



276th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

June 7, 2023
ECO Secretariat

Report

The 276th CPR Meeting, held on June 7, 2023, under the chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in hybrid mode, was attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, **Kyrgyz Republic**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, Republic of **Türkiye**, **Turkmenistan** and Republic of **Uzbekistan**. The ECO Secretary General and the relevant Staff of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as Annexure-I.

Agenda Item No.1

Adoption of the Agenda

1. The Secretariat proposed the following Draft Agenda for adoption:
 - Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 276th CPR Meeting
 - Adoption of the Draft Report of the 275th CPR Meeting
 - Adoption of the Draft Report of the 273rd CPR Meeting
 - Preparation for the 16th ECO Summit and 27th Meeting of the COM
 - ECO Awards 2023
 - Consideration of allocation from Feasibility and General Purpose Fund 10 000 USD to finance the project “Kazakhstan’s trade and economic potential in the markets of the ECO countries in the new geo-economic realities”
 - Administrative and budgetary matters:
 - Appointment of new Deputy Secretary General (Transport and Communications and Human Recourses and Sustainable Development)
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 - Any other business
 - Date of the next CPR Meeting

2. The Representative of Republic of **Azerbaijan** recalled that the 274th Meeting of CPR appointed Mr. Fuad Farzalibayov (**Azerbaijan National**) as Director for Energy, Mineral and Environment (EME). Referring to Azerbaijan’s current working condition in Tehran due to some extraordinary circumstances, he requested the Council for allowing Mr. Farzalibayov to work in hybrid mode until December 2023. Given the administrative nature of the matter, he sought Council’s consideration to discuss this proposal under Item 7 of the Agenda i.e. “Administrative & Budgetary Matters”.

3. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** disagreed with the proposal explaining that the appointment procedure has already been passed through in accordance with the ECO’s regulation and that other issues in this regard, not included in the Agenda, may be discussed under “Any Other Business” of the Agenda.

4. The **Council** agreed to discuss the proposal for hybrid mode of appointment of Director (EME) under “Any Other Business” of its Agenda.

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 275th CPR Meeting

5. The **Council** adopted the Draft Report of the 275th CPR Meeting held on May 3, 2023, circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/275th Meeting/2023/588 dated May 8, 2023.

Agenda Item No.3

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 273rd CPR Meeting

6. While recalling the previous discussion on the contents of Draft Report of 273rd CPR Meeting, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and the Representative of **Azerbaijan** updated the **Council** about their bilateral consultations in the matter, expecting some tangible recommendations to be made during next round of their consultations for consideration of the CPR.

7. Encouraging the relevant Member States to expedite the process of finalizing the said Report, in question, the **Council** deferred discussion on the issue till its next Session.

Agenda Item No.4

Preparation for the 16th ECO Summit and 27th Meeting of the COM

8. The PrepCom's **Chair** briefed the Council about the recommendations of PrepCom concerning the 27th COM and 16th Summit meetings as well as the events' outcome documents. Recalling Azerbaijan's proposal for holding COM meeting tentatively in the second half of October 2023, he mentioned that the Secretariat would soon share event's draft outcome document with the host country for review and subsequent circulation amongst the Member States. Regarding 34th RPC meeting, he said that the event is proposed to be organized in hybrid mode on September 11-13, 2023. Stating that the Informal COM in New York during UNGA will be held back to back with the 15th ECO-ASEAN joint ministerial meeting, he added expecting more clarity by next session of PrepCom about the preparations and organization of such meetings.

9. Regarding RPC meeting, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic of **Iran** proposed that the event may be convened in physical mode during December 2023 after COM and Summit meetings, providing appropriate time for preparations of the RPC. Expressing views on the COM and Summit meetings as well as reflecting on their outcome documents, he considered that in case of adoption of a Communiqué by COM in Baku, there would be no need for another Declaration by Summit in Tashkent within a very short period of time.

10. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** suggested that based on the recommendation of PrepCom and subject to no objection by any Member State, the 34th Meeting of RPC may be organized preferably in the 4th or else, in the 3rd week of September.

11. The Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** informed that matter regarding format of the Summit's outcome document was under consideration by their relevant authorities. Any development in this regard would be shared with the Council soon on receipt.

12. Appreciating the performance of PrepCom, the **Council** encouraged all Member States to be more actively participating in the proceedings of the PrepCom, enabling the forum to meet the assigned tasks well-in-time.

Agenda Item No.5

ECO Awards 2023

13. The **ECO Secretary General** briefed the Council about the status of nominations from Member States for ECO Awards and the formation of relevant Selection Committee. He mentioned that so far some of the nominations have been received from Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. He requested the Council to announce July 31, 2023 as final deadline for receiving complete lists of nominees for all specialized areas as well as composition of Selection Committee so that the names of most eligible candidates may be finalized for ECO Awards. Moreover, he requested all Member States to expedite their responses in this regard.

14. Agreeing with the proposal of the Secretary General, the **Council** extended the deadline till July 31, 2023 and stressed the Member States to ensure the provision of complete lists of their nominees for ECO Awards as well as for the composition of Selection Committee in this regard.

Agenda Item No.6

Consideration of allocation from Feasibility and General Purpose Fund 10 000 USD to finance the project "Kazakhstan's trade and economic potential in the markets of the ECO countries in the new geo-economic realities"

15. Referring to the decision of the 275th CPR Meeting wherein it was decided that the Secretariat would come up with revised project proposal for consideration of the Council, the Chair opened the floor for discussion.

16. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Tourism, PM, JPC and EAPA)** briefed the Council that the Project proposal was circulated among the Member States vide Note Verbale No: ERS/2022/1637. In this regard, he also referred to the recommendation of 33rd Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC) held on 16-19 January 2023 (paragraph 8, I-Sector, EC O Work Programme 2023). He requested the Council's consideration for approval of the proposal already welcomed by the RPC.

17. Reiterating his earlier position in the matter, the Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** recalled that an updated version of the proposal along with some additional information was previously requested. He noted that no updates and additional information in this regard were received. Moreover, he inquired about the applicability of feasibility fund to this end.

18. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** expressed his in principle concurrence with the proposed project. However, he noted that text of the proposal needs some minor amendments, which the Pakistan side would convey to the Secretariat soon.

19. Referring to the conclusion of 275th CPR Meeting and awaiting the updated version of the given project proposal, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** while expressing his in principle concurrence, proposed the Council to either agree with the proposal and see the update at the time of releasing the fund or defer the matter for discussion by next CPR.

20. The Representative of the Republic of **Kazakhstan** requested the Council's consideration for adoption of the proposal, adding that the amendments to be proposed by Pakistan side and any other technicalities could be discussed and considered at a later stage.

21. Finding no consensus, the Council deferred the matter and requested the Secretariat in collaboration with the Republic of Kazakhstan to come up with a revised proposal for consideration by next CPR. The Council also requested Pakistan side to expedite the communication of their amendments as proposed.

Agenda Item No.7

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Appointment of new Deputy Secretary General (Transport and Communications and Human Recourses and Sustainable Development)

22. The **Chair** informed the Council about the nomination of Mr. Kashif Zaman from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan against the vacant post of DSG which was circulated amongst the Member States through Secretariat's Note Verbale dated May 11, 2023.

23. The **Council** agreed for adoption of a two-week silence procedure to seek COM approval for appointment of Mr. Kashif Zaman (**Pakistan national**) against the post of Deputy Secretary General (Transport & Communications and Human Resource & Sustainable Development).

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

24. The Selection Panel met on June 7, 2023. The Meeting was coordinated by Amb. Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, ECO Deputy Secretary General (Admin, EME, IR & IT) and chaired (*virtually*) by Mr. Farid Valiyev from the Republic of **Azerbaijan**. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Türkiye** and Republic of **Uzbekistan**.

25. Noting the position of the Chair that **Azerbaijan** might need some time for internal consultations before agreeing to support the recommendation on appointment of Mr. Hojjat Moghavem (**Iranian National**) against the post of Legal Advisor

(**Category-II, P3**) to the CPR, the Selection Panel made the following recommendation(s) for consideration by the CPR:

Legal Advisor (Category-II, P3)

26. Mr. Hojjat Moghavam (**Iranian National**) may be appointed against the post of Legal Advisor (**Category-II, P3**) for a full term of four (04) years to be effective from the date of joining at the ECO Secretariat.

27. While noting the recommendation of the Selection Panel as well as position of the Republic of Azerbaijan in this regard, the **Council** deferred the matter for decision by next CPR.

Agenda Item No.8

Any other business

28. The Representative of Republic of **Azerbaijan** recalled that the 274th Meeting of CPR appointed Mr. Fuad Farzalibayov (**Azerbaijan National**) as Director for Energy, Mineral and Environment (EME). Referring their current working condition in Tehran due to some extraordinary circumstances, he requested the Council for allowing Mr. Farzalibayov to work in hybrid mode until December 2023. He explained that the current situation does not enable the physical presence of Mr. Farzalibayov and that the exceptionality of the situation should be taken into account once looking into the case.

29. The Permanent Representatives/Representatives of **Kyrgyz Republic**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, and Republic of **Uzbekistan** indicated that they do not see any harm or difficulty with authorizing hybrid mode of functioning of Director (EME).

30. Ambassador Bicakli, DSG. Admin. EME, IR and IT described the issue of allowing Mr. Farzalibayov to work in hybrid mode as providing wrong signals to other staff of the Secretariat indicating that he has started to receive similar requests from other staffs which is considered as counterproductive to the smooth functioning and predictability of the Secretariat adding that he thought it as necessary to bring this factual situation to the attention of the August Council.

31. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** disagreed with the proposal regarding hybrid mode of appointment of Director (EME), underscoring that as per clause 3 of Article IX of the Izmir Treaty, all members of staff of the ECO Secretariat are the full-time international civil servants. Accordingly, the Permanent Representative while looking into his case in the course of relevant Selection Panel, insisted that he may accordingly attend the Secretariat in due time, or else, the Secretary General may wish to continue the temporary assigning of another Director to be in charge. He also emphasized that the relevant interpreter (**Azerbaijan National**) who is the staff of the Secretariat, given the exhaustion of possible flexibilities as well as financial implications and other regulatory requirements needs to resume her job at the Secretariat promptly or undergo disciplinary measures.

32. Given the disagreement of Representative of Republic of **Azerbaijan** with the above, and lack of consensus, the **Council** tasked the ECO Secretary General to seek convenience of the Member States for making informal consultations in the matter on June 14, 2023 or another mutually convenient date.

Agenda Item No.9

Date of the next CPR Meeting

33. The Council decided to convene its next (277th) Meeting on July 4, 2023 in ECO Secretariat, Tehran.

Annexure-I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

The Republic of Azerbaijan:

- H.E. Mr. Ali Alizade, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Orkhan Zeynalov, Special Envoy, MFA
- Mr. Farid Valiyev, Head of Division, MFA
- Mr. Elchin Mirzayev, Attaché, MFA

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- H.E. Mr. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Behzad Azarsa, Senior Expert, Multilateral & International Economic Cooperation
- Mr. Musa Khosravi Moghadam, ECO Expert, Multilateral & International Economic Cooperation

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- Mr. Gamzat Khairov, Counsellor

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- H.E. Mr. Sydykov Turdakun, **Permanent Representative**

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Ahmad Shami, Counselor

The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr. Maruf Abdurahmonov, First Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye:

- Mr. Emirhan Yorulmazlar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Okan Ezrak, Third Secretary

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- H.E. Mr. Ahmet Gurbanov, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Kemal Atayev, Third Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

- Mr. Umid Babaev, Third Secretary

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General
- Amb. Mohsen Esperi, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr. Mahmoud Khoubkar, Legal Adviser
- Mr. Sukhrob Mirzoaliev, Head of CFU
- Mr. Muhammad Ahmed Raza, Senior Desk Officer
- Mr. Shahid Hussain, Desk Officer