

# **288<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

## **Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda**

June 5, 2024  
*ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

## Draft Agenda

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
2. Adoption of Draft Report of the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
3. Follow-up of the recommendations of the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review;
4. Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024;
5. Inclusion of Agriculture Section into Framework of Cooperation between ECO and ASEAN;
6. Establishment of a Working Group on Joint Trade Zones (JTZs) in the ECO region;
7. Participation at the International Tourism Symposium and Expo;
8. Extension of invitation to Afghanistan to participate at ECOTA Meeting;
9. Participation at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee;
10. Appointment of the new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD);
11. Administrative and budgetary matters:
  - Reallocation of ECO Budget of 2024;
  - Consideration of possibility Reallocation of funds in condition of being adequate cash at the end of the year between the Chapters of ECO budget 2024 without creation of increase in the total size of budget for Medical Reimbursement;
  - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
12. Any other business;
13. Date of the next CPR Meeting.

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## Annotated Draft Agenda

### **Agenda Item No. 1**

#### Adoption of the Agenda

1. The Secretariat proposes the following Draft Agenda for adoption:
  - Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
  - Adoption of Draft Report of the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
  - Follow-up of the recommendations of the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review;
  - Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024;
  - Inclusion of Agriculture Section into Framework of Cooperation between ECO and ASEAN;
  - Establishment of a Working Group on Joint Trade Zones (JTZs) in the ECO region;
  - Participation at the International Tourism Symposium and Expo;
  - Extension of invitation to Afghanistan to participate at ECOTA Meeting;
  - Participation at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee;
  - Appointment of the new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD);
  - Administrative and budgetary matters:
    - Reallocation of ECO Budget of 2024;
    - Consideration of possibility Reallocation of funds in condition of being adequate cash at the end of the year between the Chapters of ECO budget 2024 without creation of increase in the total size of budget for Medical Reimbursement;
    - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
  - Any other business;
  - Date of the next CPR Meeting.

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2. The Council may consider the above Draft Agenda for adoption.

### **Agenda Item No. 2**

#### Adoption of Draft Report of the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

3. The Draft Report of the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on May 6, 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran was circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/630 dated May 13, 2024.
4. The Council may consider the adoption of the Draft Report.

### **Agenda Item No. 3**

#### Follow-up of the recommendations of the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review

5. The First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review is scheduled to be held on May 27-28, 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran.
6. The Council may consider the recommendations of the said Meeting and take necessary decision.

### **Agenda Item No. 4**

#### Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024

7. Based on the decision of the 287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on May 6, 2024, the Secretariat vide its Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/589 dated May 6, 2024 has initiated a two-week silence procedure for obtaining approval of the COM with respect to the revised version of the ECO Work Programme 2024.
8. Since the Secretariat was provided with some amendments to the ECO Work Programme 2024 within the limit set for the procedure, from the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran, the silence procedure was considered broken. The Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/666 dated May 21, 2024 was circulated among the Member States in this regard.
9. The Council may consider the proposals of the Republic of Türkiye and take necessary decision.

### **Agenda Item No. 5**

#### Inclusion of Agriculture Section into Framework of Cooperation between ECO and ASEAN

10. The Framework of Cooperation between the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was an outcome of the 15<sup>th</sup> Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held on September 22, 2023 on the sidelines of the opening of the 78<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly in New York.
11. Later, upon proposal of the ECO Secretariat, it was jointly agreed by ECO and ASEAN Secretariats to include content of agriculture, which was previously missing in the Framework. The content on the section has been jointly agreed and finalized.
12. In order to make further headways in the matter, the Council's go ahead may please be sought to ascertain the approval of Council of Ministers including/adopting agriculture section as an annex to the Framework.

### **Agenda Item No. 6**

#### Establishment of a Working Group on Joint Trade Zones (JTZs) in the ECO region

13. Based on the decision of the 285<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR, the ECO team conducted a working visit to Sarakhs-Sarakhs and Incheh Borun-Altyn Asyr border checkpoints

between Turkmenistan and Iran on May 7-10, 2024. (*The NV No. 633 dated 14 May, 2024 with attachment of Summary Report of the working visit has been circulated among the MS*).

14. This Working Group will consist of representatives from the ministries of foreign affairs, commerce/trade, transportation agencies, customs quality control and quarantine departments and migration services of the ECO member countries. The Working Group will finalize the concept and ToRs for the feasibility study for establishment of Joint Trade Zones at the borders of interested ECO Member States.

15. The Working Group will work on developing two legal frameworks: (i) a model document (agreement) for establishing JTZs in the ECO region and (ii) an additional protocol to regulate trade, customs tariffs, visa issues and other relevant matters.

16. The Council may consider the mentioned proposal and take necessary decision.

### **Agenda Item No. 7**

#### Participation at the International Tourism Symposium and Expo

17. Through diplomatic channels, the ECO Secretariat received an invitation from Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) to participate in **International Tourism Symposium and Expo** with theme 'Building National Economy through Tourism' scheduled to be held in Islamabad, Pakistan, on May 27-28, 2024. On 14 May 2024, Tourism Directorate of the Secretariat received another e-mail message informing that the event was rescheduled to June 10-11, 2024 due to the administrative arrangements and unexpected circumstances.

18. The event program includes panel discussions on green investment in tourism, improvement of connectivity, conservation of cultural and natural heritages for tourism activities, perception of Pakistan as a tourism destinations, tourism innovation and education as well as presentations for tourism investment opportunities in Pakistan and B2B, B2G, G2G meetings. The event is expected to bring together tourism experts from the regional and international organizations such as the UN Tourism, the SCO and the World Bank and various ECO Member States to discuss the state of the tourism sector particularly for Pakistan.

19. The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation expressed their readiness to cover the costs of accommodation for three nights and internal transportation of one delegate from the ECO Secretariat during his stay in Pakistan.

20. Referring to the benefiting from the opportunities for assessment of the possibilities for the development of tourism cooperation among the Member States and to providing support for the activities of the Member States for the development of regional tourism, the Secretariat considers it appropriate to attend the event.

21. Since this event is not indicated in the ECO Calendar of Events for 2024, the Council is kindly requested to concur with the participation of the Secretariat's representative in this event.

### **Agenda Item No. 8**

#### Extension of invitation to Afghanistan to participate at ECOTA Meeting

22. The ECO Secretariat convened a Virtual technical session on May 7, 2024 to discuss Operationalization of ECOTA and convening the 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting of the ECOTA Signatory Member States.

23. During the technical discussions, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan offered to host the 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting in July 2024. However, the exact date and venue and hospitality details of the meeting will be communicated through diplomatic channel. In this regard, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran reminded that the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is a contracting party to the ECOTA, and requested clarification on whether they could be invited to the next ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting. Consequently, the Islamic Republic of Iran suggested the ECO Secretariat seek guidance from the ECOTA Parties in the CPR on the issue of participation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in ECOTA-related meetings.

24. Therefore, approval is solicited from the Council to discuss whether the ECO Secretariat may extend an invitation to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to ECOTA-related meetings, and in particular, the upcoming ECOTA Cooperation Council meeting in July, 2024.

### **Agenda Item No. 9**

#### Participation at the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee

25. The ECO Secretariat recently received the kind invitation from H.E. Mr. Ömer Bolat, the Minister of Trade of the Republic of Türkiye, addressed to H.E. Ambassador Mr. Khusrav Noziri, the Secretary General of the ECO Secretariat, for the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Trade Preferential System among the Member States of the OIC Trade Negotiations Committee, scheduled for June 11, 2024, in Istanbul, Türkiye. The invitation also includes an additional meeting for senior officials on the preceding day, June 10, 2024.

26. Regrettably, the Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Mr. Khusrav Noziri has a prior significant engagement on those dates.

27. The host organization has graciously indicated their willingness to accommodate relevant ECO staff delegated to attend these meetings. Specifically, the host will provide the necessary accommodation and hospitality for the delegates, including 2 nights of accommodation for the head of delegation, and 3 nights for the participant of Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), as detailed in the administrative notes of the event.

28. In light of this, approval is sought from the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR to consider participation of Mr. Zahid Hussain Abbasi, Director (Trade & Investment) to lead the delegation, accompanied by Mr. Mehmet Çetik, Program Officer (T&I) as participant of Senior Official Meeting, to attend this important event on preferential trade on June 10-11, 2024. The Secretariat will bear the cost of air travel and DSA for two participants only.

**Agenda Item No. 10**

Appointment of the new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD)

29. Based on the recommendation of the 287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on May 6, 2024 the Kyrgyz Republic and Turkmenistan after bilateral consultations may nominate a single candidate for the upcoming vacancy of Deputy Secretary-General (TC&HRSD).

30. The Council may consider the said proposal and take necessary decision.

**Agenda Item No. 11**

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Reallocation of ECO Budget of 2024

31. During 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on May 6, 2024, the Council authorized the Secretariat to reallocate the necessary chapters of the ECO Budget 2024 needed for implementation of the COM decision on approval of Iran's proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations, including the revised salary structure in respect of Iranian Category- III staff (Secretariat Note 509 of 22/4/2024). The Council also tasked the Secretariat to conduct consultations and coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country, if required, to ensure implementation of the COM's decision not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

- Consideration of possibility Reallocation of funds in condition of being adequate cash at the end of the year between the Chapters of ECO budget 2024 without creation of increase in the total size of budget for Medical Reimbursement

32. Article 9.2 of ECO Financial Regulations provide for the possibility of the transfer of funds between Chapters of the budget up to 10 percent by the Secretary General. As per this limit, the transferable amount should not exceed the 10 percent of the allocated budget under the chapter to which transfer is going take place.

33. Regarding the medical documents has submitted by Mr. Kashif Zaman (DSG) as his serious sickness which considered by the Secretariat in 2 parts (Rial and Dollar) totaled around USD 11,000.00 that is more than one third of the total allocated amount in related account in approved budget of 2024 for staff, the Secretariat request CPR for authorization of possible reallocation of some chapters with positive balance of the budget, for reimbursement of medical expenses of Dollar part which was happened in Pakistan and around USD 4500, depend on adequate cash at the end of the year.

34. It is noted that the amount of around USD 6500 has paid to him by the Secretariat for reimbursement of Rial part of the medical documents.

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

35. The recommendations of the Selection Panel, if any, would be submitted to the Council for making possible decisions.

**Agenda Item No.12**

Any other business

36. Under this Agenda Item, the Council may discuss any other relevant issues, if raised.

**Agenda Item No. 13**

Date of the next CPR Meeting

37. The Council may decide the date of its next (289<sup>th</sup>) Meeting in consultation with the Member States and the ECO Secretariat.

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No: CFU/2024/670

Priority: Urgent

Date: 23/5/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran and has the honour to enclose the **Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda of the 288<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR to be convened on June 5, 2024 (10:00 hours)** at the ECO Secretariat.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.



All ECO Member States - Tehran

# **287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

## **Draft Report**

May 6, 2024  
*ECO Secretariat*

## Draft Report

The 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting, held on May 6, 2024, was chaired by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and attended by the Permanent Representatives/Representatives of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, 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.

Before the initiation of the event's formal proceedings, a comprehensive discussion on migration issues unfolded, emphasizing the Organization's commitment to addressing this global challenge. The meeting featured a notable presentation by Ms. Lalini Mirasamy, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iran, shedding light on the complexities and strategies surrounding migration dynamics.

Ms. Mirasamy's presentation underscored the urgency of addressing migration challenges within the ECO region. Highlighting the joint efforts between ECO and IOM, she emphasized the upcoming workshop on trafficking in persons and human smuggling, slated for 2024. This collaborative endeavour aims to foster actionable solutions tailored to the region's unique migration landscape.

The Representatives from the Member States expressed appreciation for the informative presentation and emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation between ECO and IOM. They cited past successful collaborations and expressed optimism about future joint initiatives to address migration issues effectively.

The session concluded with a call for enhanced collaboration and a commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at mitigating the socioeconomic impacts of migration within the ECO region. As delegates gathered for a group photo with Ms. Mirasamy, the significance of international cooperation in addressing migration challenges was reaffirmed.

### **Agenda Item No. 1**

#### Adoption of the Agenda

1. Under this Item, the Council considered the proposed draft Agenda for adoption. The Chairman referred to Agenda Item No. 9, sub item "Amendments to the ECO Budget of 2024" and highlighted that the size of the Budget is not changed and the required adjustments are possible reallocations of chapters and not amendments to the Budget.

2. As suggested by the **Chair**, the **Council** adopted the following agenda of its 287<sup>th</sup> Meeting:

- Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
- Adoption of Draft Report of the 286<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;

- Preparation for the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review:
  - Report of the Second Meetings of the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee.
- Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024;
- Approval of the List of Events to be covered out of Special Support Fund (SSF);
- Participation of the Secretariat's delegation in the XII Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM);
- Appointment of the new ECO Secretary General;
- Appointment of the new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD);
- Administrative and budgetary matters:
  - Reallocation of the ECO Budget of 2024;
  - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
- Any other business;
- Date of the next CPR Meeting.

### **Agenda Item No. 2**

#### Adoption of Draft Report of the 286<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

3. The **Council** considered and adopted the Draft Report of the 286<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on April 8, 2024. However, the **Chair** made an observation regarding the conciseness of recent CPR reports, suggesting that CPR reports should provide a more detailed and comprehensive reflection of meeting proceedings, considering the significance of CPR as a frequent and vital decision-making body within the Organization.

### **Agenda Item No. 3**

#### Preparation for the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review:

- Report of the Second Meeting of the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee

4. Regarding the preparation for the upcoming meeting of the High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025, an update was provided to the Council on the recent activities of the Review Committee. This included the successful conduct of multiple meetings chaired by Mr. Behzad Azarza, Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, indicating progress aligned with the established timeline.

5. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan**, while referring to the proposal made by the Honourable President of Uzbekistan during the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit, suggested that the development of a new conceptual document should outline the Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation 2035. He added that this proposal was acknowledged as a significant initiative aimed at advancing cooperation within the ECO framework, encompassing key areas such as trade stimulation, infrastructure enhancement and environmental sustainability.

6. Subsequently, discussions revolved around the need for clarity and efficiency in making preparations for the upcoming High-Level Committee meeting. Specific emphasis was placed on aligning priorities and providing actionable projects for the remaining duration of the current ECO Vision. It was emphasized that the recommendations and progress reports from the Review Committee should be finalized

and presented to the Deputy Foreign Ministers for consideration, with the goal of informing future decision-making processes.

7. The **ECO Secretary General** conveyed that to enact the recommendations derived from the third meeting of the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee, all ECO directorial staff is tasked with providing their inputs according to a specified format. These inputs will then be disseminated among the Member States for review. Furthermore, to facilitate a thorough discussion of this format, which delineates the names of priority projects, during the forthcoming ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee session scheduled for May 8, 2024.

8. The **Chair** emphasized the significance of a proposal put forth by the Honourable President of Uzbekistan, noting that it warrants careful consideration. As we deliberate on this matter, it has become evident that we require relevant strategic documents to guide our actions beyond 2025. He further added that it is imperative that we finalize our review process before delving into the next steps, including the serious consideration of the proposal made by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. He assured that once the review process is complete, we need to develop the new vision document outlining strategies beyond 2025 and, in this regard, the Uzbekistan's initiative will be invaluable.

9. The **Chair** extended his gratitude to the ECO Secretary General, the Deputy Secretaries General and the Review Committee members for their diligent efforts saying that we anticipate positive outcomes from this process. Additionally, he acknowledged the active involvement of the ECO Secretariat and Committee members in identifying specific priorities for the remaining 18 months. He was of the view that this is very crucial as we must report our progress to our ministers in upcoming COM by December of this year. It is essential to ensure that by the end of 2025, significant projects are either implemented or back on track for implementation.

10. **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** stressed the need for clarity in response to recent developments in the preparatory process. According to him, achieving greater clarity is crucial to ensure more effective contributions to the forthcoming HLC meeting. He underscored the importance of insights from both the Chair and Member States to steer the discussions in the right direction. Specifically, he sought the Chair's discretion and guidance, considering the limited timeframe before the HLC meeting.

11. **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** further highlighted the significance of understanding the nature of the report intended for presentation to the HLC. He questioned whether there was already consensus on prioritizing one or two key areas from each Directorate, as stipulated by the Chair. These priorities, he noted, could be easily derived from the previous Vision, such as operationalizing or commercializing transport corridors and enhancing intra-regional trade. He raised the query of whether the HLC should receive the conclusions reached by the Directorates in their modified version or if further adjustments and updates to the implementation work plan were necessary. He proposed clarifying whether the report to the HLC should offer a comprehensive overview of the conclusions already drawn or merely an outline, leaving room for further discussion on the new Vision before 2025. He emphasized the need for clarity, noting that the matter had not yet been concluded.

12. The **Chair** responded to DSG's query by referring back to paragraph 7 of the last meeting report of the CPR. He noted that paragraph 7 emphasized the Council's directive for a concise review since 2021, which he believed had been accomplished. He commended the quality of the document and acknowledged its avoidance of repetition from earlier reports. Furthermore, he highlighted the CPR's mandate regarding actionable projects for the remaining 18 months of the current ECO Vision. He clarified that this mandate originated from the CPR, not from him as the Chair.

13. Regarding next steps, the **Chair** outlined the need for the Committee to strive for finalizing its recommendations before the Deputy Foreign Ministers' meeting. He stressed that if finalization was not possible, a progress report should suffice. He explained that the Deputy Foreign Ministers would provide guidance, but the ultimate decision rested with the Ministers. He reiterated the completion of a thorough stock-taking exercise and emphasized the need for actionable projects for the next 18 months. He emphasized the importance of clarity in informing authorities about progress since 2017.

14. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** confirmed their delegation's participation in the HLC meeting, indicating that the specific level and identity of the distinguished individual representing them would be announced in due course.

15. The **Chair** took the opportunity to announce that Ambassador Mahdi Safari, the Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy of **Iran**, would be in attendance from their side and would preside over the meeting.

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

##### Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024

16. The Secretariat, pursuant to the decision of the 286<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR on April 8, 2024, initiated a two-week silence procedure for COM approval of the revised ECO Work Programme 2024 via Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/447 dated April 8, 2024. However, amendments received from the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran within the prescribed timeframe led to the interruption of the silence procedure, as communicated in Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/463 dated April 15, 2024, circulated among Member States.

17. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye**, addressing the amendments in page 74 of the ECO Work Programme 2024, expressed Türkiye's intention to substitute the text while preserving the intended meaning of the sentence. They proposed replacing the second paragraph which originally stated, "Considering that to this day, the Charter of the Foundation and its Additional Protocol have only been ratified by five Member States, the delegation of Pakistan invited the non-ratifying Member States to ratify the Charter and its Additional Protocol so that the Foundation may function at the maximum possible level in the field of science, technology and innovation leading to economic development in the region."

18. The **ECO Secretary General** clarified that the proposed wording by the Republic of Türkiye were circulated among the Member States on 15 April 2024. He highlighted that the proposed changes were not intended to alter the entire paragraph but rather to substitute certain wordings. For instance, instead of "the Council requested non-ratifying Member States," the new proposal suggested "Delegation of Pakistan invited the non-ratifying Member States." This adjustment reflected the essence of the Republic of Türkiye's proposal.

19. The **ECO Secretary General** further noted a similar situation with the remaining two specialized agencies and one regional institute. In this regard he emphasized the importance of regional activity and highlighted the preference for Council's inviting/requesting non-ratified Member States to join the Cultural Institute (Tehran), the Science Foundation (Islamabad), the Educational Institute (Ankara) as well as the Trade and Development Fund (Istanbul).

20. The **Chair** proposed that to maintain "Council invited" rather than "Council requested" and recommended removing the names of the countries. Additionally, he suggested approving this change through a two-week silence procedure to secure the approval of the Council of Ministers (COM). He further explained that members could persuade their respective capitals, as the proposal aimed to streamline the process. Emphasizing that the decision to join or not join rested with each individual country, he reiterated that the invitation from the Council remained open. Consequently, the proposal was to remove the names of the five countries and substitute "requested" by "invited."

21. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** expressed gratitude to the Chairman and the Secretary General for their idea and proposal, Finally, he concluded by stating that if the Secretary General supported this approach, they would consider it as instruction.

22. Having no objection, the **Council** decided to approve the ECO Work Programme 2024 with necessary amendments in the text as proposed by the Chair, through a two-weeks silence procedure to secure the approval of COM.

#### **Agenda Item No. 5**

##### Approval of the List of Events to be covered out of Special Support Fund (SSF)

23. The ECO Secretariat circulated the 2024 List of Meetings/Events/Conferences eligible for financing from the Special Support Fund (SSF) to Member States through Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/451 dated April 8, 2024.

24. The Council approved the List of Events to be financed from the SSF as proposed by the Secretariat.

#### **Agenda Item No. 6**

##### Participation of the Secretariat's delegation in the XII Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM)

25. The **Chair** informed that Uzbekistan's Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change invited the ECO Secretary General to the XII Session of the Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) in Khiva from May 31 to June 2, 2024. Discussions will focus on tourism sectors among OIC Member States, with Uzbekistan covering accommodation and internal transportation expenses for the ECO Secretariat delegation. Given the event's significance, ECO's alignment with OIC and its location in an ECO Member State, the Secretariat deems that its participation is appropriate. As the event is not listed in the ECO Calendar of Events for 2024, the Council is asked to approve the Secretariat's delegation participation.

26. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** expressed appreciation for the invitation extended to the Secretary-General and affirmed support for his participation in the event. Despite budget limitations, which are common among organizations, they voiced no objections and welcomed the Secretary-General's involvement.

27. The Chair, representing the Islamic Republic of **Iran**, made an observation regarding the ECO's limited financial resources. He proposed that for the event in Khiva, the Secretary-General's delegation should be restricted in size. While acknowledging the host's generosity in covering 1+1 accommodation expenses, he suggested that Secretary General may attend the event without being accompanied by any staff member. This limitation aims to ensure efficient resource allocation and is particularly relevant for non-ECO events, he added.

28. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** expressed their support for covering expenses related to the event in Uzbekistan. He highlighted that Uzbekistan would cover all expenses within the country, including transportation costs. He noted that the airfare to Tashkent is relatively inexpensive, approximately \$300 round trip. Therefore, he suggested supporting one delegate plus one accompanying staff member, considering it a reasonable expense that would enhance cooperation with the Organization.

29. The **Chair** clarified that the discussion revolved around the delegation's composition rather than non-participation. He said that there are existing procedures in the Secretariat for travels. For example, travel of the Secretary-General and DSGs together to participate in meetings is not allowed (except for Summit/COM) but this not observed in some cases.

30. The **ECO Secretary General** noted, and the reports from the accounting section could confirm it that nearly all international trips undertaken by the Secretary-General last year were booked in economy class, though he, according to the ECO' Staff Regulations, is entitled to travel in the first class. He emphasized that this decision reflected his commitment to enhancing the Organization's international visibility, as instructed by the highest decision-making body. The goal was to create more opportunities for Secretariat staff to travel abroad and participate in important ECO and international events. He further reminded the Council that the Secretary General has not been accompanied by his Deputies during his missions abroad, except ECO Summits, COMs and line ministerial meetings. He also stressed that if the Secretary General of ECO is not allowed to be accompanied by any of his staff members, which is an international practice, it is better to regret invitations received from our esteemed



Member States and major international partners for participation in their high-level non-ECO events.

31. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** underscored the necessity to strengthen the Secretary-General's Office, noting its perceived privilege. He called for flexibility in the Secretary-General's travel arrangements and proposed dedicated discussions on budgeting and enhancing this high office's capabilities in future CPRs, suggesting alignment of travel plans accordingly.

32. After extensive deliberation, the **Council** reviewed and approved the Secretary General's participation in the aforementioned events, along with authorization for one staff member to accompany the Secretary General during the said visit.

### **Agenda Item No. 7**

#### Appointment of the new ECO Secretary General

33. The incumbent ECO Secretary General's term completes on August 12, 2024. The Secretariat requested Member States to submit candidatures for the post via Note Verbale No. ADMN/PER/2024/411 dated April 3, 2024. Pakistan's Embassy in Tehran conveyed H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan's candidature through Note Verbale No. ECO-7/3/2024-B/08/173 dated April 5, 2024. The Secretariat circulated this candidature for Member States' consideration via Note Verbale No. ADMN/2024/458 dated April 9, 2024.

34. As the Permanent Representative of his country, the Chairman expressed full support of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** for the nomination and extended gratitude to Pakistan for putting forth such high caliber and esteemed diplomat. He affirmed readiness to endorse the nomination through the silence procedure for ministerial approval, speaking on behalf of Iran.

35. The Permanent Representatives of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, **Uzbekistan**, **Kyrgyzstan** and the Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** expressed unequivocal support for Pakistan's candidacy for the position of Secretary General.

36. The **Chair** proposed that, based on the potential willingness of certain delegations to support the consensus, it may be appropriate to proceed with initiating a silence procedure to obtain COM's approval for the appointment of Ambassador Majeed Khan as the new ECO Secretary General. Although some delegations may not yet be prepared to join, the Chair noted the importance of moving forward, especially considering the impending replacement date for the new Secretary-General.

37. Expressing gratitude towards Ambassador Noziri for exemplary leadership during his tenure, the **Chair** acknowledged the absence of an opportunity for extension as per the rules, necessitating the appointment of the new Secretary-General. However, the Chair highlighted the fortunate circumstance of Ambassador Majeed Khan's appointment, noting his esteemed reputation and recalling past positive experiences under Pakistani leadership, including with Ambassador Khurshid Anwar. Reflecting on nostalgic memories of previous Secretary-Generals, such as Ambassador Shamshad Ahmad, the Chair congratulated Pakistan on selecting such a highly regarded

Ambassador and expressed anticipation for the upcoming ceremonies to honour Ambassador Majeed Khan's tenure and to bid farewell to the Ambassador Noziri.

38. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** expressed gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, and Kyrgyzstan for their generous support towards the candidature of Dr. Asad Majeed Khan as the new ECO Secretary General. He briefly highlighted Dr. Khan's impressive qualifications, noting his PhD in trade, past ambassadorial roles in Washington, Tokyo and Brussels, as well as his tenure as the former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. He emphasized Dr. Khan's profound insights on trade issues and his significant contributions to ECOTA negotiations and discussions within the Economic Cooperation Organization, emphasizing Dr. Khan's belief in fostering social connectivity.

39. Expressing deep appreciation to the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) for endorsing Dr. Khan's nomination, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Pakistan** also took the opportunity to extend immense gratitude to the current Secretary-General for his transformative leadership, acknowledging his invaluable contributions to the Organization. Concluding his remarks, he conveyed thanks once again to all Ambassadors present.

40. Having consensus, the **Council** recommended a two-week silence procedure to secure COM's approval for the appointment of Ambassador Asad Majeed Khan as the new Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), to be effective from 13 August 2024.

### **Agenda Item No. 8**

#### Appointment of the new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD)

41. The current ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD), Mr. Kashif Zaman's office term will expire on August 13, 2024. Member States were asked to submit candidatures for this position via Note Verbale No. ADMN/PER/2024/464 dated April 15, 2024. The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic endorsed H.E. Mr. Turdakun Sydykov for the post of ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD) while supporting Pakistan's candidature for Secretary General, conveyed through Notes Verbales No. 208-7 and No. 208-9 dated April 9 and April 15, 2024, respectively, circulated by Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADMN/2024/476 dated April 16, 2024. Similarly, Turkmenistan's Embassy, supporting Pakistan's candidature for the position of Secretary General sought backing for their Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD) candidate, to be conveyed soon, circulated by Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADMN/2024/484 dated April 17, 2024. Uzbekistan's Embassy also indicated intention to nominate a Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD) candidate, to be conveyed soon, circulated through Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADMN/2024/489 dated April 18, 2024.

42. The **Chair** noted the imminent conclusion of Deputy Secretary-General (TC & HRSD) Ambassador Kashif Zaman's tenure, which is coinciding with the arrival date of the new Secretary-General.

43. He added that the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Tehran nominated Ambassador Turdakun Sydykov, while Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan also expressed interests in nominating their candidates against the post. Highlighting the historical absence of formal competition for the Deputy Secretary-General position, the **Chair** proposed informal consultations among the three interested countries to finalize one single candidate for the post. Furthermore, the **Chair** emphasized the prioritization of qualifications over financial contributions and advocated for leaving the decision to informal consultations among the concerned countries, with outcomes to be reported to the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) by next CPR.

44. The Permanent Representative of the **Kyrgyz Republic** clarified that their nomination against the post of Deputy Secretary General was made by the President and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. This decision was presented in compliance with established practices and criteria, particularly concerning the alphabetical order for appointments to the positions of Secretary General and Deputy Secretaries General, adding that the Kyrgyz Republic anticipates understanding and support from Member States regarding their nomination, aligning with the aforementioned practices and criteria. However, given the absence of established regulations or practice in this matter, he emphasized the importance of discussion and support from the Council.

45. The **Secretary General** expressed a view that during the proposed informal consultations the following formula could be discussed: the country assuming the position of Deputy Secretary General in 2024 may support any of the other two for the post of Secretary General in 2027.

46. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** withdrew their candidacy for the Deputy Secretary General position to facilitate a smooth appointment against the post through consultations between the remaining two countries. Additionally, he expressed hope that Uzbekistan would garner support from member countries for their candidate for the position of Secretary General in 2027.

47. The **Chair** thanked Ambassador of Uzbekistan for constructive move regarding the removing the nomination. He also requested that expectation of Uzbekistan for support from the ECO membership for its Secretary General's candidature in 2027 be reflected in the Report of this CPR. Moreover, the Chair encouraged Turkmenistan and the Kyrgyz Republic to engage in bilateral consultations to nominate a single candidate for the position of Deputy Secretary General during the next CPR meeting, adding that the Council is ready to support and facilitate these consultations. He anticipated that the next CPR meeting would recommend a single nomination for the Council of Ministers' approval through silence procedure.

48. The **Council** unanimously agreed to defer the matter to the next CPR meeting, encouraging the Kyrgyz Republic and Turkmenistan to engage in bilateral consultations to nominate a single candidate for the upcoming vacancy of Deputy Secretary-General (TC & HRSD). Additionally, the Council expressed its readiness to provide facilitation, if required, in this regard.

## **Agenda Item No. 9**

### Administrative and budgetary matters:

#### - Reallocation of ECO Budget of 2024

49. The **Chair** elaborated on some required reallocation in the ECO-Budget 2024. He recalled that there was a decision by the CPR that the required adjustments to the Budget 2024 would be made after the new salary structures of the Iranian Category-III Staff of the Secretariat are approved. He noted that the following the approval by the Council of Ministers through silence procedure of the new salary scales and corresponding amendments to the Staff Regulations, it is time for making required reallocation to the Budget 2024. Moreover, any reallocation surpassing the 10% would require a proposal from the Secretariat and authorization by the CPR.

50. The **Secretary General** outlined several key points regarding the implementation of decisions related to the new salary of Iranian Category-III Staff. Firstly, he emphasized the Secretariat's obligation to implement this decision. Secondly, he requested the Council to give general authorization to the Secretary-General and his team to develop a feasible and implementable formula in this regard, referencing the document on which the decision of the Council of Ministers (COM) was based, is the report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Working Group meeting. He clarified that this report merely reflected views expressed and issues discussed during the meeting, rather than providing specific recommendations or a roadmap. Furthermore, he considered that COM decision would be implemented, which primarily warrants fixing salaries of Iranian Category-III Staff based the country's social security regulations.

51. In addition, the **Secretary General** emphasized the importance of maintaining the established practice, spanning over 25 years, of paying category A Iranian Staff Members in the currency aligned with the Secretariat's budget formation and Member States' contributions, ensuring transparency and accountability. Furthermore, he underscored the necessity of addressing allowances, benefits and end-of-service payments to avoid budget shortfalls in the current year, potentially requiring adjustments in the following year's budget. Additionally, he acknowledged the challenge posed by universally accepted labor regulations advocating for equal compensation regardless of local regulations, stressing the ECO's responsibility to ensure parity in gross salary for equivalent jobs while recognizing the influence of local regulations. Despite expressing confidence in the Secretariat's capability to implement the decision, the Secretary General cautioned that the issue of universally accepted labor regulations might resurface in the future.

52. The **Chair** underscored the duty of the Secretary General is to implement ECO rules and regulations and the decisions of the Council of Ministers not the universally accepted labour regulations. He further reminded that the Council of Ministers' decision should have been implemented following the end of two-week silence procedure. He warned that responsibility and accountability for extra payments would rest with the Secretary General though he will be leaving the Secretariat soon. Acknowledging the COM decision's clarity as per new salary scales and new amendments to the rules, he expressed flexibility on payment of new salaries to Iranian Category-III Staff in US Dollars, if local social security regulations allows. As regards

budgetary aspects of the implementation of the decision, he reminded that it was discussed in the process that the savings of the implementation of the decision (near 200,000 USD per year) would compensate any budgetary implications possibly incurred by implementation of the COM decision.

53. The **Secretary General** appreciated the Chair for clarification and expressed his acceptance of accountability, affirming his commitment to assume full responsibility for the decision's implementation. He noted some shortcomings in the circulated report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Working Group, including in the table of salaries proposed therein, signaling a need for further clarification. In this regard, he mentioned about the establishment of an internal team which is entrusted to resolving such issues and ensuring the implementation of COM decision with a fair and feasible salary framework. In this regard, he mentioned a timeline suggested by the Chief Accountant, proposing a start date of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 but stressing the necessity for additional time for precise calculations. He emphasized that his responsibility is to ensure the rights of all staff members equally.

54. The **Chair** underscored the importance of full compliance with the decision as well as readiness of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran to assist the internal team referred to by Secretary General to expedite decision implementation.

55. After careful consideration of the discussions, the Council authorized the Secretariat to reallocate the necessary chapters of the ECO Budget 2024 needed for implementation of the COM decision on approval of Iran's proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations, including the revised salary structure in respect of Iranian Category- III staff (Secretariat Note 509 of 22/4/2024). The **Council** also tasked the Secretariat to conduct consultations and coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country, if required, to ensure implementation of the COM's decision not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

56. No items were discussed under this sub agenda item.

**Agenda Item No. 10**

Any other business

57. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** highlighted a recent communication regarding the introduction of a paperless process starting January 31, 2024. He emphasized the importance of member countries designating representatives and introduced plans for a workshop at the Secretariat to provide practical training on the new system. Stressing the need for proficiency in using Didgah for efficient collaboration, he proposed scheduling the workshop prior to system implementation. He requested the member countries to ensure participation of their relevant representatives in the upcoming workshop, slated for next week or the following one.

58. The **ECO Deputy Secretary-General (TC & HRSD)** underlined the ECO's active engagement in the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) held in Bangkok from April 22 to 26. He further

informed that this occasion allowed ECO to join approximately 800 delegates from diverse countries, providing a valuable platform for dialogue and contributions to high-level discussions. He explained that the session's theme, "Leveraging Digital Innovations for Achieving Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific," resonated with ECO's focus areas. Leveraging their strong partnership with the ESCAP family, including a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2021, ECO seized the opportunity to enhance collaboration across various domains. During the event, ECO offered recommendations aligned with the theme and explored avenues for deeper cooperation, he added.

59. Additionally, the **ECO Deputy Secretary-General (TC & HRSD)** informed about his significant bilateral meetings, notably with the Chief Operating Officer of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC). This meeting, initiated by ITFC, underscored their interest in ECO's GATE project, with discussions revolving around potential financial and technical assistance, along with plans for further engagements. Acknowledging ECO's positive contributions, UNESCAP has expressed keen interest in continuing the partnership. Furthermore, ECO is in the final stages of finalizing a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office of High Representatives for the Landlocked Developing Countries. While preparations are underway for its signing during the forthcoming International Conference on Landlocked Countries in Kigali in June, there are informal indications of a possible postponement of the Conference. ECO remains committed to keeping the CPI informed of any developments impacting the MOU signing schedule.

60. The **Chair** expressed gratitude to the Deputy Secretary General for his enlightening briefing. Reflecting on the discussions held in Yazd, where the importance of establishing a unified stance for ECO countries in the UN Conference was collectively acknowledged, the Chair recalled the decision to task the Secretariat with drafting a preliminary document. The aim was to invite contributions from Member States to shape this initial draft, ultimately presenting it to counterparts in New York. It was noted that within ECO, an unprecedented 70 percent of membership consists of landlocked nations, underscoring the significance of their voice in discussions related to landlocked and transit countries. While acknowledging the challenge of influencing the outcome documents at this stage, the Chair emphasized the importance of articulating perspectives on behalf of ECO. This could inform future engagements, including the impending Memorandum of Understanding with the UN. The collective stance should highlight not only the unique challenges faced by landlocked and transit countries but also the collaborative efforts and successful corridors within the region, serving as a model for cooperation.

61. In addition to expressing expectations from the UN system and the donor community, emphasis was placed on the representation of a significant portion of the world's landlocked nations in attendance, the **Chair** said. Therefore, any support initiatives should consider their specific needs and challenges. Should the Conference proceedings face further delays, the Chair suggested distilling key points into a concise document for dissemination among Member States. This document could then be shared with the UN missions and other relevant stakeholders, either through official channels or circulation during meetings. Ensuring the accessibility and clarity of the message is paramount as efforts are made to make the collective voice of ECO heard.

62. The **Deputy Secretary General (TC&HRSD)** provided additional information on ECO's participation in a review meeting in Bangkok held in August 2023, which focused on landlocked countries. During this session, the event's Chair underscored the importance of ECO's policies in enhancing access and connectivity for landlocked countries within the region. The recommendations put forth during this meeting were intended to align with the forthcoming UN Conference. Moreover, discussions held during the session with the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN OHRLLS), along with other relevant stakeholders, led to the incorporation of these recommendations into the draft MoU. The Secretariat will facilitate the circulation of this document, as proposed by the Chair, he assured.

63. The **Secretary General** highlighted that during discussions in Yazd we addressed this matter of landlocked Member States and issued instructions to the relevant Directorate accordingly. Effective communication with the Chairperson is essential for drafting and disseminating the text proficiently to all stakeholders. I am confident for the successful completion of this task, he underscored.

64. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** announced an upcoming significant meeting set to take place in Iran's Kerman province on May 13 and 14, 2024. Invitations have been extended to ambassadors from 40 countries, with confirmations already received from Ambassadors of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The participation of Deputy Chiefs of Mission or experts is encouraged in case if their ambassadors are unavailable. The conference's opening on May 13 will be graced by H.E. Mr. Ehsan Khandouzi, the Minister of Economy and Finance of Iran, along with other high-ranking Iranian officials, including Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy. Participants are requested to provide copies of their passports promptly for ticket issuance, and those yet to provide participant details are urged to do so without delay, he said.

65. The **Secretary General** brought to the attention of the Council a Note Verbale received recently from the Embassy of Afghanistan in Tehran. The Note Verbale expressed Afghanistan's willingness to engage in ECO activities, he explained. In light of this, the Member States may express their perspectives, he added.

66. The **Chair** recalled a previous meeting involving Ambassadors and the Secretary General, during which extensive discussions were held regarding Afghanistan's engagement in ECO activities. He pointed that our collective agreement was to address Afghanistan's participation on a case-by-case basis until the convening of the Council of Ministers Meeting later this year. Importantly, there were no objections when he informally communicated this understanding to the CPR. Until and unless a decision is taken by COM, the Secretariat may seek authorization from the CPR, on case-by-case basis, to invite technical delegations from Afghanistan to the ECO meetings.

67. The **Secretary General** reiterated the matter about outstanding contributions of the Member States. He noted that as of the fifth month of 2024, only one country (Tajikistan) has fulfilled its financial commitment, representing merely one percent of the Secretariat's total budget. This delay presents a substantial impediment to our operational endeavors. He implored all Member States to promptly fulfill their

contributions, encompassing outstanding balances from previous years, some of which exceed One Million US Dollars.

68. Echoing the sentiments expressed by the Secretary General regarding contributions, the **Chair** underscored the seriousness of the matter. It is essential to recognize that the effective operation of the Secretariat is contingent upon the availability of adequate financial resources, he emphasized.

**Agenda Item No. 13**  
Date of the next CPR Meeting

69. The Council decided to hold its (288<sup>th</sup>) Meeting on June 5, 2024. However, the venue of the meeting will be shared in due course.

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:**

**The Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- H.E. Mr. Ali Alizade, **Permanent Representative**

**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:**

- H.E. Mr. Turdakun Sydykov, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Nazim Beishekeev, Attaché

**The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:**

- H.E. Mr. Muhammad Mudassir Tipu, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Ahmed Shami, Deputy Head of Mission

**The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:**

- Mr. Bahodur Nazir, Counselor

**The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye:**

- Dr. Firat Bayar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Ertan Garip, Counselor

**The Embassy of Turkmenistan:**

- Mr. Atamyrat Bayramov, First Secretary
- Mr. Kemal Atayev, Third Secretary

**The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:**

- H.E. Mr. Fariddin Nasriev, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Dilmurod Makhmudov, Attaché

**The ECO Secretariat:**

- H.E. Amb. Khusrav Noziri, Secretary General
- Amb. Mohsen Esperi, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Kashif Zaman, 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

No: CFU/2024/630

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 13/5/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of ECO Member States in Tehran and has the honour to enclose herewith the **Draft Report of 287<sup>th</sup> Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) Meeting held on May 6, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.**

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of ECO Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.



All ECO Member States - Tehran

No: CFU/2024/677

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 23/5/2024

Attachment: No

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran and, based on the consultation with the Chair, has the honour to convey the postponement of the First High-Level Committee (HLC) Meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers due to lack of quorum as per requirement of the HLC's Terms of Reference. The new dates may be decided during the upcoming CPR Meeting.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran, the assurances of its highest consideration.

All ECO Member States, Tehran





Z-2024/99530379/38121256 - MOST URGENT

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and with reference to the Latter's Note Verbale CFU/2024/589 dated 6 May 2024, has honour to inform the Esteemed Secretariat that the Embassy would like to propose an amendment to the second paragraph of the article 364 in ECO Work Programme 2024, which states "Considering that, to this date, the Charter of the Foundation and its Additional Protocol have only been ratified by five Member States, the Council invited the non-ratifying Member States to ratify the Charter and its Additional Protocol so that the Foundation may function at the maximum possible level in the field of STI, leading to economic development in the region."

The Embassy has further honour to propose omitting "...the Council invited..." part in the said article and considering two alternative writings to the said paragraph as such: i) "Considering that, to this date, the Charter of the Foundation and its Additional Protocol have only been ratified by five Member States, the delegation of Pakistan (and other ECOSF Member States) invited the non-ratifying Member States ratifying the Charter and its Additional Protocol so that the Foundation may function at the maximum possible level in the field of STI, leading to economic development in the region.", ii) "Considering that, to this date, the Charter of the Foundation and its Additional Protocol have only been ratified by five Member States, the Council discussed the issue of ratification of the Charter and its Additional Protocol by non-ratifying Member States."

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization the assurances of its highest consideration.



**Secretariat of the  
Economic Cooperation Organization  
Tehran**

No: CFU/2024/666

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 21/5/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the Member States in Tehran and referring to its Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/589 dated May 6, 2024, whereby a two-week silence procedure was initiated for obtaining approval of COM with respect to **ECO Work Programme-2024** as endorsed at the 287<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on May 6, 2024, has the honour to state the following.

Since the Secretariat was provided with some amendments to the ECO Work Programme-2024, within the time limit set for the procedure, from the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran via Note Verbale No. Z-2024/99530379/38121256 dated May 14, 2024 (*attached*), **the silence procedure would be considered broken.**

The said documents for which the silence procedure was adopted will be returned to CPR along with the proposed amendments and any further additional proposals that might be shared with the Secretariat for the required decision.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the esteemed Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.



**All ECO Member States - Tehran**

No: CFU/2024/589

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 6/5/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of ECO Member States in Tehran and based on the decision of the 287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on May 6, 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran has the honour to enclose the revised version of the **ECO Work Programme-2024**.

The Secretariat has further the honour to state that as per the decision of 287<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR a **two-week silence procedure**, as of the date of this Note Verbale, is **observed for obtaining approval of the Council of Ministers (COM) with respect to the said document**.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of ECO Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.

All ECO Member States - Tehran





Annexure - VI

# **34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC)**

**ECO Work Programme 2024**

*January 22-25, 2024*

*ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>A. SECTOR: TRADE AND INVESTMENT</b>		
1.	<p>The Council appreciated the confirmation of the ECO Member States on hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Finance/Economy (ECO-MM on F/E) preceded by the SOM in 2024 which could not be held in 2022 and 2023 due to lack of quorum.</p> <p>The Council tasked the Secretariat to pursue through diplomatic channel with Member States for their offer to host the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO-MM on F/E during 2024. The Council further requested the Membership to prepare for the meeting, once it is announced.</p>	
2.	<p>The Council took note of the fact that the 5<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (ECO-MM on CFT) has not taken place for the last seven years. The meeting was offered by Türkiye during the 33<sup>rd</sup> RPC to host in 2023 but it could not be held.</p> <p>The Council observed that in order to reach a satisfactory level of progress on various ECO initiatives and activities, the successful organization of both the ECO-Ministerial Meeting on Commerce &amp; Foreign Trade (ECO MM on CFT) and the ECOTA Cooperation Council Meetings is essential.</p> <p>The Council thanked the Republic of Türkiye for their offer to host the 5<sup>th</sup> ECO-MM on CFT) to be preceded by a Senior Officials Group Meeting only after the realization of 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting.</p>	
3.	<p>The Council took note that the 9<sup>th</sup> <i>ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting (ECOTA CCM)</i> could not be held in 2023, although during 33<sup>rd</sup> RPC Pakistan offered to hosted it.</p> <p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the report of the research study, titled “<i>Impediments in Implementation of ECO’s Trade Tools and Measures to Resolve</i>” was shared with the ECOTA Parties for their views/comments. Only the views/comments from Afghanistan could be received, and have been circulated to Member States. Moreover, the views/comments have also been solicited by the Secretariat on the working paper and agenda of the 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA CCM.</p> <p>The Council requested ECOTA Parties to assess the scenarios presented by the Secretariat</p>	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>in the aforesaid research study, which was much appreciated by the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Economy. The Council reiterated that all proposals may be discussed in the 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA CCM with a view to bring it to the table for discussion and adoption in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the ECO Secretariat for following up and noting the importance of completing all legal and procedural requirements for the implementation of ECOTA.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Council requested the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Tajikistan to complete all pending legal and procedural requirements including the submission of all the three product lists by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the ratification of the Annexes to ECOTA as well as submission of pending product list by the Republic of Tajikistan to pave the way towards effective implementation of the Agreement</p> <p>The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for its offer to host the 9<sup>th</sup> ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024 (in-person) and requested Member States to share their nominations at the earliest. The hybrid mode will be available only if the participants are not able to join in person mode.</p>	
4.	The Council recommended that other ECO Member States, not a party to the ECOTA and the ECO CCI could be invited to ECOTA Cooperation Council Meetings as observers.	
5.	<p>The Council recalled that the 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade (ECO-MM on CFT) established two Joint Working Groups (JWGs) for the following:</p> <p>i) Establishment of <i>Joint Working Group</i> to finalize the draft “<i>Multi-Dimensional Regional Trade and Investment Strategy and Prospects of Establishing a Free Trade Area in the Region</i>” (ECO-MDTIS) as well as an Action Plan defining the role, responsibilities and timeframe for launching promotional activities by the relevant organizations for the ultimate goal of creating a Free Trade Area in the ECO region.</p> <p>ii) Establishment of a <i>Joint Working Group for preparing a draft ECO Trade Facilitation Agreement aimed at simplification of Customs Procedures, harmonizing transit trade mechanisms and putting in place transparent customs regulatory regimes.</i></p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the draft paper on ECO-MDTIS was circulated by the Secretariat, among Member States. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Republic of Uzbekistan have shared their views/comments. The Council requested remaining Member States to expedite sharing their views/comments on the draft paper on “<i>Road Map on Multidimensional Regional Trade and Investment Strategy</i>” to pave way to realize the goal of Free Trade Area in the ECO Region’ along with an Action Plan on defining role, responsibilities and timeframe for establishment of Free Trade Area in the ECO.</p> <p>The Council invited the Member States to offer hosting the said meeting and requested the Membership to share their nominations for the said 1<sup>st</sup> JWG Meeting in 2024 to discuss and finalize the draft paper on ECO-MDTIS preferably before the forthcoming 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade.</p>	
6.	<p>The Secretariat further informed the Council that the 1<sup>st</sup> JWG Meeting to negotiate “<i>Draft Trade Facilitation Strategy</i>” and a ‘<i>Trade Facilitation Agreement</i>’ was organized on June 22, 2023 in Ankara, in-hybrid mode hosted by Türkiye successfully. The Secretariat noted that the JWG needs to follow up the progress made in the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting for further discussions and finalization of both the strategy and agreement.</p> <p>The Council thanked the Republic of Uzbekistan for their offer to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> JWG Meeting during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024 (in-person mode) and requested the Member States to share nominations for the said meeting to actively participate and pursue this important area.</p>	
7.	<p>The Council recalled that the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Experts of Tax Administration, on 26-28 May, 2014 in Tehran had finalized the following three draft documents on ECO Tax Cooperation, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Charter for Establishment of ECO Tax Administration Cooperation Society (ECOTAX);</li> <li>b) ECO Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Taxation and Related Matters; and,</li> <li>c) Agreement on the Exchange of Information in Tax Matters.</li> </ul>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>The Council further recalled that the Secretariat was tasked by the 33<sup>rd</sup> RPC to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration, once it receives feedback on three basic draft documents in 2023,</li> <li>b) Organize a <i>Preliminary Discussion Meeting</i>, as requested by I.R of Pakistan, to review the draft agreements before scheduling the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration.</li> </ol> <p>The Secretariat apprised the Council that views/comments were received from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.</p> <p>The Secretariat apprised the Council that the <i>Preliminary Discussion Meeting</i> was hosted by the Secretariat on August 1, 2023, virtually, under the chairmanship of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to review/develop Consensus on Drafts of Three Tax Related Cooperation draft documents. The meeting was attended by the delegations from Azerbaijan (Chair), Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Meeting unanimously decided to drop out the two documents i.e. ‘Draft ECO Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Taxation and Related Matters’ and ‘Draft Agreement on the Exchange of Information in Tax Matters among ECO Member States’, and decided to pursue only one document titled ‘Draft Charter of the ECO Tax Administration Cooperation Society (ECOTAX)’. The Meeting reviewed the text of ‘Draft Charter of the ECO Tax Administration Cooperation Society (ECOTAX)’, Article by Article, and also deliberated on the comments of the Member States on the text of the charter in each Article. The Meeting added a new Article # 10 with the title ‘Entry into Force’.</p> <p>The Meeting also deliberated the draft Agenda prepared by the Secretariat and finalized the Agenda for the ‘2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Tax Administration’ scheduled to be held in 2023.</p> <p>The Secretariat further informed that in line with the decision of the 33<sup>rd</sup> RPC, the Secretariat scheduled to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration on 6 December 2023 in hybrid mode but it was postponed due to lack of quorum.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the Secretariat for organizing the <i>Preliminary Discussion Meeting</i> to</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>review the draft documents and invited Member States to offer hosting the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration</i> in a preferred mode.</p> <p>The Islamic Republic of Iran offered to host two Preliminary Consultative Meetings prior to the hosting of <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration</i> in 2024 for discussing a range of topics of importance to the tax field.</p> <p>The Council tasked the Secretariat to continue offering the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Tax Administration to the Member States</i> through diplomatic channels to find a host and schedule the meeting. The outcome of the aforesaid consultative meetings, to be hosted by I.R of Iran, can be added as Agenda Item.</p>	
8.	<p>Providing the updates, the Secretariat informed the Council that the <i>5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Committee on Customs Cooperation (ECCC)</i> was held on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, in Ankara, Türkiye, and the <i>9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA)</i> was held on July 20, 2023 in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan, successfully. The Council recognized that there is a significant scope of improvement in terms of cooperation in the field of trade facilitation especially in the area of customs cooperation.</p> <p>The Council thanked Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Türkiye for hosting the said two meetings and appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for their offer to host the <i>10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA)</i> during 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2024 (in-person).</p> <p>The Council also appreciated the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for their offer to host the <i>6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Committee on Customs Cooperation (ECCC)</i> in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024.</p>	
9.	<p>The Council took note of the fact that the draft text of “<i>the Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters</i>” was finalized in the <i>8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Administration (CHCA)</i> in 2017. This adopted final draft text was circulated among Member States for completion of formalities and internal governmental processes. So far, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have completed their internal procedures.</p> <p>The Council kindly requested remaining Member States to complete their formalities and</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	internal governmental processes, and notify the Secretariat of their progress.	
10.	<p>The Council requested Member States to support each other on customs matters through providing a set of relevant trainings and capacity building activities, and to inform the Secretariat so as to conduct trainings on need basis.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the offer of the Republic of Türkiye for organizing experience-sharing activity on Authorized Economic Operator (AEO), Single Window, Implementation of TIR system, simplified procedures on expedited shipments and implementation of customs enforcement matters.</p> <p>The Council requested the Republic of Türkiye to consider proposals of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Republic of Azerbaijan on customs training, and reminded the remaining Member States to provide their needs on relevant capacity building/training courses with the Secretariat.</p> <p>The Council invited the Republic of Türkiye to provide the Secretariat with a tentative schedule and content of a training program for hosting a relevant training event in 2024. Where possible, the Council requested the Republic of Türkiye and the Secretariat to coordinate such events with the World Customs Organization, as well, with a view to develop relations with the International bodies for better global visibility of the ECO. The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye for their offer to organize it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024 (in-person).</p>	
11.	<p>The Council was informed that “<i>ECO Smuggling and the Customs Offences Data Bank</i>” under “<i>the Agreement on Establishment and Operation of ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank</i>” entered into force in December, 2017 to increase governmental revenues of Member States by preventing pilferages.</p> <p>Member States, signatory to the Agreement; were requested to kindly take the following actions:</p> <p>1. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has been requested to kindly deposit the original version of the Instrument of Ratification with the ECO Secretariat; which is awaited.</p>	

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	<p>2. The Republic of Tajikistan, being the only remaining signatory of the Agreement awaiting ratification, has been requested to kindly share the Instrument of Ratification at the earliest.</p> <p>The Council stressed the non-signatory Member States, namely the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, to consider signing and ratifying the Agreement at their earliest convenience.</p> <p>In order to start full operation of the databank, the Council invited the Membership to notify to the ECO Secretariat the following information at the earliest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contact information of their authorized focal points, and</li> <li>b. IP addresses of computers that are to access relevant data, and subsequently.</li> </ul> <p>The Council requested the Republic of Türkiye and the Secretariat to organize a technical online meeting to test the current data bank infrastructure with the participation of volunteer Member States in the first quarter of 2024.</p>	
12.	<p>The Council appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the <i>1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Working Group of Central Banks on ECO Clearing Union (ECU)</i> in third quarter of 2023. The Council was informed by the Secretariat that the Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Türkiye have shared their nominations for the Meeting of the ‘<i>Working Group of Central Banks of the ECO</i>’ as recommended by the “<i>1<sup>st</sup> Experts Group Meeting on Banking and Financial Matters and Forming of ECO Clearing Union</i>”. Moreover, the Council was informed that participation of only two Member States i.e. I.R of Pakistan and Republic of Türkiye have been confirmed in 2023.</p> <p>The Council was further informed that the Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Türkiye have shared their nominations for the ‘<i>Working Group of Central Banks of the ECO</i>’.</p> <p>The I.R of Iran suggested to either make a survey on utility of the <i>1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Working</i></p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p><i>Group of Central Banks on ECO Clearing Union (ECU) or in the absence of Member States' interest, drop it', as the meeting could not be materialized due to lack of quorum. The Council was apprised by the Secretariat that the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Working Group of the Central Banks on ECO Clearing Union (ECU) was mandated by the 1<sup>st</sup> Experts Group Meeting on Banking and Financial Matters and Forming of ECO Clearing Union", which was hosted by the I.R of Iran in 2021, virtually. The Working Group was tasked to analyze the relevance and viability of the proposals and make a decision.</i></p> <p><i>The council decided to delete the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Working Group of the Central Banks on ECO Clearing Union (ECU) from the Calendar of Events 2024 as proposed by the I.R of Iran and the deletion of the Working Group should be included as an Agenda Item of 2<sup>nd</sup> Experts Group Meeting on Banking and Financial Matters and Forming of ECO Clearing Union' for their information.</i></p>	
13.	<p>The Council appreciated the project titled "<i>ECO Regional Payment System (ERPS) Feasibility Study Phase-I</i>". The Council requested Member States (except Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic Pakistan and Republic of Uzbekistan) to share their comments on the report of the study with the Secretariat and actively participate in the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Expert Group on Banking, Finance and the ECU</i>. The Study recommended the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Member States to make nominations of commercial banks to participate in RPS.</li> <li>2. The Secretariat to schedule Seminar of Banking Associations of the ECO Member States.</li> </ol> <p>The Secretariat apprised the Council the comments on the study and nominations of the banks is awaited. Once the Member States provide their comments and nominations, the seminar will be conducted thereafter. The Council requested the Member States to share their comments and nominated banks' details with the Secretariat. The I.R of Iran suggested to drop the Seminar on Banking Association of the ECO Member States.</p>	
14.	<p>The ECO Secretariat informed the Council that the <i>Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI)</i>" has come into force in 2022 after the deposit of the 4<sup>th</sup> Instrument of Ratification as per Article 12 of APPI. However, the formality regarding the deposit of the Instruments of Ratification is yet to be deposited by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Council urged the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to deposit original instrument of ratification with the Secretariat.</p>	

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	<p>The Secretariat appraised that the Republic of Azerbaijan is the only signatory awaiting ratification of the APPI. The Council called upon the Republic of Azerbaijan to complete the ratification procedures along with its Amendment Protocol at the earliest convenience.</p> <p>The Council also encouraged the non-signatory Member States, i.e. Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan to consider signing/ratifying the Agreement.</p>	
15.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the “ECO Trade and Investment Network Web Portal” is available on the main ECO Web-Site with the following address: "<a href="http://www.eco.int/trade">www.eco.int/trade</a>". The Secretariat further informed the Council that upon the request of the Secretariat, the ECO Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) had circulated a request among the National Chambers of Commerce of the Member States for providing <b>updated</b> information about importers and exporters in the ECO Region. So far, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Uzbekistan have conveyed information to the Secretariat, in this regard. The Secretariat suggested that the Member States may nominate designated focal points to work with Secretariat and their National Chambers to make “<i>the ECO Trade and Investment Network Web Portal</i>” more productive and beneficial for economic operators in the region. The Republic of Türkiye informed that names and details of three focal points have been shared with the Secretariat in this area. The Secretariat apprised the council that the said information has not been received in the Secretariat through diplomatic channels so far, and it will be updated in record once the information is received.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the suggestion of the Secretariat and called upon Member States to designate and update their focal points, periodically, in the areas of Trade, Investment, Customs, Trade Facilitation, WTO, Tax, Banking, Capital Markets, E-Trade and Visa facilitation and provide their updated contact details to be placed in section for trade and investment of the ECO-Website.</p> <p>The Council requested all the Member States to share their updated company information through their National Chambers at the earliest and keep sharing updated information periodically.</p>	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
16.	<p>The Council took note of the project titled, “<i>Study on Preparation of the Guidelines and Joint Action Plan for the Establishment of ECO Regional Network of Special Economic Zones/Free Trade Zones</i>”. The Secretariat informed the Council that detailed TORs for “<i>Study on Preparation of the Guidelines and Joint Action Plan for the Establishment of ECO Regional Network of Special Economic Zones/Free Trade Zones (SEZs/FTZs) in the ECO Member States</i>” were prepared by the Secretariat and after updating them, shared with the Member States for their views/comments and proposals.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States to share their comments/ proposals on the ToRs and tasked the Secretariat to follow-up for conducting the aforesaid study and share the outcome of the study with Member States for their views.</p> <p>The Secretariat informed the council that the meeting was scheduled by the Secretariat as a host on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 in virtual format, in line with the decisions of the previous RPCs. The council was further informed that nominations for the meeting were received only from Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Türkiye in 2023.</p> <p>The Secretariat further informed the Council that in the light of decisions of the <i>1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Meetings of the Heads of SEZs/FTZs of the ECO Member States</i>, nominations for the <u>Permanent Standing Committee</u> and the <u>Joint Commission</u> of the FT/SEZs of the ECO Member States have been received from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the I.R. of Iran, the I.R. of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Türkiye. The Republic of Uzbekistan shared nomination for the Standing Committee, only.</p> <p>The Council requested Member States to share their nominations to establish the <u>Permanent Standing Committee</u> and <u>Joint Commission</u> on SEZs/FTZs of the ECO Member States and urged to expedite formation of this committee as soon as possible.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States to convey their offers to host the <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Heads of SEZs/FTZs of ECO Member States</i> in preferred mode in 2024. Since no offers were made the Council tasked the Secretariat to pursue the offers with the Member States through diplomatic channels to schedule the meeting.</p>	

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17.	<p>The Secretariat appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of SW/NDF of the ECO Member States' preceded by Experts Group Meeting of the ECO Member States</i> in 2023. The meeting could not be held in 2023.</p> <p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the draft report of the study titled “<i>Study on Preparation of the Road-Map for Formulating a Comprehensive Plan among the Sovereign and National Development Funds of Member States</i>” has been shared with the Member States for their views/comments. The views/comments were received from I.R of Iran and circulated among the membership. The comments from remaining Member States are awaited.</p> <p>The Council invited the Member States to offer to host the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Heads of the SW/NDF</i> in 2024. The Islamic Republic of Iran apprised the council that the <i>1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Heads of the SW/NDF of the ECO Member States'</i> was hosted virtually in December 2020 by I.R of Iran. As mandated by that meeting the aforesaid study was commissioned by the Secretariat and the Member States were requested for the contribution in conductance of the study but unfortunately the response was not received from any Member State. The Islamic Republic of Iran offered to host the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Heads of the SW/NDF of the ECO</i> in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024.</p> <p>The Council requested the remaining Member States to share their comments on the report of the study.</p>	
18.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the <i>1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Heads of the Commodity Exchange of ECO Member States</i> was offered to all Member States for hosting in 2022, however, it could not be held due to lack of confirmation. However, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Tehran in June 2023 conveying willingness of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) for hosting <b>the First meeting of ECO Heads of Commodity Exchanges</b> in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024 in virtual format.</p> <p>The Secretariat circulated the same among the Member States and invited proposals for the agenda of the meeting. Response/ input is awaited from the Member States.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the offer of the I.R of Pakistan to host the aforesaid meeting in the</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024, virtually and urged the Member States to share their nominations for the meeting.</p>	
19.	<p>The Council took note of the following two small-sized project proposals on standardization that will be pursued with Member States in 2024, where the ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM) shall also be invited:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Capacity Development Project for ECO Member States to Effectively Contribute to Standardization Activities at the National and International Levels.</li> <li>2. Capacity Development Project for Preliminary Gap-Analysis on the Standardization Infrastructure of ECO Member States in the Process of WTO Accession as well as International Standardization Platforms.</li> </ol> <p>The Council approved the proposal of the Secretariat to allocate USD 7200/- through the Secretariat funds, for the small-sized training projects on standardization titled 'Capacity Development Project for ECO Member States to Effectively Contribute to Standardization Activities at the National and International Levels'.</p> <p>The Council requested the Secretariat to pursue the project titled 'Capacity Development Project for Preliminary Gap-Analysis on the Standardization Infrastructure of ECO Member States in the Process of WTO Accession as well as International Standardization Platforms' by sharing the details with the Member States.</p>	
20.	<p>The Council took note of the medium-sized project proposal that is to be pursued with UNIDO and the IsDB. The Council appreciated the proposal of the Secretariat to allocate some seed money through the Secretariat funds, however, the project financing will be considered after the completion of the approved small project on standardization training, and the decision on the second small project on the standardization gap analysis.</p>	
21.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the Member States were offered to host the 4<sup>th</sup> <i>ECO Trade Promotion Organization (ECO-TPOs) Forum</i> in 2023 and nominations for participation in the forum were also requested. No offers were received in 2023 to host the events and only Republic of Azerbaijan sent its nominations to participate in the said event.</p>	

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	<p>The Council stressed urgent actions to be taken towards the implementation of the decisions of the previous meetings particularly on the draft “<b>ECO Agreement on Joint Trade Promotional Activities</b>”.</p> <p>The Council thanked the offer of Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting 4<sup>th</sup> <i>ECO Trade Promotion Organization (ECO-TPOs) Forum</i> in 2024 and requested to share exact date/venue and other related details. The Member States may share their nominations for the forum.</p>	
22.	<p>The Secretariat, while recalling the decision of the 3<sup>rd</sup> <i>ECO Ministerial Meeting on Finance/Economy</i> to set up an <i>ECO Heads of Investment Promotion Agencies (ECO-IPA) Forum</i>, apprised the Council that, 1<sup>st</sup> <i>Meeting of ECO-IPA of ECO Heads of Investment Promotion Agencies (ECO-IPA)</i> was held on December 26, 2016 in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Secretariat offered the hosting of 2<sup>nd</sup> <i>Meeting of ECO Investment Promotion Agencies (ECO-IPAs) Forum</i> in 2023 but no offer to host the meeting was received. Nominations were received from only Republic of Azerbaijan.</p> <p>The Council invited the Member States to volunteer hosting the event and share their schedule and other details with the Secretariat. The Member States may share nominations for the forum.</p>	
23.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the 26<sup>th</sup> RPC tasked the Secretariat to initiate a 2-year renewable project worth US\$ 50,000/-, to be provided by the Secretariat from its budget. The 167th CPR allocated and recommended to organize the 4<sup>th</sup> <i>ECO Business Forum</i> in the sidelines of the 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit and pursue the project. The 14<sup>th</sup> Project Management Group (PMG) meeting in November 2019 decided to pursue the project with USD 10,000/- for holding Business Forum. However, the 4<sup>th</sup> <i>Business Forum</i> was held in hybrid format on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in Ashgabat. There were no funding requests for holding 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Business Forum, therefore, the Secretariat recommended the project to be closed and a new project may be proposed on the basis of the actual needs of the business community for trade promotion. In this regard it was further informed by the Secretariat that the project document has been shared with the Member States for their views/comments and proposals.</p> <p>The Council requested Member States and ECO CCI to offer their views on the said project at their earliest convenience. The Council acknowledged that these projects should be aligned</p>	

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	with the needs and activities prioritized by the private sector for trade promotion in the region in coordination with the ECO-CCI. The Council therefore, agreed to close the project and instructed the Secretariat to pursue Project proposal in consultation with Member States and ECO CCI.	
24.	The Secretariat informed the Council that the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Trade Fair was offered to the Member States twice in 2023 to express their readiness to host, but no response has been received. The ECO CCI has also been requested to coordinate with its constituent members i.e. National Chambers of Commerce and Industries for their pursuance to schedule the event for trade promotion and share their inputs. The Council while recalling that the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Trade Fair could not be organized for a long time, requested Member States for their offers for early hosting of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Trade Fair in 2024. The Council recommended ECO Trade Promotion Organizations (ECO-TPOs), in coordination with ECO-CCI, to pursue early organizing of the trade fairs and exhibitions as mandated by ECO Vision-2025.	
25.	The Council encouraged the Member States to offer hosting a Trade Exhibition in 2024. The Council decided to drop the event from CoE-2024. However, the Council requested the Secretariat to follow up the matter through diplomatic channels for consideration by the National Chambers and make a subsequent decision.	
26.	The Council dropped the ECO-ASEAN Joint Business Forum and ECO-SAARC Joint Business Forum from the Annual Work Programme- 2024 and the Calendar of Event for 2024.	
27.	The Council was informed that the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase of the Study on Trading Patterns in the ECO Region carried out by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has been completed. The PIDE submitted its study report, which has been subsequently shared with Member States in 2020. However, no comments have been received from Member States yet. The Council requested Member States to give their views on the report of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Phase of the PIDE study.	
28.	The Secretariat informed the Council that presently six ECO Member States are party to the ECO TDB and the Secretariat has been inviting the remaining four ECO Members States to	

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	<p>the ECO TBD. The Council requested the remaining Member States, who have not joined ECO-TDB, to join this important regional financial institution. The Council encouraged the ECO-TDB, as the regional institution of ECO to continue to support the implementation of regional projects in line with the development mandate based on the Agreement of Establishment.</p>	
29.	<p>The Council was apprised that in 2023 the ECO-TDB expressed its readiness to organize. ‘1<sup>st</sup> Regional Partnership Forum’ in physical mode. However, the bank requested for the name of ECO Member State to host the event and share relevant details with the bank to organize the said forum. The Secretariat requested offers for hosting RPF the said forum by the Member States, jointly with ECO-TDB in 2023, but no offers were received in 2023.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the offer of the ECO TDB for trade promotion in the region and invited the Member States to volunteer to host this event jointly with the Secretariat and the ECO TDB.</p>	
30.	<p>All the Contracting Parties to the ECO Reinsurance Company (ERC) have submitted their nominations for the Board of Directors (BOD) and the General Assembly (GA) of ERC. After receiving updated nominations, the ECO Secretariat had circulated the same in January 2023. A Consultative Meeting on ERC held on February 6, 2023 in hybrid mode, by the Secretariat. The Consultative Meeting decided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The I.R of Pakistan will prepare initial drafts of the regulations for G.A &amp; BoD, the recruitment policy, the financial &amp; service rules etc, and share with relevant stakeholders for input and finalization. The I.R of Pakistan will also share the schedule of the meetings with the Secretariat.</li> <li>2. The Secretariat will seek approval of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to host the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the G.A and the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the BoD of the ERC.</li> <li>3. It is deemed appropriate for TCIP to make capital payments for Türkiye until 2025. In this context, it is suggested that the candidates for the General Assembly and Board of Directors of the Company, who previously represented Türkiye, be replaced and IPRSA</li> </ol>	

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	<p>and TCIP representatives be appointed as the new representative, and that a representative from TCIP also take part in the RPC meetings since TCIP has been designated as a nominee partner on behalf of Türkiye.</p> <p>4. It has been decided that the founding shareholder of ECO Reinsurance Company on behalf of Türkiye will be the Turkish Catastrophe Insurance Pool (TCIP) instead of Ziraat Bank due to its international recognition, institutional capacity and experience in the field of reinsurance, and in this context, the shares belonging to the Bank will be transferred to TCIP and the capital increases that may be required in the future will be covered by TCIP.</p> <p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the approval of the 273<sup>rd</sup> Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), held on February 27, 2023, was obtained, which mandated the Secretariat to organize 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the G.A preceded by 1<sup>st</sup> BoD Meeting of the ERC. However, actions on remaining decisions are awaited from the parties to ERC and the Secretariat has been pursuing with the parties in 2023.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the Secretariat for their readiness to host the meetings and requested the parties to ERC to implement the decisions of the Meeting so that ERC can be operationalized at an early date.</p> <p>The Council invited remaining Member States to consider joining this important ECO body for trade facilitation, in order to utilize its potential and role in furtherance of businesses and economic activities in the region.</p>	
31.	<p>The Secretariat apprised the Council that the <i>1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Capital Markets Supervisory Authorities</i> was hosted by I.R of Pakistan in 2022. The Secretariat further informed that <i>the Islamic Republic of Iran</i> announced the schedule <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Capital Markets Supervisory Authorities to be held</i> on 11-12 June 2023 (Rescheduled on 18-19 June 2023) in physical mode, offering local hospitality for 2 representatives from each ECO Member State. However, the meeting could not be held for lack of quorum as nominations were received from I.R of Pakistan and Republic of Uzbekistan.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for virtually hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting</p>	

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	<p>of ECO Heads of Capital Markets Supervisory Authorities in 2022. The Council further appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for scheduling the <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Capital Markets Supervisory Authorities</i> in June 2023 in physical mode and their offer for local hospitality.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the I.R of Iran for their offer to host the said Meeting in 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2024 (in-physical mode) and requested the remaining Member States to share their nominations and focal point details.</p>	
32.	<p>The Council was informed that considering the importance of investment promotion among the Member States of ECO Region, the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed the Secretariat, to initiate cooperation with UNCTAD in preparing and publishing “<i>The Investment Policy Review (IPR) of the Member States of ECO Region</i>”.</p> <p>The Council recommended the Secretariat to complete the investment policy details from all Member States before initiating work on the proposal – recalling that such information has so far been received from 5 Member States, i.e. the Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Turkmenistan.</p>	
33.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that UNCTAD has been approached to conduct the Investment Policy Review of the ECO Region. A draft project ‘Concept Paper’ to this effect has been prepared, and is still under consideration, in particular, for the required funding for initiating the IPR project. The council tasked the Secretariat to pursue the project with UNCTAD to complete the IPR of the ECO region.</p>	
34.	<p>The ECO Secretariat recalled the Council that during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Economy in Tehran, the Republic of Tajikistan was designated as the coordinating country for ECO initiatives on investment.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States to volunteer for hosting the <i>4<sup>th</sup> ECO Investment Conference</i> and requested the Secretariat to pursue collaboration with IsDB for funding to host the event.</p>	
35.	<p>The Council appreciated Republic of Uzbekistan for organizing the <i>5<sup>th</sup> ECO Business Forum</i> on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023, in Tashkent on the sidelines of the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit, successfully.</p>	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>The Council invited Member States to offer hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Business Forum for trade promotion in 2024 and urged them to coordinate with their National Chambers / private sector bodies/ trade bodies for the timely confirmation of their participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Business Forum, when scheduled in 2024.</p>	
36.	<p>The Council took note of the fact that 20<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and 30<sup>th</sup> <i>Executive Committee &amp; Specialized Committees Meetings</i> could not be held in 2023 due to lack of quorum. The Council highlighted the importance of these meeting; stating that regular holding of these events will be more conducive for trade expansion in the region, especially through active participation and vibrant contribution by the national chambers.</p> <p>The Council suggested that the Member States may kindly urge their National Chambers to play an active role in promoting regional trade initiatives of the ECO CCI. The National Chambers may be encouraged to start negotiating to establish the Permanent Secretariat of the ECO-CCI.</p>	
37.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that the 2<sup>nd</sup> <i>Meeting of Technical Committee on Electronic data Exchange (EDI)</i> was hosted by the I.R of Iran on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in virtual format, which mandated the Secretariat to schedule the Working Group Meeting of the Experts on EDI to finalize technical aspects of data elements and other details for the consideration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> <i>meeting of the Technical Committee on EDI.</i> The 3<sup>rd</sup> <i>meeting of the Technical Committee on EDI could not take place as the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Working Group of the Experts on EDI</i> could not finalize the data elements and other details and the 2<sup>nd</sup> <i>WG Meeting of Experts on EDI</i> could not be scheduled due to lack of quorum.</p> <p>The Secretariat further informed the Council that the following are awaited from Member States, as agreed in the 1<sup>st</sup> <i>Meeting of the Working Group of Expert on Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The response/input on a proforma for input along with the report of the Meeting for provision of information on exchange of data elements in Member States.</li> <li>2. The Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Türkiye offered to hold joint workshop on EDI, E-commerce and Paperless Trade, to share their practices and experiences</li> </ol>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Working Group Meeting. The Council requested Member States to provide necessary details of data elements on the said Proforma, and share their Focal Points at their earliest convenience.</p> <p>The Council noted the fact that the “2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group of Expert on Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)” could not be organized in 2023 due to lack of quorum and the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Technical Committee on EDI.’ The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Technical Committee on EDI could not take place as the Working Group could not finalize the data elements and details.</p> <p>The Council tasked the Secretariat to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Working Group of Expert on Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) in 2024 in order to finalize data elements, draft documents and recommendations, etc.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the offer of Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Technical Committee on EDI meeting in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2024 and the Secretariat will host the 2<sup>nd</sup> WG Meeting of Experts on EDI. The Council appreciated the offer the Republic of Türkiye to host workshop on EDI prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> WG Meeting of Experts on EDI.</p>	
38.	<p>The Council requested Member States, which have not signed or ratified “the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen” and “the Additional Protocol to the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen and Transit Drivers of ECO Member States” to sign and ratify for early implementation of the Agreement.</p>	
39.	<p>The Council took note of the draft project document titled “Study on Impediments in Issuance of ECO Business Visa Stickers to the Businessmen of the ECO Region for Greater Collaboration between the Business Communities in the ECO Region”.</p> <p>The Secretariat recalled that the 32<sup>nd</sup> RPC instructed the Secretariat to pursue the matter to initiate the requisite study in the line with exiting schemes in other regions like SAARC etc. The study project was circulated among Member States in July 2022 for soliciting their views with special consideration to the demand of business communities in the region. In response, the Republic of Azerbaijan has informed that the existing system of visa issuance and</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>facilitation is sufficient to cater its needs. Likewise, the Republic of Tajikistan has conveyed that they have visa-free regime for five (5) ECO Member States, and has started simplified procedure for the rest three (3) out of total nine (9) ECO Member States as of January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017.</p>	
40.	<p>The Secretariat further informed the Council that The ECO-CCI was requested to prepare a detailed account of the problems and bottlenecks being faced by the business community in visa issuance and facilitation.</p> <p>The matter, thereafter, was brought to the notice of 267<sup>th</sup> CPR and the CPR tasked the Secretariat to devise “a <i>Questionnaire on Business Visa Sticker Scheme for Businessmen of the ECO Region</i>”, and circulate among Member States to get their input as pursuing the study project will take substantial time. Further, the Secretariat was requested to subsequently host a <i>Virtual Meeting of the Stakeholders</i> to discuss the input in the matter. The Secretariat prepared and shared the draft questionnaire with Member States, requesting Member States and ECO-CCI to share their views on the questionnaire, status of Agreements and provide nominations for the virtual meeting. The reply of Member States and ECO-CCI is awaited.</p> <p>The Secretariat informed the Council that <i>Virtual Meeting of the Stakeholders</i> was scheduled twice by the Secretariat i.e. on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 but postponed due to non confirmation of participation. The nominations were received only from I.R of Iran, I.R of Pakistan and Republic of Tajikistan. The Republic of Azerbaijan expressed no interest to participate in the virtual meeting.</p> <p>The Council requested the Member States to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide comments on the questionnaire of the secretariat.</li> <li>2. Share nominations for the virtual meeting.</li> <li>3. ECO CCI may provide input on impediments faced by the business community.</li> </ol> <p>In view of the above, the Secretariat recommended that ‘in line with the recommendations of ‘267<sup>th</sup> CPR’, the project may be closed.</p> <p>The Council tasked the Secretariat to pursue the matter through virtual meeting and approved</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	to close the project titled <u>Study on Impediments in Issuance of ECO Business Visa Stickers to the Businessmen of the ECO Region for Greater Collaboration between the Business Communities in the ECO Region</u> ” as per the recommendations of the 267 <sup>th</sup> CPR and prepare a new project based on the needs and interests to be provided by the Membership and ECO CCI.	
41.	<p>The Secretariat informed the Council that during 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit (November 2021, Ashgabat), the Republic of Uzbekistan initiated a proposal on ‘Establishment of a Centre for Trade, Investment, Innovation within the Framework of the ECO’. The Concept Paper was also prepared by Republic of Uzbekistan and it was circulated by the Secretariat among the Membership for their views/comments. So far, views/comments have been received from Republic of Azerbaijan, I.R of Iran, I.R of Pakistan and ECO CCI. The views/comments from the remaining Member States are awaited.</p> <p>The Council requested the remaining Member States to share their views/comments on the ‘Concept Paper’ and tasked the Secretariat to follow up this important initiative to make trade centre operational.</p>	
<b>B. SECTOR: TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS</b>		
<b>Strategies, Policies and General Guidelines:</b>		
42.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Uzbekistan for hosting the 12 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Transport on 1-2 November 2023 in Tashkent and requested the Member States to prioritize implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the meeting in their national strategies.	
43.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 13 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Transport and requested the Secretariat to make necessary arrangements for organizing the Meeting during 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2024.	
44.	The Council underlined the recommendation of the Ministerial Meeting on Transport to strengthen connectivity through extending the transport corridors to neighboring regions and international markets.	
<b>I. LEGAL FRAMEWORK: TTFA</b>		

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Implementation of Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA)</b>		
45.	The Council requested the parties to fully implement the provisions of the TTFA and in particular regarding Visa simplification and border crossing facilitation to enhance cooperation and facilitate transit transport and avoid any practice in breach of their commitments.	
46.	The Council welcomed development regarding ratification of the TTFA by Turkmenistan and requested the latter to deposit its “Instruments of Ratification” as early as possible to the Secretariat. The Council also was informed of commencement of the internal procedures in the Republic of Uzbekistan to accede to the TTFA” and requested the latter to expedite signing and ratification of the Agreement.	
47.	The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to organize the 9 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC and the 15 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Railway Authorities in May or June 2024.	
48.	The Council requested the Member States to organize the 11 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of Road Committee of TTCC by first half of 2024.	
49.	The Council requested the Member States to consider acceding to major international transport facilitation mechanisms and legal instruments, such as the e-TIR and e-CMR, Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) and Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP), Unified railway Law (URL) and other relevant conventions, and requested the Secretariat to explore possibility of implementing/organizing capacity building workshops in collaboration with the relevant international organizations in the mentioned areas. The Council also requested the Member States to actively participate in the ongoing negotiations for development of new international legal frameworks on transport cooperation.	
50.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye for organizing workshops upon the request of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on ADR, ATA Carnets, Border Crossing Points modernization, Digital TACHOGRAPHS, TIR System and eTIR and welcomed the offer of the Republic of Türkiye to organize a new workshop in 2024 for the interested Member States. The Secretariat was requested to explore possibility of conducting study on need assessment of the Member States for accession to the ADR and ATP Conventions.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
51.	The Council welcomed accession of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP) and considered it as a major achievement.	
52.	The Council requested the Member States to consider providing their comments and proposals on the Draft “Modalities for Implementation of Article 7 of the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA)” suggested in June, 2023 by Iran and circulated by the Secretariat. The Council further recommended for holding an online meeting for discussion on the draft modalities.	
53.	The Council welcomed the establishment of the Multimodal Committee as auxiliary body for the TTCC as per the decisions of the 10 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of TTCC and requested the Secretariat to organize its meetings.	
54.	The Council requested the Member States to host the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of Insurance Committees of the TTCC as well as the meeting of consular officials by 2024.	
<b>II. RAILWAY TRANSPORT</b>		
55.	The Council commended obtaining “Standing Observer Status at the Ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation Committee of Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) by the Secretariat and requested the Council of Permanent Representative to support participation of the Secretariat in the relevant Meetings.	
56.	The Council encouraged the Member States to cooperate in establishing a data exchange system for railway services to facilitate transit and reduce customs formalities. In this connection, the Council also requested the Secretariat to consider organizing technical workshops in 2024 virtually.	
57.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to regularly provide the Secretariat with their Statistical Annual Report on the bilateral and transit operations of the railway sector to enable monitoring the transport operations in the region.	
58.	The Council requested the Secretariat to organize Training Courses/Workshops on Safety and Security Aspects of Transportation particularly in Maritime, Road and Railway Sectors and in this regard, the Council also requested the Member States to support Secretariat’s initiatives.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Area Priority No. 1: Railway between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI Railway)</b>		
59.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to consider hosting the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Working Group of KTI (PWG- KTI) in 2024 to review implementation of the recommendations of the “Sub- Working Group” and the relevant Road Map of the Corridor.	
60.	The Council requested the Secretariat to organize the “2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the “Sub-Working Group for Commercialization of the KTI Corridor” back to back with the meeting of the PWG-KTI and facilitate participation of private sector including freight forwarders and other relevant stakeholders to finalize the roadmap and tariff rates.	
61.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to implement the Action Plan of the First Sub-Working Group for commercialization of the KTI Corridor including, among others, establishment of relevant website and circulation of tariffs.	
62.	The Council welcomed the proposal the Republic of Kazakhstan to organize an “International Ministerial Conference on North- South KTI Corridor” on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024 in Astana and requested the Secretariat to make necessary arrangements including exact for date and details of hospitality.	
63.	The Council recommended on elevating the Small-sized Project on “Development of Economic Corridors along the KTI Railway” into a big-sized Project and include its extension to the neighboring regions and requested the Secretariat to approach the relevant financial institutions for their partnership in the project.	
64.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to regularly provide the Secretariat their Statistical Annual Report on the bilateral and transit operations of the corridor to enable monitoring the performance of the train services.	
65.	The Council will consider the proposal of the Kazakh side to conduct an operational assessment of the North-South ITC, including on the route Russia-Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran	
<b>Area priority No. 2: ECO Container Train on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) route</b>		
66.	The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to expedite construction\rehabilitation	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	of Taftan – Quetta segment of the ITI Railway Corridor and convey its periodically progress report. Pakistan's Delegation informed that negotiations with ADB are underway to explore financing Quetta-Taftan Railway Track.	
67.	The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to consider construction of the Railway with Standard (European) Gauge to avoid extra transshipment cost at Taftan Border and facilitate access of international commercial wagons easy access to Quetta.	
68.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to regularly provide their Statistical Annual Report of the bilateral and transit operations in the corridor to enable monitoring the performance of the train services.	
69.	The Council requested the Member States to update the list of authorized freight forwarders in the Corridor and consider including more forwarders to fair competition among the business community.	
70.	The Council recommended the en-route Member States to consider multimodal transportation on the corridor and requested to enhance cooperation with relevant international organizations in this regard.	
71.	The Council requested the Secretariat to organize a transport forum for commercialization of the ITI Corridor involving the freight forwarders and business community in Istanbul to help revitalize the corridor.	
72.	The Council requested the en-route countries for publicizing the regular operation of the ITI Train among the business communities.	
73.	The Council welcomed the engagement of the Bulgarian private sector in the ITI train services and requested the en-route countries to expand the corridor further to international destinations and markets towards Europe and China.	
74.	The Council requested en-route Member State to provide information before the shipment of cargos and to ship cargos after receiving the necessary approval from en-route Member State. Türkiye was also requested to continue making efforts to mobilize cargo towards Pakistan destinations	
75.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye for hosting the 13 <sup>th</sup> HLWGM and welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the 14 <sup>th</sup> HLWGM (Hybrid Format) during	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2024 including participation of all public and private stake holders. Further, the Council requested the Secretariat to finalize the exact date and other details in consultation with the host authorities through diplomatic channel.	
<b>Area Priority No. 3: ECO Container Train on Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty routes</b>		
76.	The Council requested the en-route countries to fully implement the Plan of Action endorsed by the 2 <sup>nd</sup> HLWG and furnish their progress report to the ECO Secretariat.	
77.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Republic of Uzbekistan to host the 3 <sup>rd</sup> HLWG of the Corridor back to back with the next Meetings of “UNECE/ECO Coordination Committee on the Trans Caspian and the Almaty-Tehran-Istanbul Corridors” in 2024 and also consider inviting interested countries and organizations.	
78.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to provide regularly their Statistical Annual Report on the bilateral and transit operations in the corridor to enable monitoring the performance of the train services of the corridor.	
79.	Kazakhstani side within the framework of the ECO meeting, fully supports the initiative of digitalization of cargo transportation along the Istanbul-Almaty and Bandar Abbas-Almaty railway route.	
80.	The meeting was briefed by the Islamic Republic of Iran on the developments regarding construction of new railway route between Iran and Türkiye (from Marand City toward Cheshmeh Soraya border point) that will be extended to Igdir Railway in Türkiye and will further contribute to the enhancement of transit capacity of the Almaty-Tehran- Istanbul and ITI railway corridors.	
<b>Area priority No. 4: Railway Project for the connection of China to Europe through Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Iran (KTAI)</b>		
81.	The Council requested the Secretariat to consider involving technical entities in Afghanistan in the follow-up mechanisms of the Secretariat to facilitate and speed up functionalization of the KTAI Corridor.	

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82.	The Council encouraged the en-route countries of KTAI Railway to complete the “missing links” in their relevant segments, in line with recommendation-5 of the Turkmenbashi Declaration (3 May, 2018) and in this connection appreciated Iran for the rehabilitation of the Khaaf- Herat (Rozanak) rail way as part of the KTAI Corridor.	
83.	The Council requested the en-route countries to consider re-structuring the project design into separate but easily workable segments, and provide their suggestions in this regard.	
84.	The Council requested ECO TDB, IsDB, ADB (CAREC Program) and AIIB to consider financing the feasibility study and construction of the missing links of the KTAI Corridor.	
85.	The Council recommended the Member States and Secretariat for involvement and development of the KTAI Corridor within the framework of BRI mega project.	
<b>Area Priority No. 5: Railway Project on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran) route</b>		
86.	The Council requested the Secretariat to start negotiations with ECO international partners, including inter alia, UNESCAP, and IsDB for conducting a study project for commercialization of the route.	
87.	The Council invited the parties to consider holding the 6 <sup>th</sup> HLWG Meeting on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran)-Astara (Azerbaijan) in 2024.	
88.	The Council requested Secretariat to prepare a concept paper on “Digital Modeling for Advanced Railroad Construction and Maintenance of ECO Railways (on a pilot basis at Resht-Astara railway)” aimed at reduction of costs using digital design simulator.	
<b>III. ROAD TRANSPORT</b>		
<b>Area Priority No.1: Development of ECO Road Corridors on Kyrgyz Republic-Tajikistan- Afghanistan- Iran (KTAI) and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) routes</b>		
89.	The Council highlighted the recommendations of 12th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport (1-2 November, Tashkent) regarding establishment of TIR Parks at Border Crossing Points (BCPs) and expansion of transit capacity of BCPs and mandated the Secretariat to conduct	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	technical meetings in this regard.	
90.	The Council requested the en-route countries for immediate implementation of the Action Plan approved by the 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> HLWGMs on KTAI and ITI road corridors. The Action Plan will serve as a framework for systematic monitoring.	
91.	The Council requested the ITI en-route countries to remove the existing bottlenecks for facilitation of transit transport with the aim of providing an alternative route of connectivity between East and West.	
92.	The Council appreciated offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for readiness to host the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the High Level Working Group on ITI Road Corridor during 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2024 (in person) and instructed the Secretariat to coordinate with the host authorities for date(s) and hospitality details through diplomatic channel.	
93.	The Council requested the en-route countries of ITI to expand the corridor to international destinations and markets towards Europe and China.	
94.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to regularly provide their Statistical Annual Report of the bilateral and transit operations in the corridor to enable monitoring the performance of the train services, and took note of the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran requesting the Secretariat to consider possibility of establishment of Management Information System (MIS) to regularly update and monitor statistical data of transport in the region	
95.	The Council requested the en-route countries to facilitate the movement of trucks in their territory, avoid any disturbance and unnecessary practices and remove all the bottlenecks in the corridor to help enhance regional connectivity and economic integration.	
<b>Area Priority No. 2</b> <b>Development of ECO Road Corridors on Kyrgyz Republic-Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan- Iran-Türkiye (KUTIT) and Tajikistan-Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan- Iran -Türkiye (TUTIT)</b>		
96.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Tajikistan for hosting the “First Meeting of the High-Level Working Group on the “Tajikistan-Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Türkiye” (TUTIT) Multimodal Corridor” on September 21, 2023 in Dushanbe and requested the en-route countries to consider hosting the 2nd Meeting of the High-Level Working Group in first half of 2024 (in person).	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
97.	The Council requested the en-route MS to consider inviting China for participation in the meetings of the HLWGs of the KUTIT and TUTIT corridors.	
98.	The Council requested the en-route Member States of TUTIT Multimodal Corridor to implement the recommendations and outcomes of the First Meeting of TUTIT Corridor.	
99.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to regularly provide their Statistical Annual Report of the bilateral and transit operations in the corridors to enable monitoring the performance of the train services.	
100.	The Council requested the Kyrgyz Republic to consider organizing of the First Meeting of the High-Level Working Group on KUTIT Multimodal Corridor in 2024 (in person) and instructed the Secretariat to coordinate with the host authorities for date(s) and hospitality details.	
<b>Area Priority No. 3</b> <b>Facilitation of border crossing procedures</b>		
101.	The Council highlighted the geopolitical developments in the world and encouraged the Member States to take serious measures to provide alternative options to the international community for East-West and North-South connectivity through improvement of infrastructure and simplification of transit procedures in their respective territories.	
102.	The Council requested the en-route Member States for transit facilitations at all the borders and avoiding any practice of closure of the BCPs to secure the unhindered passage of trucks and drivers throughout the region and beyond.	
103.	The Council requested the Member States to establish 'TIR Green Lanes' along the main ECO transport routes. The Council also requested the Member States to keep the Secretariat informed of progress in this regard as well as any progress in customs improvements at their relevant border cross points (BCPs).	
104.	The Council requested the interested Member States to abolish road transport permits to foster regional trade growth. The Council also requested the interested Member States to suspend bilateral and transit permit system for a test phase of two years starting from 2025 till 2027 to examine costs and benefits of abolishment of permits in the region.	
105.	The Council urged the interested Member States to continue efforts to achieve the ultimate objective of abolishing permit system as well as other bottlenecks envisaged in TTFA and relevant	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	documents. The Council also took note of the implementation of e-permit system between Türkiye and Uzbekistan, and the Republic of Türkiye invited the other interested Member States that still apply permit system to join the system. .	
106.	The Council requested the Secretariat to approach the relevant international organization for their assistance in digitalizing the transit including through implementing eTIR and eCMR.	
107.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat to organize the Workshop on Border Crossing Facilitation and TIR Green Lanes jointly with IRU, IsDB on 4-5 March in Istanbul and requested the Republic of Türkiye to kindly provide local hospitality for the participants.	
108.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 9 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Customs Committee of TTCC in 2024.	
109.	The Council requested the Secretariat to further institutionalize cooperation with the International Road Union (IRU) to speed up and enhance transit and transport facilitation in the ECO Region.	
110.	The Council requested the en-route Member States to expedite their construction in the BCPs and remove any limitation in this respect.	
111.	The Council welcomed the proposal by the Republic of Türkiye to share experiences and knowledge regarding reconstruction and modernization of the BCPs with the Member States and requested the Secretariat to consider organizing a Capacity Building Workshop in this connection in collaboration with the Customs Administration of Türkiye.	
<b>Area Priority No. 4</b> <b>Project: Joint IDB/UNECE Project on Transport Geographical Information Systems (GIS)</b>		
112.	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to finalize the negotiations with UNECE and IDB for the commencement of the next phases of the project including i) preparation of the list of priority investment projects; ii) preparing regional study on “Benchmarking transport construction and maintenance costs”; iii) preparing regional study on the “Establishment of multi-donor RCI financing facilities”.	
113.	The Council requested the Member States and UNECE and the project team to update the GIS maps with ECO’s recent maps and development plans.	

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114.	The Council recommended the Secretariat's requested to recruit a technical staff on temporary basis for cooperation with the project team and the Member States to follow up the GIS project and assist in devising and implementing the 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase of the project on temporary basis.	
115.	The Council requested the Member States to update their transport data on the ITIO GIs platform to provide the stakeholders proper use of the platform.	
116.	In pursuance of the decision of 12 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Transport, the Council mandated the ECO Secretariat to establish GIS section under ECO Transport & Communication Directorate (T&C) for mapping of regional connectivity networks in the fields of transport (road, rail, air and maritime) and other regional connectivity initiatives of the Organization.	
<b>Area Priority No.5: ECO Visa Scheme for Drivers</b>		
117.	The Council requested the interested Member States (except Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan and Türkiye) to consider acceding and implementing the Visa Pilot Scheme to help further facilitation of visa procedure for the drivers.	
118.	The Council requested the Member States to facilitate more in the Visa formalities and avoid unhelpful practices that disturb the smooth transit in the region.	
119.	The Council requested the Secretariat to organize the meeting of the Consular Officials of the Member States to discuss the latest developments and cooperation related to visa issues.	
<b>Area Priority No.6: Public Private Partnership: ECO-TIR National Associations Consultative Group (ECO-TIRACG)</b>		
120.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat and IRU for jointly functionalizing of the Group and organizing the First Meeting of the "Consultative Group of ECO TIR Issuing and Guaranteeing Associations" (ECO-TIRACG) and requested the ECO-TIRACG to participate in the relevant meetings to contribute in development of connectivity in the region.	
121.	The Council welcomed the offer of Chamber of Commerce of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of ECO TIR National Associations Consultative Group (ECO-TIRACG) on 29-30 June 2024 (in person).	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Area Priority No.7: Public Private Partnership: ECO Freight Forwarders Association</b>		
122.	The Council requested the Member States (interested freight forwarders associations) to host the First Meeting of the “ECO Freight Forwarders Association”.	
123.	The Council requested the Secretariat to prepare the roadmap, statute and other basic documents of the ECO Freight Forwarders Association and circulate the same to the Member States.	
<b>MARITIME COOPERATION</b>		
<b>Area Priority No. 1 Meeting of Heads of Maritime Organizations (HRMO)</b>		
124.	The Council welcomed offer of the Republic of Türkiye to host the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the HRMO at the end of May 2024, in Ankara, in coordination with ECO Secretariat and the exact date and details of hospitality will be conveyed through diplomatic channel by the host country.	
125.	The Council requested the Member States to organize capacity building workshops on various areas of maritime industry and in particular on Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).	
126.	The Council requested the Member States to arrange field visits to their sea/dry ports for onsite exploration of facilities and opportunities by the officials and interested private sector investors.	
<b>Area Priority No. 2 “Establishment of a RO- RO Cooperation in the Caspian Sea</b>		
127.	The Council welcomed the proposal of establishment a committee for enhancement of cooperation on promotion of Ro-Ro services in the Caspian Sea by the pre-coastal states. In this regard, the Council requested the Member States to coordinate and cooperate in arrangements.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Area Priority No. 3</b> <b>“Establishment of a common gateway among ECO countries – ECO Gate”</b>		
128.	The Council requested the Member States for designating national consultant to cooperate with the international consultant to implement the ECO Gate project.	
129.	The Council recommended the request of the Secretariat to the Member States for active participation in the relevant meetings of the Project.	
<b>CIVIL AVIATION</b>		
<b>Area Priority No.1</b> <b>ECO Working Group on Civil Aviation:</b>		
130.	The Council requested the Member States to provide the Secretariat with their proposals and requirements with regards to capacity building programs on civil aviation in 2024.	
131.	The Council took note of the willingness of the interested Member States to discuss on the cooperation for establishment of direct flights to the designated airports of Gabala and Samarkand.	
132.	The Council requested the Republic of Azerbaijan to host the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ECO Working Group on Civil Aviation (WGCA) during 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of 2024 (in person) in Gabala as the designated ECO Air Hub.	
133.	The Council welcomed offer of the Republic of Türkiye to share its experience on its newly adopted civil aviation approach, which involves digitalization and optimization.	
<b>Area Priority No.2</b> <b>Development of ECO Air Hubs</b>		
134.	The Council requested the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Uzbekistan to collaborate with the Secretariat in preparing the strategy, road map and marketing plans for enhancement of the said airports to serve as ECO Air Hubs.	
135.	The Council took note of the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to set up a task force on the sidelines of the civil aviation meeting, for evaluating technical requirements for ECO Air Hub candidates within the region.	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
136.	The Council requested the Republic of Uzbekistan to host the High Level Meeting of Private Airlines of the ECO Region in 2024 (in person) in Samarkand as the designated ECO Air Hub.	
137.	The Council noted the statement of the Republic of Türkiye stating its readiness to remove frequency limitation for 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Traffic Flights with ECO Member States reciprocally to lead more connectivity and boost economic development in line with Long Term Vision of Liberalization of ICAO.	
<b>ECO TRANSPORT EXCELLENCE AWARD</b>		
138.	The Council requested the ECO – CCI, other potential candidates and the Member States to consider organizing the ECO Transport Excellence Award Ceremony on the sidelines of the Ministerial Meetings on Transport and requested the CPR to allocate necessary funds and facilities for implementing the initiative in a proper manner.	
139.	The Council requested the Secretariat to include "digital connectivity" to the modalities of the Award in recognition of the significance of digitalization in transport and connectivity.	
<b>COMMUNICATIONS (ICT)</b>		
140.	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on 12-13 July, 2023 and requested the Member States to implement the decisions and recommendations of the Meeting. The Council also requested the Member States to consider organizing the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on ICT in 2024.	
141.	The Council requested the Member States to organize the Meeting of the “ECO High Level Working Group of ICT Regulatory Authorities”, and requested the Secretariat to follow up active participation of the Member States that will further enhance cooperation in the regulatory areas.	
142.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Republic of Türkiye to host the 3rd Meeting of ECO- ICT Working Group for exploring the avenues of cooperation on cyber security in ECO region in 2024 and requested the Secretariat to make necessary arrangements in consultation with the host authorities.	
143.	The Council requested the Secretariat to enhance cooperation with the ITU on ICT areas and implementation of joint projects.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
144.	The Council requested the Secretariat to implement, in consultation with ITU, a study project on “The ways and means to establish and develop ECO regional fiber optic network” and in this regard the Council also recommended to recruit a specialist for implementation of the Study Project in first half of 2024.	
145.	In line with the recommendation of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Meeting on ICT regarding development of new telecommunication backbone routes between Europe and Asia, the Council welcomed the proposal of the honorable president of the Republic of Kazakhstan to establish a fiber optics line along the KTI Corridor connecting Russia and the en-route countries with the rest of the world and requested the Secretariat to collect the relevant project proposals from the en-route Member States for implementation of the proposed subject.	
146.	The Council requested the Member States to consider organizing technical and scientific capacity building training courses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Artificial Intelligence.	
147.	The Council requested the Member States to organize technical meetings on cooperation, among others, on space technology, artificial intelligence, data transit, CERTs cooperation, emerging technologies, establishment of cybersecurity and e-Government committees and Startups.	
<b>Cooperation with Regional and International Organizations</b>		
148.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat in strengthening cooperation with Regional/International Organizations, including IsDB, UNECE, UNESCAP, IRU, UIC, OSJD, ITU, AIIB, OTIF, CAREC/ADB and others, to seek expertise and financial/technical assistance for advancing ECO’s mandated projects and, in that regard, the Council encouraged the Secretariat to keep continue such efforts.	
149.	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to institutionalize cooperation with the interested international organizations\agencies\unions in order to enhance transit transport and communication cooperation in the region.	
150.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat in enhancing and institutionalize the relations with IRU, UNECE, OTIF, UNOHRLLS and TRACECA and requested the Secretariat to establish relations with the Secretariat of the International North –South Corridor.	

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<b>C. SECTOR: ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>ENERGY</b>		
<b>General Provisions</b>		
151.	The Council recognized that ECO can capitalize on the increasing options of future regional energy architecture, ensuring energy accessibility, affordability, supply security and resource-use efficiency, while bolstering climate action in parallel. In this vein, the Council reiterated the critical importance of nexus approach and nexus management in regional decision-making within ECO.	
152.	The Council took note of the steady efforts for mainstreaming the sustainable energy and regional electricity market in the overall energy agenda of ECO in pursuance of “ECO Vision 2025” and “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030” and its Action Plan, as well as the recent global and regional energy trends and developments. This regional focus was manifested in development of two flagship energy projects of ECO, namely the Establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) and Establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO).	
<b>Priority area 1: Implementation of ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030 / Action Plan and the decisions of 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Energy</b>		
153.	The Council recommended all Member States to reflect and leverage the “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030” and its Action Plan in their relevant national development agenda and policies for enhancement of regional energy cooperation.	
154.	The Council further invited the Member States to submit issues in their interests and needs for further monitoring of the “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030”, as well as review its Action Plan and initiate potentially feasible project proposals to the Secretariat that would stimulate regional energy cooperation.	
155.	The Council thus called on the Member States to designate by 20 February 2024 their National Focal Points in charge of effective implementation and monitoring of the “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030” and its Action Plan	
156.	The Council welcomed the renewed intention of the Republic of Uzbekistan to host the 5 <sup>th</sup> Energy Ministerial Meeting in 2024 and encouraged the Member States to convey ideas/proposals/recommendations for stocktaking at the subject meeting.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Priority area 2: Sustainable Energy Transition and Establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Centre</b>		
157.	The Council called upon the Member States to be actively involved in operationalization process of CECECO, most notably in expediting regulatory procedures, political, financial and technical support for successful and soonest launching of the Operational Phase of the subject Project.	
158.	The Council welcomed the signing of the Charter of CECECO by the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Türkiye in the course of 2023, as well as the recent formal intention of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to sign the Charter, and invited other Member States to speed up its signing and ratification in the first half of 2024.	
159.	The Council invited key stakeholders, namely the Republic of Azerbaijan as the host country, ECO, UNIDO and international donors to double efforts for scaling up fund-raising of CECECO Project, particularly in terms of seed financing.	
160.	The Council invited the Republic of Azerbaijan as the host country of CECECO to consider the possibility of hosting one of the next Steering Committee Meetings of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC) in 2025 or 2026, which may greatly contribute to global outreach of energy transition by ECO.	
161.	The Council called for active engagement of the Member States during realization of the Project Proposal on setting up and implementing energy efficiency targets in the ECO Region.	
162.	The Council welcomed the willingness of Turkmenistan to host the 5 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Experts Group on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources in Ashgabat in 2024 and encouraged the Member States to actively participate at this meeting to keep up momentum for mainstreaming sustainable energy transition to the cleaner sources within ECO.	
<b>Priority area 3: Establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM)</b>		
163.	The Council called on the Member States to pursue proactive partnership within the Project on establishment of ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) and invited them to render all necessary support for its successful development.	
164.	The Council requested the Republic of Tajikistan or any other Member State to consider hosting the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Experts Group Meeting on establishment of ECO-REM in the first quarter of 2024 and invited all Member States to participate actively at the subject meeting	

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165.	The Council appreciated the engagement of the ECO Secretariat with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) in the course of 2023 and beginning of 2024 with a view to speed up the launching and implementation of ECO-REM Project. In this context, the Council welcomed the supporting of the Feasibility Study of the ECO-REM Project through the dedicated kickoff event organized virtually on 24 January 2024. The Council further called on the Member States to be actively involved in the schedule of activities on the subject project for 2024, most notably in development and presentation of a policy brief by the international consultant, and based on that brief in elaboration and further presentation of a sub-regional roadmap in this respect by the end of 2024.	
165.	The Council acknowledged the necessity of seed funding from the relevant ECO project financing scheme and task the Secretariat to continue exploring best international practices towards establishment of regional electricity markets through development cooperation with other international partners.	
166.	The Council took note of the readiness of the I.R. Iran to pursue the bilateral dimension of ECO-REM Project with the participation of the Republic of Türkiye. In this regard, despite several previous attempts to organize a trilateral meeting (including, Iran, Türkiye, and the Secretariat). I.R. Iran may ask the Secretariat to host the next meeting in this respect.	
167.	The Council took note of the concurrence by the I.R. Iran of the revised ToR of the ECO-REM Project prepared by the Secretariat. The Council called on the Member States to expedite sharing their views on the subject ToR and further tasked the Secretariat to organize dedicated meeting(s) to finalize it.	
168.	The Council welcomed the readiness of the I.R. Iran to host and present a webinar on the “general dimensions of a national electricity market, advantages vs. challenges” in pursuance of the establishment of ECO-REM and with a view to carry out capacity building and experience sharing, I.R. Iran is ready to transmit tentative date(s) of the webinar to be held in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024. Further information and the poster of the webinar will be available to the Secretariat in due course. The Council further tasked the Secretariat to relay the information to the Member States and share its assumption regarding the number of potential audiences.	
169.	The Council took note of the Iranian proposal regarding establishment of the Economic Cooperation Organization Electricity Networks Operators Community (ECO-ENOC) with a view to	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>promote electricity energy security amongst its Member States through collective responses in electricity supply and providing trustworthy research and analysis on ways to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for its Member Countries and beyond. The I.R Iran expressed its willingness to host the First Meeting of ECO-ENOC in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024. The Council solicited the I.R. Iran to provide the detailed concept note on the initiative of the establishment of ECO-ENOC at the earliest convenience.</p>	
<b><i>Other priorities/ activities on energy</i></b>		
170.	The Council welcomed the willingness of I.R. Iran to host 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting on Establishment of Refinery Association in ECO Region in 2024.	
171.	The Council welcomed the proposal by the Iranian Ministry of Petroleum to hold training courses at its Oil & Gas International Training Center (OGITC) for the ECO Member States. The Council tasked the Secretariat to inform the OGITC of the themes of the required courses for the Member States.	
172.	The Council encouraged the Member States to stocktake their needs and interests in joint coherent activities within ECO related to upstream, midstream and downstream sectors.	
173.	The Council requested the Secretariat to pursue the partnerships and engagements with the UN System, Energy Charter, IRENA, IsDB and other global and regional organizations in the relevant fields in consultation with the Member States and setting out further roadmap for proceeding on it.	
174.	The Council recommended the Secretariat to take part in the relevant events of the abovementioned organizations and other interested partners, where appropriate, on a reciprocal basis with a view to promote energy cooperation for implementation of “ECO Vision 2025” and “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030” and its Action Plan.	
<b>C. SECTOR: ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>MINERALS</b>		
<b><i>Priority Area 1: Streamlining the project-oriented cooperation in the field of minerals</i></b>		
175.	The Council recognized that the recent global outlook of mineral markets poses serious challenges for ECO Member States, while mineral sector is one of the major contributors to their	

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	economies and industrial growth.	
176.	To this end, the Council called upon the Member States and the Secretariat to identify renewed mechanisms and solutions for enhancement of regional cooperation in the minerals sector with the strong focus on just, resource-efficient and sustainable transition.	
177.	The Council also called for heightening regional attention to resource-efficiency agenda, the strong nexus between production and consumption patterns, and inter-linkages with environmental concerns as a defining challenge of the twenty first century.	
178.	The Council took note of the International Roundtable "New horizons for enhanced regional cooperation in the field of minerals", organized on 26 October 2023 in Baku by the ECO Secretariat in partnership with the Chairmanship of Azerbaijan in ECO in a hybrid format, as an event facilitating regional cooperation in minerals, addressing critical challenges for engagements with international partners, and raising awareness on the best examples for ECO Region towards resource-efficient transition globally, diversification of sustainable material sources and integration of circular solutions in mining sector.	
179.	The Council welcomed the willingness of I.R. Pakistan to host 9 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of MEGM in 2024 in virtual mode probably in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024. The exact date will be communicated through diplomatic channels.	
180.	The Council invited the Member States to follow up the outcomes of the 8 <sup>th</sup> ECO MEGM through concrete steps and tasked the Secretariat to facilitate implementation of its decisions.	
181.	The Council encouraged the Member States to volunteer hosting / co-hosting the training courses for capacity building and sharing best practices in the ECO Region on various pertinent topics, namely Spatial Data Infrastructure; Scientific GNSS Data Processing; Local Geodetic Datum; Regional Deformation Study of the Earth; Orthophoto Generation; Cadastral and Cartographic Maps and Atlas, in accordance with the outcomes of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Geometrics Committee.	
182.	The Council recommended that project proposal "Preparation of the ECO-Environmental Quality Index (EQI) Map (1:5M) of the ECO Region (ECO-EQI)" could be launched with the understanding of the all Member States firm support. To this end Islamic Republic of Iran as the	

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	initiator country together with Secretariat may appeal one of the next CPR meetings for consideration and allocation of necessary budget from ECO FGPF.	
183.	The Council requested the Member States to work in close coordination with ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) within the project “World is our home”, which aims to create digital learning materials for nature sciences and geological heritage, provide students with interactive engaging resources, and enhance their understanding and appreciation of the world’s natural wonders. ECOEI will submit concept note to illustrate details to project for receiving viable support from Member States.	
<b><i>Other activities/capacity-building efforts</i></b>		
184.	The Council took note of the Fifth International Specialized Training Course titled “The Role of Cartography in Optimal Presentation of Spatial and Statistical Information” on Minerals (7-8 August 2023, online), organized by the National Cartographic Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran and ECO Secretariat, as a useful tool for regional capacity-building in the related areas, and invited the Member States to host similar training courses/workshops.	
185.	The Council invited the Member States to consider hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting of ECO Heads of Surveying and Mapping Organizations and encouraged them to actively participate and enrich the agenda of the subject meeting by providing project-oriented regional cooperation proposals.	
186.	The Council invited the Member States to volunteer hosting the 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Geomatics Committee aimed at exploring project-oriented opportunities in regional cooperation on geomatics.	
<b>C. SECTOR: ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>General Provisions</b>		
187.	The Council underscored the remarkable vulnerability of the ECO Region to environmental challenges and extreme climate conditions which can negatively affect the economic and social welfare of its Member States. In this vein, the Council stressed the urgency of environmental action and cooperation in the ECO Region as a crosscutting issue to all aspects of development in line with “ECO Vision 2025”, Tashkent Communiqué of the 16 <sup>th</sup> ECO Summit, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Paris Agreement, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity	



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	Framework.	
188.	The Council highlighted the need for a whole-of-government, a whole-of-society, and a whole-of-region approach, adequate financing, and positive practices underpinned by knowledge and science to deliver on the environment. In such a context, the Council welcomed the establishment of the High-Level Dialogue Platform on Environmental Cooperation in the ECO Region by the 26 <sup>th</sup> ECO Council of Ministers Meeting. The Council further appreciated the proposal by the Republic of Uzbekistan to organize its first meeting within the framework of the Samarkand Climate Forum in 2024 to jointly develop the “Samarkand Declaration” in order to combat sand and dust storms, which are becoming a serious problem, and invited the Member States to participate at the subject meeting in a proactive manner.	
189.	The Council welcomed the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability and Circular Economy in the ECO Region (RESCUE), developed by the ECO Secretariat in partnership with the Republic of Azerbaijan as a possible collaborative platform to launch and advance the future-oriented joint action in the related areas. While taking note that RESCUE might contribute to positioning the ECO Region as a proponent of just and sustainable transition in the international arena to address climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, the Council called upon the Member States to engage in proposed activities enlisted in its Concept Note, submitted in October 2023 by the ECO Secretariat.	
190.	The Council congratulated the Republic of Azerbaijan on its election as the host and chair of the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (29 <sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29)), which stands as one of the most eye-catching events globally. While considering COP29 as a unique opportunity for ECO to significantly increase its global outreach and keep up momentum of regional cooperation, the Council called for exploring the possibilities for convening the ECO Informal Ministerial Meeting on Environment and other possible meaningful events on the sidelines of this landmark meeting.	
191.	The Council emphasized the importance of integrating and mainstreaming the environment into decision-making at every level including policies, strategies, plans, programs, and budgets. The Council also called for reducing harmful incentives and scaling up positive encouragements for the environment by all the Member States.	
192.	The Council called upon the Member States to seek synergy solutions to address environmental	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	issues, and in this respect invited them to further get ownership and volunteer to propose and host events/conferences/seminars/workshops in this field in 2024.	
<b>Priority Area 1: Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming in the ECO Region / ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment</b>		
193.	The Council welcomed convening of the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Environment of the ECO Member States hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan in Dubai on the sidelines of the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference and its Joint Statement, which recommended the draft “ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment” and its annexes (2023-2030) for adoption by the decision-making bodies of ECO, as the revised version of the “Framework Plan of Action on Environment Cooperation and Global Warming in the ECO Region”.	
194.	The Council invited the Member States to adopt the ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment and its two annexes, namely the Work Plan on Climate Change and the Work Plan on Biodiversity, as well as to incorporate its components into their relevant national plans and programs. The Council took note of the Iranian proposal that Member States may consider, in the course of the upcoming ECO environmental meetings, the possibility of working out a new work plan dedicated to pollution control and waste management in the ECO region as another annex to the draft “ECO Cooperation Framework on the Environment” that could be approved separately.	
195.	The Council invited the volunteer Member State to host the formerly pledged ECO meetings on environment with a view to promote ongoing ECO activities/projects in environment, addressing the regional and global environmental challenges, and streamlining ECO environmental agenda. In this context, the Council welcomed the proposal of the Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan to convene the 6 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Samarkand in 2024. The Council further invited the Member States to take an active part at the subject meeting at the highest possible level.	
196.	The Council proposed the Member States to voluntarily host the 8 <sup>th</sup> ECO Working Group Meeting on Environment in 2023. The Secretariat will consider organizing this meeting in case of absence of the volunteer Member States to host it.	
197.	The Council highlighted the importance of the exchange of trusted and reliable environmental data among the Member States as a requisite for evidence-based decision-making and exploring	

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	regional cooperation opportunities on the environment. The Council therefore recalled the Member States to submit their National Progress Reports (NPRs) to the Secretariat on an annual basis preferably during the first quarter of each calendar year.	
<b>Priority Area 2: Combating Land Degradation with the special emphasis on Sand and Dust Storms in the Region</b>		
198.	The Council underscored the increasing significance of combating desertification, sand and dust storms in the ECO Region which should be seen as an integral part of climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation of biodiversity and land degradation management strategies.	
199.	The Council invited the Member States to consider hosting a meeting with the aim of elaborating ways and means of advancement of the ECO LandCare as a collaborative programme by the ECO Member States to combat land degradation, sand and dust storms. While recognizing the role of capacity-building and awareness-raising as a common ground and a potential starting point for cooperation, the Council called for speeding up the improvement and soonest launching of the Project Proposal “Capacity Building on Desertification Land Degradation and Erosion Monitoring System in the ECO Region” suggested by the Republic of Türkiye in this respect.	
200.	The Council welcomed the convening of the International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, following the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/171 and invited Member States to carry out coordinated actions in this respect at sub-regional, regional, and global levels.	
201.	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for the offer to convene the Experts Consultation Meeting on Risk Resilience Management of Sand and Dust Storm in the fourth quarter of 2024 in Tehran.	
<b>Priority Area 3: Addressing serious threats to biodiversity and sustainability of ecosystems in the ECO Region</b>		
202.	The Council recommended the Member States to adopt and implement the revised “Work Program on Biodiversity in ECO Region (2023-2030)” as a remarkable initial step towards the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, which is also indicative of solidarity with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).	
203.	The Council urged the Member States to actively engage in preparing the ground for collective biodiversity-related action and cooperation in the ECO region through hosting and attending the environmental meetings and events in the region.	

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<b>Priority Area 4: Cooperation with the environment-related international organizations/entities/instruments</b>		
204.	The Council welcomed the ECO Secretary-General's interactions and communications with the UN high-ranking officials on the environment in 2023 and recommended the Secretariat to continue its activities targeted at finding ways and means for strengthening collaboration with the different UN environmental entities.	
205.	The Council acknowledged the importance of support from the relevant regional and international environmental organizations for implementation of the Work Programme 2024. The Council thus invited the Secretariat to continue substantive consultations with multilateral environmental entities to explore building up fruitful partnerships with them on different environmental issues.	
206.	The Council welcomed the ECO Secretariat's efforts and interaction with the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFFS) to further enhance cooperation with this entity for soliciting technical and financial support and enhancing its visibility in forest-related issues, particularly through contribution to the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) guidelines in order to make intergovernmental regional and sub-regional organizations as ECO eligible to receive GFFFN support.	
207.	The Council requested the Member States to consider working with the ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) and hosting a workshop on climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, and desertification to enhance awareness about environmental issues among the youth in the ECO region.	
208.	The Council called upon the Member States to demonstrate stronger political will and further investment in regional cooperation on environmental issues which is requisite for a more positive and welcoming approach by the multilateral environmental entities towards further collaboration with the ECO Secretariat and region as a whole.	
<b>D. SECTOR: AGRICULTURE &amp; INDUSTRY</b>		
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>		
<b>Priority Area-1: Food Security and Implementation of the ECO-RPFS</b>		
209.	The Council, while welcoming the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 8 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture preceded by 7 <sup>th</sup> High Level Experts Meeting in June 2024, urged the Member States to actively participate in these Meetings with highest possible corresponding	

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	level.	
210.	The Council appreciated the ECO-RCCFS for successful conclusion of the project namely "Transformation of the ECO Regional Coordination Center for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS) from a programme-based organization to a self-sustainable institution of ECO" and mandated the ECO-RCCFS to report back on the progress to the 8 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture.	
211.	The Council requested the ECO-RCCFS to produce concrete project proposals and approach to possible external donors for the implementation of the ECO Regional Programme for Food Security (ECO-RPFS) to promote coordination and increase synergy in ECO regional efforts and enhance food security through technical cooperation, including institutional capacity development, transfer of technology and increasing agricultural productivity.	
212.	The Council, while welcoming the offer of the Republic of <i>Türkiye</i> for hosting the 5 <sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting of the ECO-RCCFS for Implementation of the ECO-RPFS in 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter of 2024, requested the relevant authorities to <i>send the details of the meeting. Also, the Council invited the Member States to cooperate on the implementation of the subject ECO-RPFS.</i>	
213.	The Council appreciated ECO-RCCFS for updating its website content at " <a href="http://www.ecorccfs.org">www.ecorccfs.org</a> " and invited Member States to further enrich the subject website by continuing to provide their studies, inputs, experiences and best practices, and recommended that ECO-RCCFS would make the necessary updates in the website with a view to serve as a knowledge-based portal to address food security challenges.	
214.	The Council welcomed receiving of the project proposal namely "Creating a Joint Cooperation Network of Rural Women in ECO Member Countries" by the Islamic Republic of Iran and requested the esteemed Member States to convey their views and comments on the subject project proposal.	
<b>Priority Area-2: Strengthening Seed Supply in the ECO Region</b>		
215.	The Council, while welcoming the preparation of ECO Regional Seed Agreement as an outcome of the implementation of the ECO/FAO-SEC (FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia) Project on Seed Sector Development in the Region, requested the Member States (except Azerbaijan, Pakistan, <i>Türkiye</i> and Uzbekistan) for accelerating their views on the subject document.	
216.	The Council, while appreciating the ECOSA (ECO Seed Association) for its proposal to host the 8 <sup>th</sup> ECOSA International Seed Trade Conference, Seed Trade Fair and ECO Expert Meeting on Seed	

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	Sector Development, requested the host authorities to send exact date and details of the meeting. The Council, also approached ECOSA to organize training courses on seed industry for ECO Member States in cooperation with FAO-SEC, Turkish Plant Breeding Union (BISAP) and other relevant institutions.	
217.	The Council requested Member States (except Azerbaijan, <i>Türkiye</i> and Uzbekistan) to convey their nominations for formation of the Advisory Board of ECOSA.	
218.	The Council took note of the initiative of the Republic of <i>Türkiye</i> to conduct project titled “Improving Cooperation in the Seed Sector in Asia and Caucasus Region” and called Member States to consider cooperation in the further steps of the project and utilize the outcomes of the project.	
<b>Priority Area-3: Cooperation on Animal Trade and Veterinary Services</b>		
219.	The Council, while welcoming the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the <i>4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Veterinary Organizations</i> in September 2024, requested the Member States to actively participate in the Meeting. Likewise, the Council urged the Member states to consider to sign/ratify the Statute of the ECO-VECO.	
220.	The Council, while appreciating the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Technical Committee Meeting for implementation of the Work Plan of the priority activities of ECO-VECO, requested the Member states to consider hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Technical Committee Meeting and cooperate on implementation of the subject Work Plan.	
221.	The Council encouraged the esteemed Member States to consider hosting the Meetings of Technical Committee and ECO Heads of Veterinary Organizations in a regular way, respectively twice and once annually. Likewise, the Council requested ECO-VECO and relevant authorities of the Member States to cooperate with regional and international animal health related organizations to receive their technical and financial support on veterinary services.	
<b>Priority Area-4: Water Management</b>		
222.	The Council requested the Member States (except Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, <i>Türkiye</i> and Uzbekistan) to nominate their national focal points/institutions and then create a network among their relevant organizations in order to expedite the process of Establishment of the ECO Center of Excellence for Efficient Water Utilization for Agriculture (ECO-CEEWUA).	
223.	The Council approached the relevant authorities of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	inform the ECO Secretariat about the establishment procedure of the ECO-CEEWUA and accelerate the process of establishment of the Center. Likewise, the Council took note that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan would share the details through diplomatic channels by the end of March 2024.	
<b>Priority Area 5: Cooperation on Meteorological Issues</b>		
224.	The Council, while appreciating the offer of the Republic of Türkiye to host the 4 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Meteorological Organizations in 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2024, requested the host authorities to send details of the meeting. The Council urged the Member States to actively participate in this meeting.	
225.	The Council requested the esteemed Member States to convey their views/comments (except Tajikistan and Pakistan) on the draft Statute for the establishment of the ECO Meteorological Calibration Center (ECO-MCC), for its early finalization.	
<b>Priority Area-6: Agricultural Bio-technology Network</b>		
226.	The Council, while appreciating the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Expert Group Meeting of the ECO Agricultural Bio-Technology Network (ECO-ABN) and the Workshop on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) Bio-Safety and Regulation, requested the Member States to consider hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Expert Group Meeting of the ECO Agricultural Bio-Technology Network (ECO-ABN) in 2024.	
227.	The Council welcomed the project proposal namely "ECO Bio-Safety Capacity Building (ECO-BCB)", which was presented by Agricultural Biotechnology Research Institute of Iran (ABRII) during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Expert Group Meeting of the ECO Agricultural Bio-Technology Network (ECO-ABN) on October 24, 2023.	
228.	The Council requested the ECO-ABN to update its website and asked to enhance and expand its activities and communication with the Member States and also with the relevant international networks and organizations.	
229.	The Council requested the Member States to contribute to ECO Agricultural Bio-Technology Network with sharing information, studies, inputs, experiences and best practices and conveying/updating their country reports on agricultural biotechnology issues.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>Priority Area-7: Relations with Regional and International Organizations</b>		
230.	The Secretariat informed the Council that it has maintained regular interactions with the international organizations on the basis of mutual interest, most notably with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UN World Food Programme, UN Food System Summits, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) with a view to identify/develop possible strategic partnership frameworks, to get their financial/technical support to ECO projects and initiatives, as well as to expand ECO's outreach and visibility.	
231.	The Council asked the Secretariat to pursue the cooperation policy and engagements with abovementioned organizations and other interested partners in the relevant fields, after consultation with the Member States and setting out further roadmap for proceeding on it.	
232.	The Council recommended the Secretariat to invite representatives of abovementioned organizations and other interested partners to the relevant ECO events with a view to enhance cooperation for implementation of ECO Vision 2025.	
233.	The Council appreciated the initiative of the Secretariat to prepare a draft Memorandum of Understanding between ECO and IOFS and requested Member States to support and cooperate on this issue.	
234.	The Council urged the need for enhanced efforts through communications, meetings, visits, etc. by the Secretariat to mobilize financial resources from the relevant international and regional organizations to support the projects and activities of the ECO in agricultural sector.	
<b>D. SECTOR: AGRICULTURE &amp; INDUSTRY</b>		
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
<b>Priority Area-1: Policy Makers Cooperation on Industry</b>		
235.	The Council, while appreciating the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> HLEG Meeting on Industry in 2024, requested the host authorities to send exact date and details of the event. The Council urged the Member States to actively participate in the Meeting.	
236.	The Council requested the interested Member States to host the 4 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Industry, which was also mentioned by Shusha Declaration, adopted by 27 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) held in Shusha, Azerbaijan on October 10, 2023, and	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	inform the Secretariat the exact date and details, at the earliest.	
237.	The Council, while welcoming the proposal of the Republic of Uzbekistan for hosting the First Interregional Industrial Exhibition of ECO in 2024, requested the host authorities to send exact date and details of the event. The Council urged the Member States to actively participate in this event.	
238.	The Council recommended the ECO Member States to organize meetings to initiate the process of development of Green industrial development strategy at regional level in order to contribute to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda. Likewise, the Council welcomed the offer of the Republic of Türkiye to conduct workshop on "Green Transformation of Industry and SMEs" in 2024 and invited Member States to actively participate in the subject workshop.	
<b>Priority Area-2: Cooperation on Quality Infrastructure</b>		
239.	The Council requested the Member States to sign and ratify (except Afghanistan, Iran, Türkiye and Pakistan) the Statute and Protocol Amending Article 5.4.1.10 of the Statute of ECO-RISCAM to pave the way for early functioning of the Institute. Likewise, the Member States were approached to effectively participate in the activities of ECO-RISCAM.	
240.	The Council requested the Republic of Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to expedite establishment of Technical Management Boards of Standardization and Accreditation and Technical Management Board of Metrology of ECO-RISCAM, respectively, and convey the exact date and details for the first meeting of subject TMBs, at the earliest convenience.	
241.	The Council, while appreciating the Islamic Republic of Iran for its proposal to host the First General Council Meeting of ECO-RISCAM, urged the Member States to actively participate in this event and officially introduce their representatives and the head of the delegations to participate in the meeting.	
242.	The Council urged the Member States (except Iran and Türkiye) to reflect their views and comments on the roadmap and work programme of ECO-RISCAM.	
243.	The Council urged the Member States (except Iran) to reflect their views and comments on the draft basic documents of the Institute (i.e. Rules of Procedure, Financial Regulations and Staff Regulations) to be approved by the First General Council Meeting of ECO-RISCAM.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
244.	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 9 <sup>th</sup> High Level Working Group (HLWG) Meeting in 2023.	
245.	The Council requested the Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of <i>Türkiye</i> to hold workshops in the fields of Standardization, Accreditation, Conformity Assessment, and Metrology and asked the host to send the exact dates and details of the events and the Member States to actively participate in the said workshops.	
246.	The Council requested the Member States to share their conformity assessment methods and procedures so that consensus may be developed for initiating uniformed conformity assessment method in the ECO Region.	
247.	The Council requested the Republic of Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to prepare and submit the draft procedures for functioning of standardization, accreditation and metrology TMBs.	
248.	The Council requested the Republic of Türkiye to establish Technical Committee for harmonizing of the standards in the region. For this purpose, the Council requested the Republic of Türkiye to share its plan and roadmap.	
249.	The Council requested the Kyrgyz Republic to nominate their representatives along with contact details (email/whatsapp) for each TMB and also Turkmenistan is requested to convey the particulars of their representatives for Accreditation and Metrology TMBs.	
<b>Priority Area-3: Cooperation on Nanotechnology Network</b>		
250.	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting on ECO Nanotechnology Network on July 10, 2023.	
251.	The Council requested the Member States to consider hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting on ECO Nanotechnology Network in 2024 and urged the Member States to actively participate in this event.	
252.	The Council encouraged the Islamic Republic of Iran for updating the study project on the situation of Nanotechnology in the ECO region.	
253.	The Council requested the Member States to convey their country reports toward this area of cooperation to the Secretariat and to ensure a more active involvement of their Nanotechnology related institutions in the ECO Nanotechnology Network.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
254.	The Council, while welcoming the project proposal namely "Establishment of a coordinating and facilitating platform for implementation of Nanotechnology based water treatment pilot/demo plants in ECO Region", encouraged the Member States to submit their Project Proposals on Nanotechnology issues and invited the Member States to increase their cooperation in the field of new Nanotechnology projects.	
<b>Priority Area-4: Industrial Property Rights</b>		
255.	The Council appreciated the Republic of <i>Türkiye</i> for hosting the 4 <sup>th</sup> Coordination Committee Meeting on Industrial Property Rights on October 7-8, 2024 in Ankara, and encouraged the ECO Member States to actively participate in this meeting.	
256.	The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the workshop on "National and International Patent Protection Mechanism with the focus on Green Technologies" in 2024 and invited Member States to actively participate in the subject workshop.	
<b>Priority Area-5: Development of SMEs &amp; Entrepreneurships</b>		
257.	The Council appreciated the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the 5 <sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting (SCM) on Entrepreneurship and SME Development on April 27-28, 2024 and requested the Member States to actively participate in this event.	
258.	The Council requested the Member States to host expert level meetings on exploring possibilities of developing a financial mechanism aimed at supporting start-ups, SME's and entrepreneurs, also while welcoming the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the First Expert Level Meeting on exploring possibilities of developing a financial mechanism aimed at supporting start-ups, SME's and entrepreneurs, requested the relevant authorities to convey the details of the meeting.	
259.	The Council appreciated the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the First ECO International Innovation and Technological Exhibition (ECO-TEX) on May 7-10, 2024 in Tehran at Pardis Technology Park and requested the esteemed Member States to actively participate in the said event. In this regard, the Council also requested the Member States to nominate their focal points in order to facilitate the communications.	
<b>Priority Area-6: Privatization and Private Sector Development</b>		

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
260.	The Council requested the Member States to nominate their focal points along with the contact details for privatization and state property management issues.	
261.	The Council requested the interested Member States to consider hosting the “7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Heads of Privatization Administration” and the “6 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of HLEG on Privatization and Private Sector Development” in 2024. Likewise, the Council approached the Member States to actively participate in the said Meetings.	
<b>Priority Area-7: Relations with Regional/International Organizations/Agencies</b>		
262.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for active follow-up of MoU between ECO & WIPO and requested the Member States to cooperate actively on this issue.	
263.	The Council, while appreciating the ECO Secretariat for organizing a joint high-level meeting with WIPO comprising of Heads of Intellectual Property Centers (IPCs) of ECO Countries, requested the Member States to participate actively in the subject event.	
264.	The Council requested the Secretariat to initiate/intensify cooperation with international and regional organizations, such as United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), to get their financial/technical support.	
<b>E. SECTOR: TOURISM</b>		
265.	<p>The Council profoundly appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the <b>5<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism</b> preceded by the <b>7<sup>th</sup> High Level Experts Group Meeting on Tourism</b> on 4-5 October 2023 in Ardabil.</p> <p>The Council accordingly requested the Member States to convey their readiness to host the 6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism and the 8<sup>th</sup> High Level Experts Group Meeting on Tourism.</p> <p>The Council agreed to consider the details of organizing the <b>6<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism</b> and the <b>8<sup>th</sup> HLEG Meeting on Tourism</b> through diplomatic channels.</p>	
266.	The Council stressed the importance and timeliness of the <b>Ardabil Declaration</b> adopted as an outcome of the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism held on 5 October 2023 in Ardabil, Iran and emphasized that it will serve to enhance cooperation and create synergies among the tourism authorities of the Member States. The Council requested the Member	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	States to actively contribute to the implementation of the objectives envisioned in the Ardabil Declaration.	
267.	<p>The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for launching the ceremony of proclaiming <b>Ardabil</b> as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2023 and congratulated the city of <b>Shusha</b> in the Republic of Azerbaijan for being selected as the ECO Tourism Capital for the year 2026.</p> <p>The Council also kindly requested Uzbekistan and Türkiye to propose their programs for holding various tourism events in <b>Shakhrisabz</b> in the Republic of Uzbekistan and the city of <b>Erzurum</b> in the Republic of Türkiye, ECO Tourism Capitals for the years <b>2024</b> and <b>2025</b> respectively and share it with the ECO Secretariat for timely coordination of the events.</p>	
268.	The Council appreciated the proposal of Uzbekistan on establishment of <b>Consultative Committee on Tourism</b> for the ECO region which was initiated by H.E. President of the Republic Uzbekistan during the 16th ECO Summit held in Tashkent on November 9, 2023.	
269.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for preparing and circulating the “ <b>ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development</b> ” for comments and proposals of the Member States and requested Member States to accelerate sending their views for further action.	
270.	The Council requested the Secretariat to follow-up the meetings of the <b>ECO Tour Operators’ Network</b> ” to facilitate development of joint tour packages for tourists in the ECO region. The Council appreciated the offer of the Republic of Azerbaijan to host the 1 <sup>st</sup> ECO Tour Operators Forum in March 2024 in Baku.	
271.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the ECO Working Group on Tourism Standardization regarding the preparation of <b>Common criteria for Sustainability of the Accommodation Facilities in the ECO region</b> . The Council requested the Member States to provide the necessary inputs for the adoption and implementation of the document.	

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272.	The Council welcomed the Secretariat's communication with the <b>Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)</b> for advancement of sustainable tourism in the region and development of the quality of tourism services and the work force and requested the Member States to provide feedback for signing MoU with the GSTC for further collaboration and holding a joint regional workshop for raising awareness on development of sustainable tourism.	
273.	Considering the need to develop a well-trained, customer and service-oriented tourism workforce in the ECO region, the Council tasked the Secretariat and the Member States to organize <b>training activities</b> for tourism experts from ECO Member States in cooperation with leading institutes. The Council welcomed the reiteration of Türkiye's proposal of providing international tourism training programs to the other Member States.	
274.	The Council encouraged the Secretariat's decision to publish a Second Special Edition of the ECO Chronicle dedicated to " <b>UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the ECO Region</b> " and requested the Member States to forward (for the Member States that have already submitted to update) the articles in English regarding their registered UNESCO World Heritage Sites to the ECO Secretariat.	
275.	The Council appreciated the establishment of the <b>ECO Silk Road Task Force</b> to increase cooperation and coordination to publicize Silk Road Tourism initiative with the cooperation of the Member States, the international community and relevant organizations and requested the Member States (except Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Türkiye) to appoint their focal points to the ECO Silk Road Task Force. The Council requested active participation of the Member States to the First Meeting of the ECO Silk Road Task Force to create an effective Silk Road brand strategy, enhance collaboration between Silk Road destinations and increase consumer awareness.	
276.	The Council welcomed the proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran for holding the <b>Sixth ECO - Silk Road Food Festival in Zanzan-Iran</b> with the <b>workshop on Culinary Tourism</b> in September 2024 and requested the Islamic Republic of Iran to convey to the Secretariat the necessary information regarding the event (including exact dates, hospitality details,	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	focal point and other relevant information) for circulation amongst the Member States to enable timely coordination.	
277.	The Council requested the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) to cooperate with the ECO Secretariat and include the <b>ECO Silk Road Initiative</b> in their program in 2024 to enhance the visibility of the ECO Silk Road destinations in their publications, exhibitions and events.	
278.	The Council requested the Secretariat and the Member States to consider the possibility of organizing <b>workshops</b> in cooperation with ECI and UNESCO <b>on preservation of the ancient Silk Road monuments and cultural heritages.</b>	
279.	The Council requested the Member States to participate in the ECO High Level Expert Meeting on <b>Visa Facilitation</b> in 2024 to move towards a visa free regime in the region.	
280.	The Council requested the Member States to participate in the Meetings of the <b>ECO Tourism and Transport Task Force</b> and actively contribute to the efforts to increase connectivity between the Member States, as well as to create a synergy between two interrelated sectors.	
281.	The Council requested the Member States to provide inputs of the National Railway Authorities to implement a pilot study on the feasibility of this Regional Pass through the <b>ECO Regional Rail Pass Working Group.</b>	
282.	The Council requested the Member States (except Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Türkiye and Pakistan) to introduce at least five cities as tourist destinations based on the “Criteria of Tourism Destination Choice” which was circulated to MSs via 30 <sup>th</sup> RPC Working Paper. The Council further requested all the Member States (Pakistan may kindly send photos) to send informative data including tourism activities in the destination choice along with high resolution photos to be designed as the <b>ECO Tourism Databank</b> in Word and PDF format for easy compilation by the Secretariat.	
283.	The Council requested all Member States (except Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Iran) to fill up and furnish the ECO Secretariat with the <b>questionnaire on ecotourism</b> that was kindly	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	prepared by the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to establish the relevant database as early as possible.	
284.	The Council reiterated its request to the Member States (except Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) to provide all the necessary information (with high resolution photographs) for the “ <b>Ecotourism Catalogue for the ECO Region</b> ” to be prepared by the Republic of Türkiye.	
285.	The Council reiterated its request to the Republic of Türkiye and the Turkish Cypriot State to provide the details of organizing the <b>4<sup>th</sup> EGM on Ecotourism in Nicosia</b> and requested the active participation of the Member States.	
286.	The Council appreciated the establishment of an ad-hoc specialized working group among the Member States to prepare a document for investigating and identifying the potential and opportunities for <b>diversification of intra-regional tourism</b> to broaden the regional tourism offer by joining efforts to bring out lesser-known or niche destinations and identifying all available and potentially available tourism resources and facilities in various tourism segments and requested the Member States (except Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan and Uzbekistan) to send their nominations for the ad-hoc specialized working group.	
287.	The Council requested the Member States to send data on other specialized tourism segments and destinations in their countries (health tourism, sports tourism, mountain climbing, cycling, culinary tourism, urban tourism, religious tourism, heritage tourism, agro tourism, etc.) to be compiled by the Secretariat to establish an <b>ECO Region Databank/ Catalogue of Specialized Tourism Products and Services</b> based on the information received from the Member States. To facilitate compilation of the data in each segment the Council requested the volunteer Member States in each segment to prepare a table of requested data along with the required visual materials in each segment. The Council requested the support of ECO-CCI in the compilation of the databank. The Council requested the Member States to accelerate sending data regarding their specialized tourism attractions to be compiled as a digital catalogue of all the tourism destinations of ECO Member States to be hosted on the <b>Tourism Section of the ECO Website</b> and the Council agreed to utilize the ECO Region Databank for this purpose.	



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288.	The Council also welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the <b>3<sup>rd</sup> ECO Confobition on Health Tourism</b> in June 2024 in Hamedan city and requested information with regards to exact date and hospitality details of the event may be conveyed to the Secretariat for smooth coordination.	
289.	The Council welcomed proposal of Iran on establishing a working group on <b>hydrotherapy and spa tourism</b> in order to develop health and wellness tourism and requested Iranian side to share Questionnaire on hydrotherapy tourism in the ECO region with the ECO Member States through the Secretariat and to consider the possibility of development of a comprehensive strategy aimed at fostering growth in medical tourism.	
290.	The Council reiterated the need for more intense collaboration among the public and private stakeholders in regional tourism sector and joint involvement in the regional tourism activities through the organization of and participation in the relevant meetings, events, exhibitions, fairs and initiatives. In this connection, the Council requested the ECO-CCI to hold the <b>meetings of Tourism Committee of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry</b> regularly tasked the ECO-CCI Secretariat to work out a report to strengthen means of cooperation among the public and private sector associations/forums/federations with the purpose of sustainable tourism promotion and propose its report to the ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism.	
291.	Emphasizing the significance of mobilization of investment to regional tourism by promoting ways to increase the regional tourism appeal and facilitate development of the regional tourism sector as envisioned in the ECO Vision 2025, the Council requested the Member States to consider organizing a <b>Tourism Investment and Business Conference/Forum</b> in coordination with the ECO-CCI in 2024 to raise awareness of the ECO region's investment potential and marketing regional tourism investment opportunities.	
292.	The 32 <sup>nd</sup> Council requested the Secretariat to develop a regional <b>Tourism Investment Guide</b> to provide a compendium of policies, laws, incentives and opportunities in the ECO tourism sector. In that regard, the Council requested the Member States to furnish the Secretariat with country information, investment climate, economic indicators and policies,	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	financial framework, statutory requirements and relevant agencies along with all the tourism projects, investment opportunities and incentives to be compiled for identification and promotion of investment initiatives in the regional tourism sector as a guide. The Council requested all the Member States to update the inputs.	
293.	Considering the significance of the <b>Tourism Promotion Fund</b> which was established to finance tourism projects and initiatives, the Council called upon the Member States to consider contributing to the said Fund to provide financial support for the projects and initiatives to reach the tourism mandates of the ECO Vision 2025. The Council requested the Member States to nominate their Representatives to the Board of Trustees (BoT) of the Fund. The Council requested the Secretariat to look for means including financial support for tourism projects and initiatives.	
294.	The Council while appreciating the Secretariat's efforts for enhancing <b>bilateral cooperation</b> between <b>UNWTO</b> and institutionalizing relations with the two organizations through an MoU, recommended the Secretariat to expand its cooperation with the other relevant international organizations in tourism sector.	
295.	The Council urged the Member States to expedite the appointment of their <b>National Focal Points</b> (NPFs) in tourism sector for prompt and smooth communication.	
296.	The Council welcomed the project proposal of the Secretariat called ' <b>Honorary ECO Tourism Ambassadors</b> ' to support the promotion of tourism destinations in ECO Member States and requested the Secretariat to circulate the relevant details among the Member States for their consideration.	
<b>SECTOR F: HUMAN RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Priority Area I: Sustainable Development		
297.	The <b>Council</b> instructed the ECO Secretariat to further enhance the mutual collaboration with International Organizations such as UNDP, IFRC, UNFPA, UNESCAP, UNECE,	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	UNDRR, IOM, UNESCO, ADB and IsDB on projects relating to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as stipulated in the ECO Vision 2025.	
298.	The <b>Council</b> instructed the ECO Secretariat to prepare a “Draft Regional Roadmap” in collaboration with the International Organizations for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the ECO Region.	
299.	The <b>Council</b> welcomed willingness of the Turkmenistan to host the “1 <sup>st</sup> ECO Forum on Sustainable Development”, in 2024 in Arkadag City along with the 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the High Level Sustainable Development Working Group (HLSDWG)” to discuss preparation of an Action Plan in order to enhance Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) in the ECO Region.	
300.	The <b>Council</b> requested Member States to engage ECO Secretariat in meetings on SDGs in order to enhance coordination between Secretariat and the Member States.	
301.	The <b>Council</b> instructed the Secretariat to complete the project on “SDG Performance Index for the ECO Region” by the end of 2024.	
302.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to provide necessary data/documents to the Secretariat for preparing ECO Sustainable Development Performance Index.	
303.	The <b>Council</b> called upon Member States to participate in the workshop on “Trafficking in Persons and Human Smuggling in the ECO Region” in 2024, to be organized jointly by the ECO Secretariat and International Organization for Migration (IOM).	
304.	The <b>Council</b> appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting “3 <sup>rd</sup> Session of the Heads of Civil Registry and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Organization/Center”, in 2024.	
305.	The <b>Council</b> appreciated the offer of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for hosting the “1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Heads of National Societies in ECO Region” in Tehran in the second quarter of 2024.	
<b>Priority Area II: Disaster Risk Reduction</b>		
306.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to consider hosting the “9 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction”, in 2024 and instructed the Secretariat to coordinate with host country for ascertaining the exact dates and hospitality details through diplomatic channel.	
307.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to voluntarily organize the “2 <sup>nd</sup> Senior Officials	

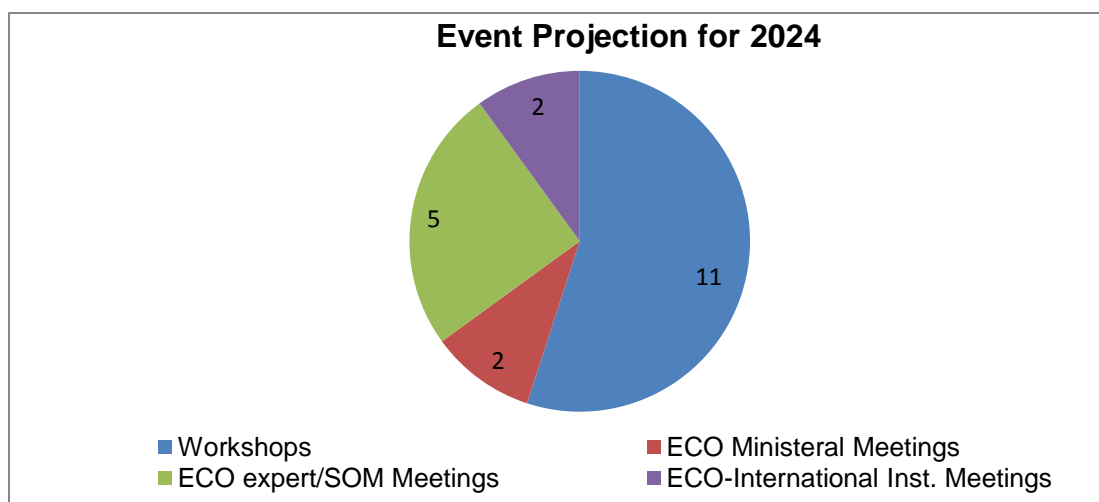
Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	Meeting/Heads Meeting for Disaster Insurance Authorities”, in 2024, and instructed the Secretariat to coordinate for exact dates and hospitality details.	
308.	The <b>Council</b> appreciated the approval of the Status of ECO-RCRM in COM Meeting in Tashkent in 2023 and invited all Member States to join the protocol.	
309.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to consider hosting the “5 <sup>th</sup> ECO Expert Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction and Implementation of the ECO Regional Framework for DRR”, in 2024.	
310.	The <b>Council</b> instructed the Secretariat to enhance cooperation with the international organizations, especially ESCAP (as per the MoU with ESCAP) and, IFRC, UNDRR regarding the HRSD mandates.	
311.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to provide the Secretariat the implementation status of the “ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction” and the “Roadmap of Implementing ECORFDRR” in 2024.	
312.	The <b>Council</b> urged the ECO-RCRM to coordinate with the relevant stakeholders for establishment of a task force to conduct country-specific meetings on disaster risk management issues in the region. The <b>Council</b> also requested the Member States to nominate their focal points in this regard.	
313.	The <b>Council</b> requested Turkmenistan to continue its cooperation with ECO-RCRM regarding the Project “Site Selecting for Road Weather Stations via Mashhad-Ashgabat”, considering contribution to the project with a view to improve the road weather monitoring.	
314.	The <b>Council</b> welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran Metrological Organization (IRIMO) and the ECO-RCRM to co-organize training courses/workshops entitled “Natural Disaster Early warnings and loss Estimation System” in 2024 in Mashhad.	
315.	The <b>Council</b> , while appreciating the ECO-RCRM for preparing first phase of the project titled “Implementation of seasonal climate prediction over ECO Region”, with in-kind support of I.R. of Iran Meteorological Organization (IRIMO) and requested from other Member States to continue its cooperation and supporting this project for completing other phases.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
316.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to join project proposal initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran (Organization of Geology and Mineral Exploration) on the Landside Hazard zonation (LHZ), supported by the Member Countries in the Validation Meeting held in 2022. The council also invited other interested Member States to extend every possible support for the successful launching and implementation of the project.	
317.	The Council took note of the following three project proposals of GIS of Iran highlighted in the 4 <sup>th</sup> Experts Group Meeting held in 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The Assessment of Climate Change Science Late Quaternary in ECO Member States Region;</li> <li>ii. Generating of Flooding and Inundation Map in ECO Member States;</li> <li>iii. Geo-Environmental Risk Assessment Map of Mining Areas in ECO Member States Region (ECO-GERAM)</li> </ul>	
<b>Priority Area III: Health</b>		
318.	The <b>Council</b> appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the “6 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health” preceded by “High Level Working Group Meeting (HLWG) on the implementation of Plan of Action on Health”, in 2024 (in person).	
319.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to revise regional project proposals taking into consideration the priority areas, recommended by the “Declaration” and the "ECO Action Plan on Health" adopted by 5 <sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health in Geneva in 2023.	
320.	The <b>Council</b> appreciated the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the “1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Task Force on Regional Capacity on Intra-Trade of Pharmaceuticals”, in 2024 (in person), in order to consider the recommendations of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Health held in 2023.	
321.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to consider hosting the workshop on “Promoting Universal Health Coverage”	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
322.	The <b>Council</b> emphasized the importance of continued interaction with the international organizations, including WHO and other relevant stakeholders as well as multilateral development banks for their technical and financial assistance in joint projects.	
<b>Priority Area IV: Education</b>		
323.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to consider hosting the “3 <sup>rd</sup> Workshop on Disaster Risk Transfer through Insurance in the ECO Region”, in 2024.	
324.	The <b>Council</b> requested the ECO-EI to coordinate with the ECO Secretariat and announce the scholarship programs/training courses on Sustainable Development, Disaster Risk Reduction and Health for the ECO Member States.	
325.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to offer health related scholarships among themselves and convey relevant information to the Secretariat including the objective/s of the courses; terms and conditions for admission; and detailed curriculum of the courses etc. in cooperation with ECO Educational Institute (ECO-EI).	
326.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to propose and host workshops on the main priority areas of Disaster Risk Reduction, Health and Sustainable Development in 2024.	
327.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to consider project proposal of short documentary/animation for children on Disaster Risk Reduction with the theme “Preparedness for Resilient Recovery” to enhance regional capacity in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDRR.	
328.	The <b>Council</b> requested the Member States to collaborate with the new established UNESCO Center, Resilience for West and Central Asia (RCECWA) for joint training projects on DRR.	
329.	The <b>Council</b> requested Member States to consider hosting of the ECO-EI “Workshop on the State of Challenges and Best Practices in Medical Education”, which will explore the state of medical education in the hosting state.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
330.	The <b>Council</b> requested Member States to consider hosting of the “1 <sup>th</sup> ECO-EI Expert Group Meeting on Internationalization of Higher Education in the ECO Region”, which will bring together experts from agencies responsible for higher education polices in the Member States.	
331.	The <b>Council</b> encouraged Member States to consider hosting of ECO-EI workshop on Mathematics Education, which aims to assess the level of Mathematics attainment in the hosting ECO Member State, compare approaches to Mathematics term in different states and report the findings to the relevant agencies of the hosting ECO Member State.	
332.	The <b>Council</b> encouraged Member States to consider hosting of ECO-EI Workshops on “Status of Physics Education in ECO Member States”, on the “Status of Chemistry Education” as well as on the “Status of Biology Education”, which will be organized by the ECO-EI to assess the status of education in the respective areas among the hosting ECO Member States and report the findings to the relevant offices/agencies of the hosting ECO Member States.	
333.	The <b>Council</b> welcomed the proposal of National Cartography of Iran (NCC) about hosting the first international specialized training webinar course on “Application of Geospatial Data in Disaster Risk Reduction” in the third quarter of 2024.	

### Projected Events by HRSD for 2024



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
<b>G. SECTOR: JUDICIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY COORDINATION AND ECO ADVOCACY PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN</b>		
334.	The Council reaffirmed the importance of regional cooperation in combating drugs and organized crime in the ECO Region as a crucial contribution to economic growth and sustainable development. It urged the JPC&EAPA and Member States to continue their efforts to enhance cooperation in this area. The Council highlighted the significance of regional institutional arrangements, such as police and law enforcement, judicial and anti-corruption cooperation, capacity building, and training programs, for the success of collective efforts against drugs and organized crime. Additionally, the Council requested the Secretariat to maintain close communication with relevant regional and international organizations to seek their ongoing support in countering illicit drugs and organized crime activities in the region.	
335.	The Council has made a request to the Member States to nominate or update their focal points in various areas such as drugs, organized crime, judiciary, anti-corruption, police and law enforcement, and parliamentary cooperation.	
336.	<p><b>I. <u>Meeting of the Ministers of Interior</u></b></p> <p>The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Ministers of Interior of the ECO Member States during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2024 in Tehran.</p>	
337.	<p><b>II <u>Judicial Cooperation</u></b></p> <p>The Council appreciated the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States on 14-16 September 2023 and reaffirms the decisions of the Meeting. The Council requests all Member States to actively participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of the ECO Member States to be held in Dushanbe on 16 May 2024 at the highest level."</p>	
338.	The ECO Secretariat has notified the Council that the Draft Plan of Interaction among the Attorneys/Prosecutors General Offices of the ECO Member States is being prepared and will be circulated among the Member States by the end of February. The Secretariat has requested the Member States to kindly provide their comments and feedback on this document.	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
339.	The Council requested the interested Member States to organize relevant expert meetings and seminars on specific subjects to enhance mutual judicial cooperation and legal assistance.	
340.	The Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council that they would share the draft of Mutual Judicial Cooperation and Legal Assistance by March 2024 through diplomatic channel.	
341.	The Council welcomed the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran for drafting a document regarding Joint Legal and Judicial Cooperation as well as the initiative of holding the meeting of Ministers of Justice of the Member States.	
342.	<p><b>III <u>Anti-Corruption Cooperation:</u></b></p> <p>The Council expressed its appreciation to the National Accountability Bureau of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the State Parties to the ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen on September 21, 2023.</p>	
343.	The Council requested the interested Member States to consider hosting the 5 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of Anti-corruption Organizations of the ECO Member States and the 2 <sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the State Parties to the ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen in the year of 2024.	
344.	<p>The Council recalled the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to prepare all required documents for the operationalization of RCCACO before the end of June 2024. Accordingly, the Council urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to timely submit the said documents to the Secretariat.</p> <p>The Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Council that the General Inspection Organization is drafting the basic documents of RCCACO and will share with the Secretariat during 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2024.</p>	
345.	The Council requested the interested Member States to consider hosting of the relevant working group(s) to finalize necessary documents for operationalization of RCCACO to be sent to the 5 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of Anti-Corruption Organizations of the ECO Member States or the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the General Assembly of the State Parties to RCCACO for its approval.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
346.	The Council requested the Republic of Tajikistan to consider ratifying the Statute of the ECO-RCCACO and the Kyrgyz Republic to join the Center.	
347.	The Council also urged Member States that have not yet signed the Statute of the Center to consider signing it.	
348.	<p><b>IV <u>Police and Law Enforcement Cooperation</u></b></p> <p>The Council acknowledged the progress made in establishing ECOPOL and requested the Member States to accelerate the process.</p>	
349.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting of Chiefs of Police of the ECO Member States in Tehran during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024 and requested to provide the Secretariat with the preliminary information regarding the meeting.	
350.	The Council assigned the ECO Secretariat with the task of preparing concrete proposals for the early operationalization of ECOPOL.	
351.	<p><b>V <u>Parliamentary Cooperation</u></b></p> <p>The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 4<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO) during mid May or late September 2024.</p>	
352.	The Council has requested the Member States who have not signed/ratified the Charter of the PAECO to consider signing/ ratifying it.	
353.	<p><b>VI <u>Capacity Building Programs</u></b></p> <p>The Council requested the interested Member States to indicate their willingness to host the necessary training programs related to combating drug-related offenses, financial crimes such as corruption and money laundering, judicial collaboration, cybercrimes, and other relevant areas.</p>	
354.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold the 5 <sup>th</sup> virtual training	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	course on Addiction to Narcotic Drugs and focus on Treatment and Harm Reduction during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of 2024.	
355.	The Council asked the Islamic Republic of Iran to share initial details about the ECO Workshop on Controlled Delivery and Joint Investigation, along with the training course on combating corruption.	
356.	The Council has also requested the ECO Member States to actively participate in the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Virtual training course on Drug Addiction, focusing on Treatment and Harm Reduction Associated with Addiction scheduled to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024;</li> <li>• Training Course on Awareness of Drugs and Precursors to be organized in Pakistan from 4-8 March 2024.</li> </ul>	
357.	The Council welcomed the offer of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to host the Training Course on Fight against Corruption during October 2024.	
358.	<b>VII <u>ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan</u></b> The Council requested the Member States to propose feasible ideas to help ensure the implementation of EAPA, taking into special consideration the prevailing conditions in Afghanistan, as all activities under EAPA were temporarily on hold due to situation in the country.	
<b>H. SECTOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		
<b>a) INTER-REGIONAL ECO ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>i) ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies</b>		
358.	The Council took note of the ECO Secretariat's efforts to enhance coordination among ECO Specialized Agencies, appreciated for hosting consultation meetings among Heads of ECO Specialized Agencies and recommended augmenting frequency of such meetings.	
<b>• ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)</b>		
359.	The Council urged the Member States to punctually fulfil annual budgetary obligations to ECI, enabling the Institute to execute enterprises towards attainment of its aims and objectives smoothly	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
360.	The Council, with a view that increased general membership would strengthen the Institute, reiterated its earlier recommendation that the non-signatory Member States might contemplate signing the ECI Charter and requested the signatory Member States to speed up ratifying the Charter.	
361.	The Council appreciated the Cultural Institute for its efforts to introduce ECO Youth Awards.	
362.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye for acceptance in principle, the necessary support that can be provided in line with the possibilities regarding ECI planned activities for 2024. Receiving official requests for these subjects included in the draft, will be appreciated.	
363.	The Council took note of the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye for an additional event for ECI 2024 activities, in this regard, the Republic of Türkiye requests from ECI that the Directorate of Scientific Studies of the Atatürk Research Center of the Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History of Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye would kindly propose “World Encyclopedia” which will be presented in 2024 and the previously published Uzbekistan and Ukraine works, as well as Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan works a envisaged to be published in the first half of 2024, to be added to the ECI calendar of events. The Council further appreciated the Republic of Türkiye’s request to ECI to suggest an academic panel to be added to ECI calendar of events for 2024 as well, regarding above-mentioned proposals’ introduction consisting of the authors and editors of the works. The details of aforesaid events will be conveyed in due course.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)</b></li> </ul>		
364.	<p>Pakistan’s delegation highlighted that the ECO Science Foundation has been facing several financial constraints due to nonpayment of mandatory budget by the ratifying countries. Pakistan is hopeful that Member States would pay its mandatory budgetary contributions as per commitments, as soon as possible.</p> <p>Considering that, to this date, the Charter of the Foundation and its Additional Protocol have only been ratified by five Member States, the Council invited the non-ratifying Member States to ratify the Charter and its Additional Protocol so that the Foundation may function at the maximum possible level in the field of STI, leading to economic development in the region.</p>	
365.	The Council appreciated the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the Fifth Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Science Foundation on February 14, 2023 in Esfahan, Iran.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
366.	The Council appreciated ECOSF for holding of “Technology and Trade Exhibition and the Conference (TTEC)” in Islamabad in 2024. The Council emphasized the Member States to participate in TTEC.	
367.	The Council took note of the financial challenges confronting the Foundation on account of unpaid annual contributions by Member States and encouraged swift payment of budgetary contributions along with arrears.	
368.	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 the ratification of the ECOSF Charter and its additional protocol.	
369.	The Council appreciated the Science Foundation for approaching the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Türkiye, and the Kyrgyz Republic to expedite ratification of the ECOSF Charter	
<b>• ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI)</b>		
370.	The Council took note of the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Educational Institute, held on August 5, 2023 in Istanbul, Türkiye.	
371.	The Council welcomed incorporation of the proposals by the Member States to the “ECOEI Work Program 2023-2026” which was adopted at the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ECO Educational Institute. The Council requested ECOEI Member States and non-Member States to join and support the Institute in its working and activities.	
372.	The Council appreciated Islamic Republic of Iran for paying two years’ membership fee to ECOEI and requested the Member States to fulfil budgetary obligations in a regular and timely manner.	
373.	The Council requested the non-signatory and non-ratifying Member States to sign and ratify the ECOEI Charter.	
374.	The Council appreciated the Republic of Türkiye to accord legal status to the ECO Educational Institute.	
<b>• ECO Regional Institutes/Affiliated Bodies</b>		
375.	The Council appreciated Pakistan for signing charter of ECO Research Center and request to provide instrument of ratification. The Council urged the Member States to sign and ratify the Charter of the ECO Research Center (ERC), which would be headquartered in Baku, Azerbaijan.	
376.	The Council noted that increased general membership of the ECO Clean Energy Centre would make it more viable financially and administratively.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
377.	The Council welcomed the Annual Report of 2023 of the ECO College of Insurance.	
<b>b) ECO'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b>		
378.	The Council welcomed the adoption of the biennial resolution by the UN General Assembly on UN-ECO Cooperation entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization", on August 25, 2023.	
379.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for expanding relations with the United Nations System, International Organizations and non-ECO Countries	
380.	The Council welcomed the observership of ECO in the Organization of Turkic States.	
381.	The Council took note of the Secretariat's endeavours to deepen ties with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and obtain observer status in SCO on reciprocal basis.	
382.	The Council welcomed the bilateral visit of the SCO Secretary General to the ECO Secretariat, held on March 7, 2023.	
383.	The Council took note of the Secretariat's efforts to finalize Joint Plan of Action with the SCO for an early implementation of MoU, which was signed in 2008.	
384.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat to revive the forum of Joint Annual ASEAN-ECO Ministerial Meeting on the sidelines of UNGA Session in New York.	
385.	The Council took note of outcomes of the 15 <sup>th</sup> Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held on September 22, 2023 in New York on the margins of 78 <sup>th</sup> UNGA Session and welcomed the adoption of Framework of Cooperation between ASEAN and ECO.	
386.	The Council recommended the ECO Secretariat to approach ASEAN for convening Joint ECO-ASEAN Ambassadorial meetings in Tehran and Jakarta.	
387.	The Council took note of ECO-CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) ties and urged the Secretariat to deepen ties with CICA via obtaining observer status.	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
388.	The Council took note of the Secretariat's active participation in the Summit-level Meeting of NAM Contact Group on Post-Pandemic Global Recovery, hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan on March 3, 2023 in Baku and encourage the Secretariat to deepen its ties with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).	
389.	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Economic Cooperation Organization to obtain observer status in the International Organization for Migration.	
390.	The Council mulled over the status of relations between the Developing-8 Organization of Economic Cooperation and the Economic Cooperation Organization and expressed support for the application of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the membership in the D-8 and acceleration of the relevant procedures related to the mentioned upcoming membership in line with the D-8 Charter.	
391.	The Council took note of the Secretariat's efforts to establish ties with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and urged to re-approach the BSEC Secretariat for an early conclusion of MoU.	
392.	The Council took note of Secretariat's efforts to upgrade MoU with the World Customs Organization and urged the Secretariat to re-approach ECO for an early conclusion of MoU	
393.	The Council took note of Secretariat's efforts to upgrade MoU with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC).	
394.	The Council welcomed the Secretariat's initiative to plan the brainstorming session/meeting to launch new round of reforms, at the level of Deputies Foreign Ministers in 2024.	
395.	The Council welcomed the efforts of the ECO Secretariat to invite the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to be partnered in the ECO Clean Energy Center hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Clean Energy Corridor, and the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO REM).	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
396.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for upholding time-honoured tradition of granting ECO Awards to skilled human resources of the region.	
397.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for its participation various international events held in Iran, more precisely, Khwarizmi International Award (Tehran), Khwarizmi Youth Festival (Tehran), Ibn-e Sina Birth Anniversary (Tehran), 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-8 Technology Transfer Exchange Network (Pardis), Mostafa Prize Award (Esfahan), World Hafez Week (Tehran and Shiraz),	
398.	The Council took note of the Sixth Meeting of ECO Heads of National Libraries, held on September 22, 2023 in Baku and encouraged for enhancing library cooperation amongst Member States.	
399.	The Council took note of long-awaited Workshop on Training of Foreign Service Officers, which would enable the diplomats of Member States to be well versed with the best diplomatic practices prevailing in the region.	
400.	The Council appreciated the Secretariat for regularly publishing ECO Chronicle, keeping readership abreast of latest developments in the region.	
401.	The Council took note of ECO Awards 2023, which were granted during the 16 <sup>th</sup> ECO Summit, held on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent and congratulated the winners and further recommended for upgrading modalities on ECO Awards and add new fields of excellence.	
402.	The Council took note of the Secretariat's endeavours to mainstream web content and recommended enhancing ECO's digital footprints across various social media platforms.	
<b>I. SECTOR: ECONOMIC RESEARCH &amp; STATISTICS</b>		
<b>STATISTICS</b>		
403.	The Council re-iterated the provision in ECO Vision 2025, which envisaged: "to make the Organization better equipped to face challenges and advance the fundamental principles of the Organization to expand project based economic activities and develop and strengthen the ECO institutions" ( <i>Implementation Framework of ECO Vision 2025</i> p.1).	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
404.	The Council took note of the Report of the 9th High Level Expert Group Meeting on Statistics held on May 16, 2023 ( <i>reference: Secretariat's NV 748, dated June5, 2022</i> ).	
405.	The Council took note of the Report of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of National Statistical Offices of the ECO Member States held on September 20, 2023 ( <i>reference: Secretariat's NV 1641, dated October 15, 2023</i> ).	
406.	The Council recommended that the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) of ECO Member States may forward to the Secretariat their relevant proposals/suggestions regarding the provisional Agenda items to be discussed at the 8th MHNSOs and 10th HLEGM on Statistics as well as the venue of the meetings scheduled to be held in 2024 ( <i>ECO Calendar of Events 2024</i> ).	
407.	The Council mandated the member states to host the 10th ECO High-Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Statistics and 8th Meeting of the Heads of ECO National Statistical Offices (HNS), separately.	
408.	The Council expressed satisfaction with the pace of the realization of the " <i>Five Year Strategic Plan on Statistics 2021-2026</i> " and, in this regard the 9th High Level Expert Group Meeting on Statistics held on May 16, 2023 and 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of National Statistical Offices of the ECO Member States held on September 20, 2023 have proven constructive: representatives of the Member-States that took part in the gatherings put forward a wide-range of proposals on intensifying cooperation in this area ( <i>33<sup>rd</sup>RPC, Work Programme 2023, "1<sup>st</sup> Sector: ERS, paragraph-36</i> ).	
409.	The Council requested the Member-States for wider exchange with good practices/experiences/expertise among the National Statistical Agencies in order to build up a shared potential in the field of statistics.	
410.	In practical terms, particularly in the part which relates to the organizing and holding among the Member States of interactive webinar sessions, online seminars, training courses and workshops under ECO's framework with specific emphasis on " <i>sharing knowledge, experiences, and expertise among ECO NSOs</i> , the Council encouraged Member States to	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	offer such statistical events that primarily focus on ECO countries' statistical capacity building needs.	
411.	<p>The Council tasked the following to the Secretariat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the implementation of the Action Plan should be assessed. Moreover, a timetable accompanied by the respective activities should be prepared and monitored for this Action Plan;</li> <li>• to conduct annual survey on the capacities and needs of the Member States; NSOs to enjoy their capabilities and provide needed services to them.</li> </ul>	
<b>ECONOMIC RESEARCH</b>		
<b>Establishment of ECO Research Centre</b>		
412.	<p>The Council appreciated that the Charter of ECO Research Center (ERC) was signed by the three ECO Member States, notably by the Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Türkiye, on the sidelines of the 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit Meeting of the Heads of State/Government (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021) and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during the 26<sup>th</sup> COM Meeting held in Tashkent, on January 24, 2023. In this connection the Council encouraged the remaining ECO Member States to sign the document. The Council expressed the hope that ECO Research Center will start functioning soon.</p> <p>The Council emphasized the importance of operationalization of ECO Research Centre (ERC) and encouraged the Republic of Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to ratify the Charter during 2024. The Council also called for kind consideration of other Member States to sign and ratify the said Charter at their earliest convenience.</p>	
413.	<p>The Council noted with satisfaction the willingness of the relevant government agencies of the Member States to accede to the Charter of ECO Research Center (ERC) and therefore tasked the ECO Secretariat to ensure timely signing of the said document in line with relevant established procedures and protocol.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the willingness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to sign the Charter of ECO Research Centre during the upcoming high level meetings.</p>	
414.	The Council stated that the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) can be affiliated with the ECO Research Center (ERC), since it is located in Baku, Azerbaijan	
<b>Transformation of ECO Economic Journal (EEJ)</b>		

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
415.	<p>The Council reiterated the importance of the implementation of the task of the 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ECO countries held in Tashkent on January 24, 2023, which unequivocally <b>supported</b> the continuation of activities aimed at transforming the ECO Economic Journal borne by the Chief Editor's Office into an internationally recognized, widely disseminated and reputable publication and <b>called on</b> the Secretariat to continue work on financing the transformation of the Journal.</p>	
416.	<p>The Council noted with satisfaction the pace of implementation of its task, when it requested the Secretariat to consider the financing of the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ), which needs USD50,000 (fifty thousand US dollars), aimed at transforming it into internationally recognized, widely disseminated and reputable publication among academic, scientific and policy oriented publications (<i>33<sup>rd</sup>RPC, Work Programme 2023, "I" Sector: ERS, paragraph-17</i>).</p> <p>The Council expressed thanks to the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) for arranging allocation of USD 20,000 (twenty thousand US dollars) and the ECO Secretariat for arranging allocation of USD 5,000 (five thousand US dollars) for the transformation of the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ).</p> <p>The Council directed the Secretariat to further consider the financing of the ECO Economic Journal, which needs now USD 25,000 (twenty-five thousand US dollars) aimed at transforming it into internationally recognized, widely disseminated and reputable publication among academic, scientific and policy oriented publications.</p>	
417.	<p>The Council expressed satisfaction with publications by the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) publications for the years 2022 and 2023. The Council noted that the Journal resumed its work after a pause of several years.</p> <p>The Council expressed satisfaction with the assistance of the ECO Secretariat rendered to the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) in preparing and publishing its publications for the years 2022 and 2023. Particularly, ECO Secretariat forwarded notification to Member States (NV No.275 from 23.02.2023) to contribute expert articles to EEJ. Further ECO Secretariat forwarded to EEJ articles from Iran and Kazakhstan as well as a Foreword and an Article by ECO Secretary</p>	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	General.	
418.	The Council requested the ECO Secretariat to continue close interaction with ECO Economic Journal in preparing in-depth research materials for EEJ publications.	
419.	The Council requested the ECO Economic Journal to place on its web-site publications and relevant economic reports prepared jointly by Member States and ECO Secretariat.	
420.	The Council took note of the fact that since the Board of the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) and ECO Secretariat have been dealing with securing funding for the transformation of the EEJ, 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Editorial Board of ECO Economic Journal (EBEEJ) was not organized. The issues related to EEJ was included into the agenda of 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (EPSCER). However, this meeting was postponed due to lack of quorum.	
421.	The Council requested to hold in 2024, the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Editorial Board of ECO Economic Journal (EBEEJ) separately or as part of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (EPSCER).	
422.	The Council requested the Board of the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) and ECO Secretariat to consider alignment of the agendas of the Journal and EPSCER, since the agenda of EPSCER is focused on carrying out economic researches and EEJ agenda is publication of economic research results, expert articles and publications, and consider them at the 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (EPSCER).	
423.	The Council stated that the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) can be affiliated with the ECO Research Center (ERC), since it is located in Baku, Azerbaijan	
424.	The Council recommended the Secretariat to timely forward to the Member States Notes Verbales requesting for articles, analytical papers and other relevant materials in line with the current priorities of the Member-States to be published in the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ).	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
425.	Since the ECO Economic Journal is affiliated with the ECO Research Centre the Council requested the Editorial Board of the ECO Economic Journal in cooperation with the ECO Secretariat to compile a <i>List of ECO Lead Analytical Centers/Consultancies and Regional Research Institutions</i> .	
<b>ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (EPSCER)</b>		
426.	The Council re-iterated the provision in “ <b>ECO Vision 2025</b> ” which envisaged that: “the core mandate of the Economic Cooperation Organization is economic development and regional integration”. To that end, “ECO Vision 2025” particularly emphasized “ <b>Economic Growth and Productivity</b> ” as one of core cooperation areas of ECO (Section 3, “Co-operation Areas”, sub-section “E”, “ <i>Implementation Framework of the ECO Vision 2025</i> ”, p.2).	
427.	Since 7 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research (EPSCER) which was scheduled to be held on October 18, 2023 was postponed due to lack of quorum ( <i>reference: Secretariat’s NV1651, dated October 16, 2023</i> ) the Council tasked the Secretariat to inform about the new dates of the event after due consultations with the Meeting Chairpersonship – the Institute of Economic Research of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan	
428.	The Council recommended to identify during the 7 <sup>th</sup> meeting of EPSCER directions of research stemming from the economic priorities of the Member States expressed at the 14 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> Summits of Heads of State and Government held in 2021 and 16 <sup>th</sup> Summit held in November 2023 in Tashkent.	
<b>ECO Annual Economic Reports and other publications</b>		
429.	The Council positively assessed preparation and dissemination by the ECO Secretariat in cooperation with the Member States of “ECO Annual Economic Report 2021: Overall Economic Situation and Trade in ECO Area” and “ECO Annual Economic Report 2022: Overall Economic Situation and Agriculture in ECO Area”.	
430.	The Council positively assessed interaction between the Member States and the ECO Secretariat in updating and introducing due adjustments into the ECO Annual Economic	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	Reports and called for the continuation of the same level of interaction in publishing fresh Annual Economic Reports as well as other publications.	
431.	<p>In practical terms, the Council requested the Member States for their relevant inputs and country reports for period 2023/2024 for the purposes of compilation of ECO Annual Report 2023/2024 and, in that regard, also suggested that the Secretariat avails of accessible official data sources and/or online official publications of relevant authorities/Ministries dealing with Economy, Budget and Planning of ECO Member States as regards the economic research and country strategy development.</p> <p>The Council appreciated the suggestion of the Republic of Türkiye for better communication among the focal points of the Member States to identify thematic areas for the next ECO Annual Economic Report 2023.</p>	
432.	The Council instructed the Secretariat to also use available national data sources in compiling ECO regional economic and statistics reports and publications, following the UN <i>“Recommended Practices on the Use of Non-Official Sources in International Statistics”</i> .	
<b>ERS PROJECTS</b>		
433.	The Council positively assessed the progress in carrying out the project titled “Transformation the ECO Economic Journal” ( <i>detailed information is given above, in the section ECONOMIC RESEARCH, Transformation the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ)</i> ).	
434.	<p>The Council positively assessed the progress in carrying out the project titled “Kazakhstan’s trade and economic potential in the markets of the ECO countries in the new geo-economic realities”.</p> <p>The Council took note that ECO Secretariat in October 2023 forwarded to the Embassy of Kazakhstan signed copies of ToR for hiring a consultant and Contract for implementation of the project.</p>	
435.	The Council positively assessed the progress in carrying out the project titled <i>“Agricultural statistics and Land Cover statistics from Earth Observations for selected ECO Countries”</i> in	

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	<p>coordination with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Statistics Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan as pilot country for the project.</p> <p>The Council took note that ECO Secretariat in September 2023 forwarded to FAOSTAT replies of the Statistical Agency of Tajikistan to specific questions of FAOSTAT.</p>	
436.	<p>The Council requested the Member States to initiate various research or practical projects in the field of Economic Research and Statistics, which will contribute to the expansion of ECO's potential, theoretical base, experience and potential.</p>	
<b>ECO ECONOMIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME (EERP)</b>		
437.	<p>Due to dynamic developments in the ECO area and renewed interest of the ECO Member States in deepening mutual cooperation the Council instructed the ECO Secretariat to draft in coordination with the Member States an <b>ECO Economic Research Programme (EERP)</b> in line with the immediate priorities of the Member-States expressed at the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Summits of the ECO Heads of State and Government as well as at the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (COM) of ECO countries, making emphasis in the following areas - transit and transport, energy, water, food security, diversification of economy, green economy, climate change.</p>	
438.	<p>The Council requested the Member States to continue the practice of providing Key Statistical Indicators (KSIs) (in a previously agreed excel format), country economic performance reports and other related materials and publications to the Secretariat for compilation of analytical reports and publications.</p> <p>The Council tasked the Secretariat to regular provide reports on KSIs of the Member States.</p>	
439.	<p>The Council recommended to the ECO Economic Journal (EEJ) to place various reports, analytical materials and publications prepared by ECO Secretariat and Member states at the web-site of EEJ as well for greater dissemination.</p>	
<b>CAPACITY-BUILDING</b>		

Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
440.	The Council expressed satisfaction that the ECO Secretariat in close cooperation with the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific (SIAP) and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) held a <b><u>Regional Training Workshop on Transition to Register-based approaches for Population and Housing Censuses in Ankara, Türkiye on 12-15 June 2023.</u></b>	
441.	The Council expressed satisfaction that the ECO Secretariat in close cooperation with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the Department of Statistics of Malaysia (DOSM) in line with the Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme held an Online Training Course titled <b><u>'International Trade Statistics and Balance of Payments' on 20-22 June 2023</u></b> in a virtual mode.	
442.	The Council expressed satisfaction that the ECO Secretariat in close cooperation with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and the Department of Statistics of Malaysia (DOSM) in line with the Statistical Capacity Building (StatCaB) Programme held an Online Training Course titled <b><u>"SDG 13 (Climate Action) Indicators"</u></b> in a virtual mode on December 19-20, 2023.	
443.	The Council took note that the Secretariat with its Notes Verbales informed about UN SIAP's e-Learning course Sustainable Development Goal 9 (SDG 9): Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure between 24 April and 26 May as well as about UN SIAP's <u>webinars on Indicators on business performance related to well-being and sustainability</u> that were held on 26 April, 31 May and 28 June 2023.	
444.	The Council requested the Member States to consider holding various physical or online events on statistics, without solely relying on the international partners.  The Council welcomed the readiness of the Republic of Türkiye to host online workshop on trade related statistics upon the requests of Member States.	
445.	The Council took note that at the 33 <sup>rd</sup> RPC meeting held in January 2023 Azerbaijan volunteered to hold the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Think-Tank Forum (33 <sup>rd</sup> RPC, Work Programme 2023, "I" Sector: ERS, paragraph-24), however this plan did not materialize. In this connection the	



Paragraph #	Programmes/Activities	Actions to be taken
	Council appreciated the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting the 3 <sup>rd</sup> ECO Think-Tank Forum during 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2024.	
<b>INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION</b>		
446.	<p>The Council stated that the ECO Secretariat has well-established ties with UN Statistical Institute for Asia (UN SIAP), the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Statistics Division of UNESCAP, the Department of Statistics of Malaysia (DOSM), United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), with who regular online or physical events are held.</p> <p>The Council recommended to the Secretariat to continue cooperation with international partners in holding various events related to capacity building in statistics.</p>	
447.	The Council welcomed the decision of the 282nd meeting of CPR held on November 27, 2023 to endorse the signing of a fresh Memorandum of Understanding between the ECO Secretariat and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) and requested the Secretariat to expedite conclusion of a fresh MoU with SESRIC in 2024.	
<b>ERS WEB-PAGE</b>		
448.	The Council positively assessed the work of the ERS Section of the ECO Secretariat in redeveloping in 2023 its web-page on the ECO Secretariat's web-site, which is done in line with increasing volume of work in the field. In this connection the Council requested the Member States and ECO Secretariat mutually interact on enriching the content of the ERS web-page and improving its work as well as sharing the best practices of the Member States.	

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## Proposed Section for Agricultural into Framework of Cooperation between Economic Cooperation Organization and Association of Southeast Asian Nations

- a) **Explore** ~~Developing agricultural cooperation between two organizations as a driving force in the economies of both regions for achieving~~ **to address issues of food safety and (ASEAN's proposed addition)** security, poverty alleviation, rural welfare and sustainable economic development; **(ECO: ASEAN can go along with edits)**
- b) ~~Encouraging joint cooperation in addressing food security challenges at global and regional level and a common approach toward safe, healthy and environment-friendly agri-food value chains;~~ **(ASEAN to delete)**
- c) ~~[Enhancing cooperation on harmonized, science-based food safety regulations and requirements on the basis of international standards and formulation of mechanisms for achieving mutual recognition and certification to catalyze agricultural growth and to facilitate smooth trade in agricultural productions;~~ **(ASEAN to delete)**
- d) ~~Encouraging financing agricultural projects/programmes, in particular, empowering agricultural SMEs, to contribute to the sustainable development goals (SDGs)~~ **(ASEAN to delete)**
- e) ~~Promoting high quality seed trade between two organizations to increase production efficiency this leads to economic and social welfare;~~ **(ASEAN to delete)**
- f) ~~Enhancing cooperation in agro-trade and investment and activate the private sector in agricultural production and trade, in order to benefit from global market on agricultural production~~**(ASEAN to delete)**
- g) ~~Enhancing cooperation in the field of veterinary health issues, facilitation of trade of livestock and animal-originated products~~**(ASEAN to delete)**
- h) ~~Launching joint training courses and workshops for capacity building and exchange information and best practices in the field of agriculture]~~ **(ASEAN to delete)**

# **Framework of Cooperation Between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organisation (2024-2028)**

## **Introduction**

1. Cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) is governed by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Secretariats of ASEAN and the ECO signed on 18 January 2006 and a mutually agreed Work Programme.
2. This ASEAN-ECO Framework of Cooperation (FoC) serves to strengthen relationship through practical and feasible cooperation in areas of mutual interests for both regional organisations. This FoC incorporates elements of the existing MoU, the Work Programme, and the evolving priorities of both Organisations.
3. ASEAN-ECO Cooperation will conform to international law and respective domestic laws, regulations, and policies of Member States of both Organisations.

## **Scope of Cooperation**

4. ASEAN and ECO reaffirm commitment to continue cooperation in areas identified in the existing MoU, namely: (a) trade and investment, (b) tourism, (c) development of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), and (d) narcotics control.
5. Other potential areas of cooperation include transport, connectivity, narrowing development gaps, energy, minerals, environment, disaster management, human resources development and sustainable development.

## **Implementation Modality**

6. The ASEAN–ECO Foreign Ministers will meet regularly on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, or at a mutually-agreed venue and mutually-convenient opportunities.
7. The Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and ECO Contact Group, consisting of Ambassadors of ECO Member States to ASEAN, will engage with each other regularly to assess the progress of the implementation of the ASEAN – ECO Framework for Cooperation, as well as to identify new cooperation

areas. The frequency and modality of the meeting will be determined based on mutual consultations.

8. The Secretariats of ASEAN and the ECO will continue to facilitate contacts and coordination between both sides in the implementation of this Framework of Cooperation.

9. Encourage relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and their ECO counterparts to pursue cooperation through this Framework of Cooperation, where appropriate, while also providing the flexibility to make adjustments as required during implementation. Both sides may consider implementing this Framework of Cooperation through mutually agreed activities.

10. Extending invitations to the Secretariats of ASEAN and ECO for their participation in ASEAN-ECO joint activities aimed at exploring possibilities of future cooperation.

## **Priority Areas of Cooperation**

### **11. Trade and Investment**

- a) Promoting the exchange of best practices on trade and investment facilitation and other priority economic issues;
- b) Encouraging business exchanges between both sides to promote trade, investment, and networking in the two regions;
- c) Promoting the exchange of relevant statistical data for a better understanding of economic and trade developments of ASEAN and ECO;
- d) Encouraging joint capacity-building projects in areas like Paperless Trade / E-Commerce, Regional Value Chains, WTO, Trade Policy-related matters, Project Implementation, etc.; and
- e) Developing linkages among Economic Research Institutes in ASEAN and ECO Member States.

### **12. Tourism**

- a) Promoting ASEAN tourism destinations in ECO Member States and ECO tourism destinations in ASEAN Member States including through travel fairs, exhibitions, and tourism festivals to widen the international markets into the two regions;

- b) Exchanging information, research, technological innovations, knowledge and experiences, and sharing best practices in the tourism development, such as eco-friendly initiatives safety and ease of travel, consumer protection, risk and crisis management, and emergency response and decarbonisation of tourism operations between the two regions;
- c) Undertaking joint promotional efforts to market tourism products of the ASEAN and ECO Member States such as travel fairs and tourism roadshows to target the broader international market;
- d) Encouraging the development of cooperation between the National Tourism Organisations of the Member States of ASEAN and ECO;
- e) Promoting youth participation in tourism development in the two regions, including exchange of youth visits;
- f) Enhancing cooperation and exchange in tourism capacity building including through training, exchange programs and workshops to support the travel and tourism sector.

### **13. Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Industry**

- a) Exchanging information, knowledge, and experience, and sharing best practices and undertaking capacity building programmes in the field of entrepreneurship, including the promotion of women and youth entrepreneurship;
- b) Enhancing cooperation in development and access to finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) including through startup exchange visits, incubators and co-working partnerships, access to industry-specific mentors and export readiness initiatives;
- c) Developing digital connectivity and digital skills among MSMEs in both regions that focus on empowering and enhancing competitiveness of MSMEs;
- d) Enhancing cooperation in the field of standardization, conformity assessment, accreditation and metrology between two organizations with a view to facilitate trade of goods and services and to develop cooperation in the spheres of intellectual, scientific, technological and economic activities;

- e) Encouraging for cooperation in the Industry issues and events, regarding the need for industrial and technological development particularly in the high-tech arena;
- f) Promoting cooperation in the field of Nano-Technology projects and programs; and,
- g) Exploring joint training courses and workshops to exchange information and share best practices in the field of industry and high-tech issues.

#### **14. Sustainable Development**

- a) Promoting sharing of experiences, best practices and expertise with regard to policy, practices and method for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- b) Promoting networking and forging partnership for future collaboration in the implementation of the SDGs through various approaches.

#### **15. Narcotics Control (Drug Abuse Prevention and Control)**

- a) To promote the exchange of information on national laws, regulations to suppress illegal drug trafficking and share best practices on drug abuse prevention and control;
- b) To develop, share and adopt, where appropriate, evidence-based community-based drug prevention and control programs;
- c) To encourage the formulation and sharing of sustainable alternative development programs, with emphasis on skills training and marketing and trade opportunities for alternative development products; and
- d) To promote joint efforts in organizing workshops, training courses, study visits on matters related to law enforcement, preventive drug education, treatment and rehabilitation, research and alternative development.

#### **16. Transport**

- a) Exchanging data and information on transport and transit trends, tariffs and relevant data that supports sustainable transport in both regions;
- b) Exploring possibility in organising and encouraging participation in training courses, workshops, conference, exhibitions and forums on various

areas of transport industry. Cooperating in the framework of international meetings, conferences and events.

## **17. Energy and Environment**

a) Enhancing regional cooperation dialogue with topics related to sustainable energy, including, but not limited to low-carbon economy, renewables, transitional fuels, energy efficiency, and conservation, financing clean energy transitions and carbon pricing mechanisms;

b) Exploring collaboration in development of renewable energy sources including, solar, offshore and onshore wind power, geothermal, hydropower and bioenergy for electricity generation and exchanging experience and sharing advanced practices in the areas of strengthening of grid, integration of renewables to grid and other relevant fields;

c) Enhancing joint partnership with relevant international organizations/financial institutions/donor agencies with a view to raising necessary financial resources for ensuring effective implementation of mutual projects/activities/studies;

d) Exploring cooperation on information exchange in the field of environment to address the environmental challenges affecting member states;

e) Exploring potentials of cooperation for implementing joint projects, organizing joint events along with exchange of experiences and development of a joint information sharing platform in the environmental areas of mutual interest;

f) Increasing sustainability of mineral resources in the respective regions inter alia via exchanges of information, knowledge and best practices at the regional level, while addressing SDG goals implicating minerals with particular emphasis to overcome its environmental impact in the region and beyond;

g) Supporting the development of environment-friendly industries, and enhancing exchanges and cooperation in green economy and technologies, circular economy, sustainable consumption and production, and environment protection.

## **18. Health Cooperation**

- a) Enhancing cooperation in health sector to address challenges of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases based on health priorities identified in ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda, as well as to prepare for other future public health emergencies;
- b) Exploring enhanced collaboration, coordination and sharing of information, experience and expertise to develop manufacturing, strengthen research and development capacity and networks to attain medical countermeasures/vaccine, therapeutic, and diagnostic (VTD) security and self-reliance during normal times and emergency situations, through among others, collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED);
- c) Promoting cooperation to build capacities for regional and national health systems;
- d) Promoting cooperation to improve access to primary healthcare including access to health tools and medicines.

## **Funding**

19. Activities conducted under this Framework shall be supported through available means of funding as agreed upon by both sides.

## **Conclusion**

20. ASEAN and ECO are committed to work towards the implementation of this Framework Document, which may be updated as appropriate, in order to advance ASEAN – ECO relations.

Endorsed by the ASEAN and the ECO Foreign Ministers at the ASEAN – ECO Ministerial Meeting in New York, the United States, on the Twenty Second of September in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty Three.

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**AT8032 /2024**

The Permanent Mission of Malaysia to ASEAN presents its compliments to the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Secretariat and has the honour to refer to the latter's Note Verbale No: IR/2024/264 dated 5 March 2024 that provided the ECO's concurrence for the inclusion of an amendment to the additional paragraph on agriculture in the Framework of Cooperation (FOC) between ASEAN and the ECO.

The Permanent Mission of Malaysia to ASEAN has further the honour to convey ASEAN's proposal to adopt the additional paragraph on agriculture as an Annex to the FOC, which is the standard practice between ASEAN and its external partners in incorporating additional paragraphs into FOCs which have already been agreed upon. Should ECO be agreeable to the proposed Annex to the FOC, the Permanent Mission of Malaysia would further like to propose for an exchange of letters between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran in their capacities as the current Country Coordinators for ASEAN and ECO respectively, in order to formalise and finalise this process.

The Permanent Mission of Malaysia to ASEAN would highly appreciate it if ECO could provide feedback on the above to ASEAN by 25 April 2024.

The Permanent Mission of Malaysia to ASEAN avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Economic Cooperation Organization Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.



12 April 2024

**Economic Cooperation Organization Secretariat  
TEHRAN**



КЫРГЫЗ РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНЫН ИРАН  
ИСЛАМ РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНДАГЫ ЭЛЧИЛИГИ

EMBASSY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC  
IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

No : 208-9

Date:

Most urgent

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Tehran, and with reference to the ECO Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADMN/PER//2024/464 dated April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, has the honour to state the following.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has decided to present nomination of the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) H.E. Mr. Turdakun Sydykov for the post of the ECO Deputy Secretary General (CV is attached).

This Embassy kindly reminds that the above stated nomination by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has already been presented to the esteemed ECO Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran via its Note Verbale No. 208-7 dated from April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 with reference to the previous ECO Secretariat's Note Verbale No./2024/458 dated April 9, 2024 along with his CV (Copy of the Note Verbale is attached).

The ECO Secretariat is kindly requested to complete all required formalities and share the outcome with this Embassy.

The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the ECO Secretariat in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.

Enclosure: As mentioned above.

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

THE SECRETARIAT OF THE  
ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION  
TEHRAN





**EMBASSY  
OF TURKMENISTAN  
TEHRAN**

**28/4-903**

The Embassy of Turkmenistan in Tehran presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Embassies of Member States of the ECO in Tehran and with reference to its Note Verbale No 28/4-631 dated April 8, 2024 has honour to forward the Note Verbale of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan No 19/59869 dated May 21, 2024 regarding the nomination of Turkmenistan to the post of the Deputy Secretary General of the ECO, which fall vacant as August, 2024.

The Embassy of Turkmenistan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Embassies of Member States of the ECO in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.

*Enclosure: 4 pages*

**Tehran, May 21, 2024**

**THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
ORGANIZATION**

**CC. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ISLAMIC  
REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**CC. EMBASSIES OF MEMBER STATES OF THE ECO**

**TEHRAN**



No:ADMN/2024/476

Priority: Normal

Date: 16/4/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran and has the honor to enclose copy of self-explanatory Notes Verbales No. 208-7 dated April 9, 2024 and No. 208-9 dated April 15, 2024 received from the Embassy of Kyrgyz Republic, supporting Pakistan's candidature for the post of next ECO Secretary General, as well as requesting support for the candidature of H.E. Mr. Turdakun Sydykov, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Iran (CV enclosed), against the post of ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD, Cat-I D3).

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the esteemed Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embassies of ECO Member States the assurances of its highest consideration.

All ECO Member States - Tehran



No:ADMN/2024/671

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 23/5/2024

Attachment: Yes

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran and has the honor to enclose a copy of Note Verbale No. 28/4-903 dated May 21, 2024 received from the Embassy of Turkmenistan, conveying the decision of the Government of Turkmenistan to nominate H.E. Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev, currently working as Economic Advisor in the ECO Secretariat for the post of Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD, Cat-I D3).

It is further noted that as per Article 6.4 of ECO Staff Regulations appointment to the post of Deputy Secretary General shall be made by the Council of Ministers at the recommendation of the Council of Permanent Representatives. The 288<sup>th</sup> CPR will consider the aforesaid nomination and will take the required decision.

The Curriculum Vitae of the candidate is attached.

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Embassies of the ECO Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.



**All ECO Member States - Tehran**

## CURRICULUM VITAE



**NAME:** Silapberdi NURBERDIYEV

**DATE OF BIRTH:** November 22, 1977

### **EDUCATION and CAREER:**

In 1998 graduated Magtymguly Turkmen State University, economist (International Economy).

**2000 - 2004** – Attaché of the Department of Consular Services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan;

**2004 - 2008** – Third Secretary, Second Secretary, First Secretary of the Department for International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan;

**March 2008 - July 2011** – First Secretary/Counsellor of the Embassy of Turkmenistan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Riyadh);

**July 2011 – July 2022** - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to the Republic of Austria;

**August 2011 – July 2022** - Head of the Delegation of Turkmenistan to the OSCE;

**November 2011 – July 2022** - Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the UNOV and CTBTO;

**February 2012 – July 2022** - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to Hungary;

**January 2013 – July 2022** - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to the Czech Republic;

**February 2014 – July 2022** - Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the UNIDO;

**August 2015 – July 2022** - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to the Slovak Republic;

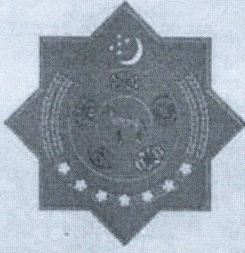
**August 2016 – July 2022** - Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the IAEA;

**August 2022 – January 2024** - Head of the International Economic Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan;

**Since January 21, 2024** – Economic Advisor for Regional Economic Issues of the ECO Secretariat;

**Foreign languages:** English, Russian – fluent; German, Arabic – basic knowledge;

**Marital Status:** Married, has three children.



TÜRKMENISTANYŇ  
DAŞARY IŞLER  
MINISTRLOGI

19/59869

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ministry Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Embassies of the Member States of the ECO in Tehran and with reference its Note Verbale No 28/4-631 dated April 8, 2024 has honour to inform the following.

The Government of Turkmenistan has decided to nominate the H.E. Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev, currently working as an Economic Advisor of the ECO Secretariat, to the post of the Deputy Secretary General, which fall vacant as August, 2024.

Turkmenistan's full involvement in the activities of the ECO was and remains one of the important dimensions of Turkmenistan's foreign policy. Member States can reasonably count on Turkmenistan's comprehensive support for all constructive ideas and proposals to further strengthen economic and trade partnerships to ensure regional and continental stability and to strengthen and expand cultural and humanitarian ties between our fraternal countries and peoples.

**THE SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION  
ORGANIZATION**

**CC. MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC  
OF IRAN**

**CC. EMBASSIES OF MEMBER STATES OF THE ECO  
TEHRAN**



Turkmenistan makes contribution to expanding mutually beneficial trade, economic and investment ties, creation of economic corridors, joint transport and logistics centers in the ECO region.

The 15th ECO Summit held in Ashgabat on November 28, 2021 was a milestone event. It was full of important initiatives and events and gave a new energy to our joint activities. The Ashgabat Consensus for Action adopted at the Summit is a mainline document that includes all key areas of cooperation particularly trade, transport, connectivity, energy, industry, economic growth, as well as social welfare, environment, climate change, and a number of others.

H.E. Ambassador Nurberdiyev holds a degree in international economics and has gained rich experience working with international organizations while serving as an Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Turkmenistan to the Republic of Austria (CV attached).

In this regard, the Turkmen side would highly appreciate if the nomination of Turkmenistan is supported by the esteemed ECO Member States.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization, Ministry Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Embassies of the Member States of the ECO in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.



Ashgabat, May 21, 2024