

Closing Remarks
of H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri, ECO Secretary General
at Plenary Session of the 34th RPC Meeting
January 25, 2024, ECO Secretariat, Tehran

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Participants,

Before the conclusion of this 34th Session of Regional Planning Council, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Chair, as well as other Heads and Members of Delegations for their dedication and support to successfully discuss, finalize and endorse the annual guiding documents of our Organization - the ECO Work Program and Calendar of Events for 2024.

I am also thankful to all nine Sectoral Committees for effectively accomplishing the assigned tasks. Today, the adoption of that two important outcome documents is done due to their meticulous and professional contribution which is acknowledged with high appreciation.

I further thank and commend my Deputies, Directors, Heads of Sections, Program Officers, Interpreters, Desk Officers and other staff of the Secretariat for their valued and excellent services to efficiently conduct this road-mapping event.

Distinguished Delegates,

The emerging economic and political challenges brought about extensive hardship that impedes national, regional and global progress. Despite such hardships and external challenges, the Economic Cooperation Organization remains determined for fulfilling its mandate to foster regional economic cooperation in its priority areas for the common interest of the region.

During the 16th ECO Summit held in November last year in Tashkent, we were particularly energized by strong participation, ownership and support of our Heads of State and Government. I may confidently note that our leadership has validated ECO's role as a relevant and useful forum to discuss regional matters. They have also recommended some very important new initiatives for ECO to develop new projects and programs for tackling with the emerging challenges in the region.

As we prepare to develop and implement our projects and programs with a renewed and refreshed commitment, the valuable work produced by the RPC will guide our annual Work Program throughout 2024.

Further, I may recall that the basic strategy document of ECO, namely the Vision 2025 is approaching its target year. As such, this year we will need to evaluate and assess the Organization's achievements against the aims and objectives set in the Vision through final review process, and we also will be engaging in preparation of

a new strategy document which will set new objectives for the Organization beyond 2025.

Moreover, I may recall in this connection that, this year we will hold the First Meeting of the High-Level Committee on Reforms and Prospects of Cooperation in the region. This newly established High-Level Committee at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers is expected to mull over, *inter alia*, different reform prospects of the Organization, ascertaining appropriate recommendations thereon.

I would like to underline that both these exercises are critical for determining the future orientation and direction of ECO. That's why I kindly request strong engagement and active participation of our Member States for collectively mapping out the future of ECO, which should be more project-oriented and result-based, more efficient and vibrant, more internationally visible and reputable and more economically integrated and prosperous.

To maintain our momentum for securing our development targets the Organization requires deep ownership and support of the Member States. While highly appreciating your tireless efforts during these four days, I look forward to realization of all events and projects agreed by the Council and included in the 2024 Work Program and Calendar of Events, with full participation and constructive inputs of all concerned line Ministries and Agencies of our Member States.

I believe the remarkable outcomes of this 34th RPC Meeting would also greatly contribute to the success and effectiveness of the chairmanship of the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of proposed inspiring theme “*Enhanced and Resilient ECO Region through Expansion of Intra-Regional Trade*” and the main event of the year - next 28th ECO COM Meeting - the highest policy- and decision-making body of the Organization to be hosted and chaired by Iran in 2024.

Closing my remarks, I once again thank all the distinguished Heads of Delegations and other respectable delegates for their kind contributions to make this event a success.

Thank you with best of wishes.