis of reciprocity, if possible. Observer status may be granted to regional and international organizations based on the following criteria:

1. Commitment to regional and international economic cooperation.
2. Commitment to promote socio-economic development in ECO region.
3. Commitment to respect Treaty of Izmir and other basic documents of ECO.
4. Harmony of principles.
5. Potential to contribute to the goals and objectives of ECO.

# Amending Modalities on ECO Awards

1. ECO has a strong and renowned tradition of recognizing its skilled and effective human resources, who contribute tremendously to the cause of the region. In this regard, ECO Awards are presented biennially to the academicians, scientists, and scholars from across the region.
2. ECO Awards are presented in five fields of excellence in line with the modalities which were framed in 1998. Given the fact that new fields of excellence have come to fore and member states have time and again wished modalities to be more lucid, it is time Modalities for ECO Awards reframed and made more relevant and clear to be apace with new trends. The Modalities must contain marking criteria to do justice with nominations, and be open to the individual nominations in addition to member countries.

# Proposed Calendar of Events 2024

**ECO Events**

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| **No.** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | 79th General Debate of the UN General Assembly | New York | September  2024 |
|  | 16th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting | New York | September  2024 |
|  | ECO Training Workshop/seminars for foreign services officers (officers dealing with external relations) from ECO Member States | Islamabad | 2024 |
|  | 7th Meeting of ECO Ministers of Culture |  | 2024 |
|  | 7th Meeting of ECO Heads of National Libraries |  | 2024 |
|  | 7th Meeting of Board of Trustees of ECO Cultural Institute |  | 2024 |
|  | Meeting of Heads of Broadcasting Organizations (Radio and Television) of ECO Member States |  | 2024 |
|  | Heart of Asia/ Istanbul Process |  | 2024 |
|  | Meeting of Heads of ECO Football Federations |  |  |
|  | 3rd High Level University Representatives Forum |  | 2024 |

**Non-ECO Events**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Event/Activity** | **Venue** | **Date** |
|  | UNOSSC Global South-South Development Expo | TBD | 2024 |
|  | 3rd Antalya Diplomacy Forum | Antalya | 2024 |
|  | International Conference on Neutrality | Ashgabat | 2024 |
|  | 23rd SCO Summit | Kazakhstan | 2024 |
|  | 11th OTS Summit |  |  |
|  | 7th CICA Summit |  |  |