

278th Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Report

July 31, 2023
ECO Secretariat

Report

Held in hybrid mode under the chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the 278th CPR Meeting 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. Proposed by ECO Secretariat, the Meeting's agenda was adopted by the Council as follows:

- Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 278th CPR Meeting
- Adoption of Draft Report of the 277th CPR Meeting
- Adoption of Draft Report of the 273rd CPR Meeting
- Preparation for the 16th ECO Summit and 27th Meeting of the COM
- ECO Awards 2023
- Consideration for allocation of US \$ 10,000 from Feasibility and General Purpose Fund 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:
 - Reallocation of funds between the Chapters of ECO Budget 2023 without any increase in the total size of budget
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
- Any other business
- Date of the next CPR Meeting

Agenda Item No.2

Adoption of Draft Report of the 277th CPR Meeting

2. The Draft Report of the 277th CPR Meeting held on July 4, 2023 was circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/CPR/277th Meeting/2023/952 dated July 6, 2023.

3. The Council considered and adopted the Report of its 277th Session.

Agenda Item No.3

Adoption of Draft Report of the 273rd CPR Meeting

4. Following discussions held during 277th Meeting of the CPR, the Council re-considered the matter for adoption of the draft report of its 273rd Session.
5. The Council adopted the Report of its 273rd Meeting along with the minor amendments proposed by Azerbaijani delegation during 277th Meeting of the CPR.

Agenda Item No.4

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

6. Referring to its previous proceedings with regard to the preparations of 16th Summit and 27th COM Meetings, the Council resumed discussions on the matter.
7. The PrepCom's **Chair** briefed the Council about the latest 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 on October 9, 2023, he mentioned the following:
 - i. The 5th PrepCom Session completed its first reading of the draft Shusha Declaration which was subsequently circulated amongst the Member States for their consideration;
 - ii. The 34th Meeting of Regional Planning Council (RPC) is proposed to be organized on December 18-21, 2023;
 - iii. The 25th Informal COM and 15th ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meetings will be held back-to-back in New York on the sidelines of UNGA; In this regard, the Azerbaijani authorities are in regular touch with their Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York for expediting the matter and ascertaining clarity with regard to the dates and venues of these events.
8. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** informed that his Country intends to participate in the 27th COM at the highest level, adding that, confirmation will be conveyed once received from the Office of the Honorable Foreign Minister. Regarding the upcoming Summit, he looked forward to more clarity finding some ambiguous expression about confirmation of the event's date. Moreover, he requested the Azerbaijani side to make an early decision and announcement with regard to the date (s) and venue (s) of the Informal COM and ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meetings, as well as the finalization of revised ECO-UN Resolution.
9. Re-confirming the already proposed dates for the Summit i.e. November 9-10, 2023, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** added that format of the event's outcome document was under consideration by their relevant authorities, expecting an early decision in this regard.

10. Referring his telephonic conversation with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan and noting the completion of quorum for the Summit, the **ECO Secretary General** said that the event would take place as scheduled. He requested the Member States to seek convenience and early confirmations of their Heads of States/Governments for participation in the Summit meeting at Tashkent on November 9-10, 2023.

11. The **Council** expressed satisfaction over the process being made for preparations of the next Summit and COM Meetings, encouraging the Member States to be more actively engaged in the ongoing preparatory process at the PrepCom Meeting. The Council also urged the Member States to expedite the confirmations of their participation in both important ECO events.

Agenda Item No.5 ECO Awards 2023

12. The **ECO Secretary General** briefed about the status of nominations from Member States for ECO Awards and the formation of Awards' Selection Committee, including the following:

- i. Deadline to receive nomination for ECO Awards and the Awards' Selection Committee has already passed on July 31, 2023;
- ii. Pakistan and Uzbekistan sides have yet to convey nominations of their relevant candidates;
- iii. So far, only Türkiye and Tajikistan sides have conveyed the nominations for Awards' Selection Committee;
- iv. Pakistan and Uzbekistan sides to expedite their nominations for ECO Awards and the Awards' Selection Committee; whereas, the other Member States to convey their nominations for Awards' Selection Committee.

13. Recalling his previously conveyed principle position, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** reiterated that the ECO Specialized Agencies should be engaged in the selection process for ECO Awards.

14. Supporting the Iranian side's proposal, the Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** stated that it would be quite hectic for CPR to scrutinize and ascertain merits of the candidates for ECO Awards in the absence of any Specialized Selection Committee.

15. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** requested to extend the date for conveying nominations, informing that selection of candidates to this end is under consideration by their relevant authorities in Pakistan.

16. Extending the nominations' date for ECO Awards and the Awards' Selection Committee as requested by Pakistani side, the **Council** urged the Member States to ensure that their nominations for ECO Awards and the Awards' Selection Committee are conveyed to the ECO Secretariat by or before 15 August 2023.

Agenda Item No.6

Consideration for allocation of US \$ 10,000 from Feasibility and General Purpose Fund to finance the project “Kazakhstan’s trade and economic potential in the markets of the ECO countries in the new geo-economic realities”

17. Resuming deliberations in the matter, the floor was opened for further consideration with regard to the project proposal submitted by the Republic of **Kazakhstan** to be sponsored from Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF). Looking into their previous positions, the **Council** looked forward to Pakistan and Türkiye sides ascertaining their latest views on the proposal.

18. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** said that the nature of amendments to be proposed by Pakistan side for incorporation in the proposal was minor bearing no technical aspects. He, therefore, concurred with the project proposal as submitted by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

19. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye**, who earlier sought some more details about the project, also concurred with the Kazakh side’s proposal. However, he stressed that such projects should be comprehensive, covering the entire region under their scope and application. Moreover, he desired a two-week silence procedure to ascertain further views/comments, if any, from the Member States.

20. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, though joined the consensus, expressed his dissatisfaction over the method adopted for submission of this project proposals. He, categorically, mentioned that such issues should first be brought to the attention of the Project Monitoring Group (PMG). He emphasized the need for resumption of PMG meetings and finally supported the views of Türkiye side for broadening the scope of any such project proposals.

21. The Council approved a two-week silence procedure to be initiated by ECO Secretariat for securing final concurrence of the Member States. In the absence of any contrary views or remarks during the two-week timeframe, the allocation US \$ 10,000 for the project proposal as requested by Kazakhstan may be considered as “**Agreed**” by CPR.

Agenda Item No.7

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Reallocation of funds between the Chapters of ECO budget 2023 without any increase in the total size of budget

22. Referring previous discussion and views of the Member States on reallocation of funds as proposed by ECO Secretariat, the matter was discussed by the Council again.

23. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye**, who had earlier sought some time to respond in the matter, concurred with the proposal provided that a two-week silence procedure should be adopted to seek further views/comments, if any, by Türkiye or any other Member State. Moreover, he emphasized that such issues should be discussed and deliberated on a separate forum.

24. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** proposed that the Council might make an ad-ref decision for reallocation of the request funds subject to no objections by any Member States within a two-week time.

25. Considering the views of the Member States and with a view to maintaining procedural consistency, the **Council** approved a two-week silence procedure for securing final concurrence of the Member States. In the absence of any contrary views or remarks during the two-week timeframe, the proposal of the ECO Secretariat for reallocation of US 28000/- (US Dollars Twenty-Eight Thousand) from the Chapter "*Salary and Allowances*" to the Chapter "*Consumable Items and Other Services*" may be considered as "**Agreed**" by CPR.

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

26. No issue was discussed under this sub-agenda item.

Agenda Item No.8
Any other business

27. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Administration, EME, IR & IT)** informed that the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye vide its Note Verbale No. Z-2023/99530379/36364073 dated July 23, 2023 concurred with the proposal of the ECO Secretariat for allowing Ms. Gulden Uzun to continue her services as Documentation Officer (Category-II, P2) until August 28, 2023.

28. The Council approved the extension of service in respect of the incumbent Documentation Officer, Ms. Gulden Uzun until August 28, 2023.

29. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Tourism, PM, JPC & EAPA)** informed that 4th Meeting of Attorneys/ Prosecutors General of ECO Member States would be held on September 15, 2023 in Baku, Azerbaijan. He added that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan informed about the wish of the delegation of the Russian Federation to be led by the country's Prosecutor General to attend the said meeting. In this connection, Secretariat has forwarded a Note Verbale to all Member States on July 26, 2023 with the request to consider the proposal.

30. The Council considered the briefings provided by the relevant DSGs and approved the participation of ECO Secretariat in the following two non-ECO events:

31. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD)** briefed the Council about the High-Level Euro-Asia Regional Review Meeting of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, to be held on August 22–23, 2023 at Bangkok, Thailand. He said that the subject event would provide the ECO with an opportunity to be part of the important regional and international initiatives, plans and activities for development of the transit and transport facilitation, particularly for its Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC). As regards the High Level Regional Review Meeting of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs on 22–23 August 2023 in Bangkok, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while fully supporting the relevance of participation of the Secretariat in the Meeting, stressed on encouraging active participation of all the ECO Member States in the Event and requested the Secretariat to organize a sideline consultative meeting of the Member States at the venue of the above Event in Bangkok to discuss regional initiatives, consult and coordinate policies and proposals to enhance the ECO role in the event and the ensuing process.

32. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** informed the Council that the Ministry of Agriculture of Uzbekistan, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), would be organizing an International Conference on Food Security in Samarkand on September 7–8, 2023. He explained that the aim of this event is to (i) study the current state of food security in the world and central Asian countries; (ii) discuss issues in the agri-food system that prevent the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and (iii) find way outs for solution of these issues. He further informed that it would also serve as a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and collaboration among policymakers, experts, academics and industry leaders. The event is highly significant as it will conclude with the adoption of the "Samarkand Declaration on Food Security". It was indicated that the host country will pay the accommodation and local hospitality expenses of ECO delegation on a 1 plus 1 basis.

33. The **ECO Secretary General** and the **Permanent Representatives/Representatives** of the Member States joined the Council for expressing their warm and sincere gratitude to H.E. Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi who was going to successfully complete his tenure as Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Iran and the Country's Permanent Representative to ECO. Acknowledging Ambassador Qureshi's valued contribution for supporting and promoting the ECO's mutually developed economic agenda, they mentioned that the outgoing Ambassador was bequeathing a rich legacy for the utmost facilitation of his successor. Moreover, they wished him all the best for his future career and personal life.

34. Ambassador Qureshi reciprocated the gestures kindly expressed by ECO Secretary General and the Permanent Representatives/Representatives. Recalling some notable events and achievements that the Organization held/made during his tenure, he stood satisfactorily glad while noting his services to the Organization and the People of the region. In addition, Ambassador Qureshi thanked all the delegations for their continued support, guidance and constructive approach that helped him meet his task and responsibilities in an effective and fruitful manner.

Agenda Item No.9

Date of the next CPR Meeting

35. The Council decided to hold next CPR (279th) on August 30, 2023 at 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. Rovshan Mirzayev, 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
- Ms. Shokoufeh Shadi, ECO Expert, Multilateral & International Economic Cooperation

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- Mr. Kuanish Agaidarov, First Secretary

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Mr. Nazim Beishekeev, Attaché

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:

- H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Hukmiddin Rahmonov, First Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye:

- Mr. Mehmet Zahit Uzun, Counselor
- Mr. Ertan Garip, Counselor

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- Mr. Kemal Atayev, Third Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

- H.E. Mr. Bakhodir Abdullaev, **Ambassador**

The ECO Secretariat:

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