

ECO Secretariat, Tehran

Report

Official visit of the ECO Secretary General to New York

(18-22 September, 2023)

1. A three-member ECO delegation led by the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, visited New York on an official visit on September 18-22, 2023 to attend the Seventy-Eighth Session of the United Nations General Assembly and the SDG Summit. He also participated in the 25th Informal Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers and the 15th ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meeting, which were held on the sidelines of the General Assembly Session.

2. In addition to participation in the above mentioned events, the Secretary General held bilateral meetings with the Director-General of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UN-OSSC), Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and the Foreign Minister of the Turkish Cypriot State to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Participation in the Seventy-Eighth Session of the UN General Assembly

3. In line with the practice, the Secretary-General represented ECO at the Seventy-Eighth regular session of the UN General Assembly, in the capacity of observer.

25th Informal Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers

4. The 25th Informal Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) was held on September 21, 2023 in New York. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

5. The Informal COM Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers/Representatives of the ECO Member States, as well as the Turkish Cypriot State and the Organization of Turkic States as observers.

The 15th ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meeting

6. The 15th ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held on 22 September 2023 at the sidelines of the 78th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR and H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

7. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers or their representatives from ASEAN and ECO Member States, except Myanmar and Afghanistan, as well as Timor-Leste as Observer. The Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Political-Security Community and the ECO Secretary-General were also in attendance. The proceedings of the meeting followed an approved agenda. A joint press release was issued after the close of the meeting (<https://eco.int/eco-asean-ministerial-meeting/>). A summary record of the meeting was circulated separately.

Bilateral Meetings of the Secretary General

Meeting with the Director of UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UN-OSSC)

8. The ECO Secretary General held a bilateral meeting with the Director of UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UN-OSSC) Ms. Dima Al-Khatib on September 21, 2023. The meeting discussed ways and means to enhance ECO-OSSC cooperation in all mutually possible areas and activities.

9. Expressing ECO's ambition to expand its global working partnerships, Ambassador Noziri underlined the significance of a biennial UN Resolution on ECO-UN cooperation adopted by UNGA on August 25, 2023.

10. He also briefed the UN dignitary about the Organization's efforts towards increasing ECO's share in the global trade, as well as boosting region's trade profile through trade liberation/facilitation and smoothing customs procedures. Realizing the magnitude of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in fueling multiple socioeconomic activities, he proposed ECO-UNOSSC collaboration for further capacity building of the ECO Member States and the ECO Secretariat.

11. Ms. Dima expressed receptivity for enhancing OSSC's relationship with ECO, summarizing their working scope and mandate. She mentioned that OSSC is entrusted to maintain cooperation with important ECO countries which include Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Regarding expansion of OSSC-ECO ties, she suggested the Organization's registration on the South-South Galaxy online platform, noting that the ECO has been contributing to the Office's Global Report on SSC.

Meeting with the UN High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS)

12. The ECO Secretary General and the UN High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), Ms. Rabab Fatima met on September 19, 2023 in New York.

13. The meeting discussed on issues of mutual interest including, inter alia, some development challenges of ECO landlocked countries as well as scope of ECO-OHRLLS joint initiatives in regional trade and connectivity sectors.

14. Ambassador Noziri emphasized the importance of a biennial Resolution adopted on August 25, 2023 by 77th UNGA Session on ECO-UN Cooperation that encourages an enhanced coordination between the ECO and UN Agencies. He briefed the UN High Representative on certain activities of the Organization carried out for development of ECO intra-and-inter-regional transport linkages through various road and railway networks. Moreover, he mentioned about the concept for establishing air hub in the eastern part of the region which is especially aimed at facilitating the ECO landlocked countries in their efforts to secure greater transport connectivity. Looking forward to OHRLLS's support and involvement in such important initiatives, he proposed the establishment of a joint mechanism in a bid to oxygenate ECO endeavours for improving regional transport links and other developing sectors.

15. The UN dignitary appreciated the ECO for its kind dedication towards overall regional development. Noting the strenuous impacts of climate change particularly on landlocked nations, Ms. Fatima also reciprocated the idea for further consolidating the level of OHRLLS-ECO cooperative link. To this end, she said that a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) could define all areas in which the two sides had the potential to collaborate and move on. Illuminating their mandate and agenda, she invited the ECO's participation in the LDC Conference scheduled for June 2024 in Kigali, Rwanda.

Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

16. The ECO Secretary General held a meeting with H.E. Mr. Tahsin Ertuğruloğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Cypriot State, on September 22, 2023 in New York. The bilateral interaction reviewed the scope of cooperation between ECO and the Turkish Cypriot State and other issues of mutual interest.

Other Bilateral Interactions

17. Ambassador Noziri also held bilateral interactions with the President of Mongolia H.E. Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh and the Secretary General of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana on the sidelines of the High-level Week.