

**290<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES  
(CPR)**

*October 08, 2024  
ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

Agenda Item No. 1

Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 290<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

No: CFU /2024/1336

Priority: Urgent

Date: 24/9/2024

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 290<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR to be convened on October 8, 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**



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

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

October 8, 2024  
*ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

## Draft Agenda

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 290<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
2. Adoption of Draft Report of the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
3. Preparation for the:
  - 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) (*December 2024*);
  - First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (*November 3, 2024*);
  - 35<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) (*November 4-7, 2024*).
4. Status of Afghanistan in the context of the country's participation in ECO activities;
5. Administrative and budgetary matters:
  - Extension of tenure of Deputy Secretary General (ADM, EME, IR & IT);
  - Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024;
  - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
6. Any other business;
7. 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 290<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
  - Adoption of Draft Report of the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
  - Preparation for the:
    - 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) (*December 2024*);
    - First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (*November 3, 2024*);
    - 35<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) (*November 4-7, 2024*).
  - Status of Afghanistan in the context of the country's participation in ECO activities;
  - Administrative and budgetary matters:
    - Extension of tenure of Deputy Secretary General (ADM, EME, IR & IT);
    - Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024;
    - 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 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

3. The Draft Report of the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on September 10, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran was circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/1294 dated September 18, 2024.
4. The Council may consider the adoption of the Draft Report.

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

#### Preparation for the:

- 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) (*December 2024*);
  - First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (*November 3, 2024*);
  - 35<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) (*November 4-7, 2024*).
5. The 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) is scheduled to be hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran during December this year in Tehran.

6. Based on the decision of 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting held on September 10, 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran, the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) was established to facilitate the preparations and holding of 28<sup>th</sup> COM, First HLC and 35<sup>th</sup> RPC meetings.
7. As per consultation with the Chair, the Secretariat vide its Note Verbale proposed the dates of November 3, 2024 for organizing the First HLC Meeting and November 4-7, 2024 for conducting the 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of RPC for consideration of Member States.
8. The Council may consider the proposed set of dates for holding the HLC and RPC meetings.
9. The first PrepCom Meeting is scheduled to be held on October 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran. The Council will be briefed on the outcomes of the first PrepCom session in due course.

**Agenda Item No. 4**

Status of Afghanistan in the context of the country's participation in ECO activities

10. The Council, in its last session held on September 10, 2024, proposed to consider the status of Afghanistan in the context of its participation in ECO activities during the next meeting.
11. In the light of the briefing given by the Secretariat, the Council may also wish to dwell on the latest developments around this issue.

**Agenda Item No. 5**

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Extension of tenure of Deputy Secretary General (ADM, EME, IR & IT)

12. The post of Deputy Secretary General (ADM, EME, IR & IT) will fall vacant on November 1, 2024, upon completion of tenure of Ambassador Huseyin Avni Bicakli (Türkiye national).
13. The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran vide its Note Verbale requested to consider the extension of tenure of Ambassador Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General (ADM, EME, IR & IT), who competes his six years at ECO on November 1, 2024 and attains the age of 65 years on October 28, 2024, till arrival of his successor during the 290<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting. The said request was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. ADM/2024/1324 dated September 22, 2024.
14. The Council may consider the matter and take necessary decision.
  - Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024

15. Based on the conclusions of 287<sup>th</sup>, 288<sup>th</sup> and 289<sup>th</sup> Meetings of CPR, the Secretariat will carry out necessary consultations with the ECO Chairmanship on the matter, and bring it back to CPR in due course.

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

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

**Agenda Item No.6**

Any other business

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

**Agenda Item No. 7**

Date of the next CPR Meeting

18. The Council may decide the date of its next (291<sup>st</sup>) Meeting in consultation with the Member States and the ECO Secretariat.

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Agenda Item No. 2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

No: CFU/2024/1294

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 18/9/2024

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 289<sup>th</sup> Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) Meeting held on September 10, 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



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

## **Draft Report**

September 10, 2024  
*ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

## Draft Report

Under the Chairmanship of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting was held on September 10, 2024, attended by the Permanent Representatives /Representatives of Republic of **Azerbaijan**, Islamic Republic of **Iran**, Republic of **Kazakhstan**, **Kyrgyz Republic**, Islamic Republic of **Pakistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan**, Republic of **Türkiye**, **Turkmenistan** and Republic of **Uzbekistan**. The ECO Secretary General and the relevant staff of the Secretariat also attended the Meeting. List of participants is enclosed as **Annexure-I**.

While calling to order the 289<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR, the **Chair** warmly welcomed the newly appointed ECO Secretary General, **H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan**. Expressing confidence in his leadership, the Chair highlighted Ambassador Khan's extensive knowledge and experience, particularly in multilateral cooperation, as key assets that will foster a more positive and conducive environment for the ECO.

The **Permanent Representatives and Representatives of the ECO Member States** also extended their congratulations to the Secretary General for assumption of his new responsibilities, conveying best wishes for his success to meet the assignments. They also expressed pleasure over the appointment of new ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD), **Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev**, welcoming and felicitating him to join the Council.

The **ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan** expressed his gratitude and acknowledged the significant responsibility that comes with his new role. He emphasized the importance of cooperation among the Member States and reiterated his commitment to achieving ECO's objectives, particularly as the Organization approaches the final stages of its Vision 2025. He underscored the need for efficient implementation of key projects in areas such as trade, connectivity, and tourism. Furthermore, he stressed upon the initiative of the Honourable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to develop ECO Strategic Objectives for 2035, ensuring continuity in the Organization's long-term goals. He mentioned that "consolidation" and "implementation" are the key words and would remain his topmost priorities in the context of carrying out much needed and long awaited comprehensive reforms in ECO. The complete statement of ECO Secretary General is attached at **Annexure-II**.

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

#### Adoption of the Agenda

1. The **Council** unanimously adopted the following Agenda proposed by the ECO Secretariat, circulated amongst the Member States via Note Verbal dated August 29, 2024:

- 1) Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
- 2) Adoption of Draft Report of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting;
- 3) Preparation for the First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review;
- 4) Preparation for the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COM, Informal Meeting of the COM in UN HQ, and 16<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meeting;

- 5) Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024;
- 6) Administrative and budgetary matters:
  - Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024;
  - Extension of the post of Head of Section for Administration & Management;
  - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
- 7) Any other business;
- 8) Date of the next CPR Meeting.

## **Agenda Item No. 2**

### Adoption of Draft Report of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting

2. The Draft Report of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting, held on June 5, 2024, at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran, was adopted by the Council with the views/comments amendments as proposed during the CPR meeting.
3. The Council tasked the Secretariat to circulate the adopted Report of the 288<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting in due course.

## **Agenda Item No. 3**

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

4. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD)** briefed the Council on the progress made during the Fifth Meeting of the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee held on July 1, 2024 and the said Review Committee's Final Draft Report circulated amongst the Member States on July 3, 2024 for consideration. He emphasized that the ECO Vision 2025 Review is to be endorsed by the First High Level Committee (HLC) and recommended to the next COM for adoption. He also requested the Council to consider the new dates for conducting the First HLC Meeting as previous dates were postponed due to lack of quorum.
5. In this context, the **Chair** suggested exploring the option of scheduling the upcoming 35<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meeting to coincide with the First High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers, proposed for late November or early December 2024.
6. While deliberating on the new dates for the HLC Meeting and aiming to secure high-level participation, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** urged the Council to take into consideration the scheduled COP29, which will be held in Baku from November 11-22, 2024.
7. The **Chair** acknowledged this request and assured the Council that both meetings would be scheduled in a manner that avoids any overlap with the events taking place in Baku.
8. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** informed the Council that they have received the views of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Türkiye with regard to the Draft Report of ECO Vision 2024 Review Committee that was shared with

the Secretariat on September 10, 2024. He requested to incorporate the said view in the Review Committee's Draft Report.

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

##### Preparation for the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COM, Informal Meeting of the COM in UN HQ, and 16<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN Joint Ministerial Meeting

9. The **Chair** informed the Council that the logistical arrangements for the Informal COM and 16<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN Ministerial meetings on the sidelines of UNGA are scheduled to be held on September 27, 2024 (15:00 – 16:00 hrs and 16:00 – 17:30 hrs) in New York. He noted that the Draft Agendas and Annotated Draft Agendas of both meetings were circulated among the Member States via Secretariat for consideration.

10. The **Chair** strongly encouraged the Member States to confirm the participation of their Honourable Ministers, stressing those back-to-back meetings with ASEAN would offer a valuable platform for ministers to exchange views and engage in informal consultations with the new ECO Secretary General.

11. The Permanent Representatives of the Republic of **Uzbekistan**, Republic of **Tajikistan** and Republic of **Kazakhstan** provisionally confirmed the participation of their Honourable Foreign Ministers at the Informal COM and 16<sup>th</sup> ECO-ASEAN Ministerial meetings scheduled for September 27, 2024 in New York.

12. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Admin, EME, IR & IT)** provided an update on the preparations for the abovementioned ECO events in New York and informed the Council that Turkish Cypriot State, as the ECO Observer is requesting to participate at both meetings and make the statement during the events. The request of Turkish Cypriot State was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale on September 10, 2024.

13. The Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** reiterated the importance of the participation of the Turkish Cypriot State in the said meetings in New York. He emphasized that the topic is significant not only for Türkiye but also for other Member States.

14. The **Chair** reminded the Council that, despite the informal nature of the Informal COM meeting, flexibility had always been shown in accommodating observers. He reiterated that the informal nature of the meeting allows the Member States and observers to make remarks and exchange views.

15. Since no comments were raised, the **Council** adopted the Draft Agendas for both meetings in New York. Also the Council adopted the participation of Turkish Cypriot State at Informal COM and ECO-ASEAN meetings in the sidelines of UNGA. The Council urged the remaining Member States to expedite confirmation of the participation of their Honourable Ministers in forthcoming two important ECO events.

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

##### Approval of ECO Work Programme 2024

16. As no comments were raised by Member States regarding the proposed amendments by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Work Programme 2024, the **Council** tasked the Secretariat to initiate a two-week silence procedure to obtain COM's approval with regards to Work Programme 2024.

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

##### Administrative and budgetary matters:

##### - Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024

17. In the course of discussions on the reallocation of the ECO Budget 2024, the **Chair** reminded the participants of prior agreements between the Secretariat and the host country to engage in consultations aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Council of Ministers' decision. He underscored that those consultations have already commenced with the ECO Secretary General, and that they will continue moving forward. The Council will be informed on the progress of implementation in due course, he added.

##### - Extension of the post of Head of Section for Administration & Management

18. In continuation of discussions on the extension of the Head of Section for Administration and Management, the Chair explained that the extension would remain in effect until the appointment of a new Head of Section, as the internal selection process within the Iranian Foreign Ministry is still ongoing.

19. Since no objections were raised, the **Council** approved the extension of tenure of Mr. Mojtaba Ramezani Ahmadabadi (Iranian National), the Head of Section for Administration and Management till the arrival of his successor.

##### - Recommendations of the Selection Panel

20. The **Co-Chair** of the Selection Panel, DSG (Admin, EME, IR & IT) informed the Council of the Selection Panel's decision. He explained that the tenure of Ms. Nayari Sadat Mohseni, the Program Officer of the Agriculture and Industry Directorate, is completing. In response to the vacancy, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs nominated Mr. Mehrdad Fallah. Following discussions and interviews, the Selection Panel, composed of Representatives from Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Türkiye, reached a consensus and recommended Mr. Mehrdad Fallah's appointment to the said position.

21. The **Council** approved the recommendation without objections, with the Chair offering thanks to Ms. Mohseni for her service and congratulating Mr. Fallah on his appointment.

22. The **ECO Secretary General** acknowledged the contribution of Ms. Mohseni and expressed appreciation for Iran's nomination of a competent successor. He emphasized the importance of appointing qualified personnel to key positions, particularly in economic roles, to ensure the Organization's effective functioning.

## **Agenda Item No.7**

### Any other business

23. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Tourism, PM, JPC & EAPA)** informed the Council that the Afghanistan Embassy in Tehran has submitted several requests, including resuming Afghanistan's participation in ECO activities, filling two vacant positions, and contributing to the ECO Secretariat's budget. However, since Afghanistan's current government is not recognized, the Secretariat seeks the Council's permission to engage in formal or informal discussions with the Afghan Embassy, he added.

24. The **ECO Secretary General** proposed that either he or a Deputy Secretary General could engage informally with relevant parties to hear their perspectives directly, outside of formal settings. He emphasized that this approach, if approved by the Council, would allow for private discussions and will be consistent with the approach adopted by some other organizations.

25. The **Chair** clarified that the Secretariat is permitted to engage informally on technical issues, as previously decided, if such engagement is required. However, the broader question of how these members should participate in formal activities remains for the membership to decide, given their desire for representation.

26. The **Chair** further emphasized that informal technical engagement with their delegation is allowed if deemed necessary by the Secretariat. For matters that require pre-authorization or additional information, these should first be brought to the CPR. Regarding higher-level participation in ECO activities, the Chair noted that a formal decision from the ministers will be awaited.

27. The **Chair** opened the floor to Member States for their interaction to the Afghan Embassy's Notes Verbale, but no comments were made. The Chair proposed that the Secretariat prepares a detailed commentary on the note to facilitate further discussion among the Member States.

28. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (Tourism, PM, JPC & EAPA)** also raised the issue of funding for the "ECO-Economic Journal," a project based in Baku under the supervision of the Economic Scientific Research Institute of Azerbaijan's Ministry of Economy. The journal aims to become an internationally recognized publication, with a total project cost of \$50,000, he informed. Last year, \$25,000 was allocated, and the journal now requires an additional \$25,000 to complete the project. The Secretariat proposes that \$5,000 may be allocated from the Feasibility and General Purpose Fund (FGPF).

29. The **Council** considered the request and agreed to allocate the funds, acknowledging the importance of supporting economic research within the Organization.

30. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC&HRSD)** informed the Council that the 9<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in Dushanbe on September 16-17, 2024, organized by the Tajikistan Committee for Emergency Situations and Civil Defense. He further informed that the meeting will focus on developing a framework for disaster risk reduction in the ECO region. He added that confirmed



participants include Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Turkmenistan. He expressed appreciation for their high-level participation. He also informed that Turkish Cypriot State has requested to attend this meeting as an ECO Observer. The said request was forwarded to Tajik side for consideration and requires also CPR's approval.

31. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Tajikistan** highlighted the importance of the upcoming meetings on ECO Disaster Risk Reduction and the ECO Regional Electricity Market. He thanked the participating countries for their confirmation and requested expedited details on delegation arrivals and air tickets for the Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction. For the second expert group meeting on the ECO Regional Electricity Market, scheduled for September 20-21, 2024 in Dushanbe, the Ambassador asked the participating countries to promptly provide delegations' information. Moreover, regarding the participation of observers in the Disaster Risk Management meeting in Dushanbe, the Ambassador noted that the matter is still under consideration and no further information is available at this time.

32. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** addressed two key issues. i) First, he highlighted a proposal from the Honourable President of Uzbekistan at the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit to develop a new conceptual document titled "Strategic Objectives of ECO - 2035." The document aims to enhance mutual trade, transport and communication interconnectivity, industrial cooperation, energy security, climate change mitigation, tourism, and cultural exchange. The Secretariat has been requested to expedite the development and approval of this important document; ii) Second, he informed that Uzbekistan will hold elections to the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) and local representative bodies on October 27, 2024. The elections will occur under a new constitution and a mixed electoral system. To ensure transparency, international observers have been invited. The Chairman of the Central Election Commission has invited the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, to observe the elections. He expressed hope that the ECO Secretary General will participate as an International Observer.

33. The **Chair** acknowledged the invitation extended by the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Secretary General to serve as an international observer at the upcoming parliamentary elections in Tashkent. The Chair emphasized that this invitation reflects the increasing engagement of ECO Member States with the Organization and highlights the importance of ECO as a significant international body.

34. Since no further comments were made in this context, the **Council** agreed to give authorization for the ECO Secretary General to attend the elections in October 2024 as an International Observer.

35. The Representative of **Turkmenistan** underscored that the new Secretary General, H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, has received a cordial invitation from Turkmenistan to attend an international conference honoring the renowned Turkmen poet and writer, 'Magtymguly Fragi' scheduled to be held on October 11, 2024. The Conference will include participants from various countries, including academicians and international organizations. He highlighted that Turkmenistan has organized similar events in recent years, with consistent participation from ECO. Given this, it would be appropriate for the ECO Secretary General to attend this significant event.

Additionally, the Secretary General could use this opportunity to make a bilateral visit to Turkmenistan, potentially making it his first visit on this occasion. He requested the Council to authorize the Secretariat's participation in the conference. Turkmenistan will provide accommodation and internal transportation, which will help keep travel costs low. Consequently, the **Council** agreed the participation of the ECO Secretary General in the said event.

36. The **ECO Director for HRSD** reported on the recent ECO-IOM workshop held at the ECO Secretariat in late July 2024, focused on combating trafficking and human smuggling. Organized with the Iran Office of IOM, the workshop included 80 participants from eight ECO Member States and international organizations. He further added that the event aimed to strengthen regional cooperation and address new challenges like digital platforms and cybercrime. A networking reception hosted by the ECO Cultural Institute highlighted the need for effective collaboration across local, national, and international levels. He further added that the draft report has been finalized and will be shared with member states once complete.

37. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** briefed the Council on the ECOTA issue, highlighting its critical impact on ECO's activities. Despite being signed and ratified in 2003 and 2008, the implementation of ECOTA has stalled, affecting other ECO initiatives. He was of the view that a recent breakthrough occurred at the ninth Council meeting in Pakistan, where it was decided to review and amend the ECOTA instrument. This process involves gathering Member States' inputs on impediments to implementation, forming a technical negotiating committee, and preparing a revised document for the upcoming ministerial meeting, likely in early to mid-2025. He emphasized the urgency of Member States providing timely inputs to ensure the success of this initiative. He called for political support to expedite the process and noted the need for a formal letter from the ECO Secretary General to emphasize the importance of this endeavor. He underscored that the meeting in Islamabad was praised as a significant step forward, and all Member States were urged to contribute data and support the updating of the study to facilitate evidence-based decision-making. He concluded by stressing the importance of starting negotiations soon to advance trade integration within ECO.

38. The Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** expressed gratitude to Pakistan for hosting the mentioned meeting and confirmed that Iran has provided the requested information for the ECOTA Cooperation Council. Iran is prepared to proceed with the next steps as required, he added.

39. In response, the **Chair** thanked Iran and requested assistance in informing their capital that the Secretariat is awaiting additional data. This data is necessary to update the study and prepare for the upcoming technical meetings on reviewing or renegotiating ECOTA.

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

##### Date of the next CPR Meeting

40. The Council decided to convene its next (**290<sup>th</sup>**) Meeting on October 8, 2024 at ECO Secretariat, Tehran. However, he informed that in case of change of venue and date Secretariat and Member States will be communicated, accordingly.

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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

**The Republic of Azerbaijan:**

- H.E. Mr. Ali Alizade, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Asgaz Asgazov, Counsellor

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

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

**The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan:**

- H.E. Mr. Ontalap Onalbayev, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Kuanish Agaidarov, First Secretary

**The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic:**

- Mr. Nazim Beishekeev, Attaché

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

- Mr. Ahmed Shami, Charge d'Affaires/Deputy Head of Mission
- Ms. Khirat, First Secretary

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

- H.E. Mr. Nizomiddin Zohidi, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr. Alisher Azamzoda, First Secretary

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

- Dr. Firat Bayar, Charge d'Affaires/Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr. Murat Sogangoz, Counselor
- Mr. Emin Cagri Kaya, Third Secretary

**The Embassy of Turkmenistan:**

- Mr. Atamyrat Bayramov, Charge d'Affaires
- Mr. Kemal Atayev, Third Secretary
- Mr. Megan Bayrammyradov, staff

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

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

**The ECO Secretariat:**

- H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, Secretary General
- Amb. Mohsen Esperi, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Jandos Asanov, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Silapberdi Nurberdiyev, 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

SG's Inaugural Remarks  
289<sup>th</sup> CPR Meeting  
September 10, 2024

**Honourable Chairman,  
Distinguished Permanent Representatives,  
Eminent Members of the Council,**

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ  
*Good Morning*

It is with great honour and sense of responsibility that I join you today as the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I fully recognize the importance of my new role, and I assure you of my unstinted resolve to fulfilling my duties to the best of my abilities. In this regard, I count on your support and guidance.

**Excellencies,**

I firmly believe that ECO serves as a beacon of regional economic integration, sustainable development and mutual cooperation. Our shared goals are more vital today than ever as we approach the culmination of the ECO Vision 2025—a vision that has been guiding us in our efforts towards a more interconnected and prosperous region.

With the ECO Vision 2025 nearing its final phase, I realize that our focus must be on the swift and effective implementation of key projects across various development sectors, most significantly in trade, connectivity and tourism. As you are aware, the projects prioritized by the ECO Vision Review Committee, are essential to securing our ambitious goals.

In this context, I would like to acknowledge the proposal put forward by the Honourable President of Uzbekistan to formulate the ECO Strategic Objectives 2035. This forward-looking approach can be collectively worked out for shaping the long-term strategy of our organization, ensuring that we continue to build on the achievements of ECO Vision 2025 and effectively address our future challenges.

**Distinguished Colleagues,**

As we prepare for the 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM), to be kindly hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran in December this year, it is imperative that we establish a Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) as soon as possible to facilitate the preparations, including draft (s) Agenda and Tehran Declaration. The Tehran Declaration is expected to serve as a roadmap for giving fresh impetus to our ongoing and future activities.

Looking ahead to the informal COM and ECO-ASEAN Meetings, scheduled on the sidelines of the upcoming UNGA Session in New York, I am optimistic that these important meetings will allow us to further explore avenues for cooperation, deepen our engagement with ASEAN and align our developmental goals with broader global

objectives. On this note, we expect participation of our honorable Foreign Ministers in these important meetings.

We have revived this process after a break of many years. This meeting is an important forum to learn from each other. We must make a serious effort to ensure the participation of our Ministers in these two meetings, as the attendance has been limited in the past.

### **Excellencies,**

At the same time, I recognize one of the key challenges we face in realizing our organizational goals—the delays in organizing some critical ECO meetings due to the lack of quorum or the unavailability of hosts.

For example, despite several requests, no member state has yet agreed to host the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Industry since the last one held in 2006 in Lahore. The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Environment has also faced delays, with the last held in December 2014. Another important meeting, namely the Meeting of Finance Ministers was also postponed. Recently, the First Meeting of the High-Level Committee of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers had to be postponed also due to insufficient quorum.

The success and timely scheduling of these vital meetings rely heavily on our joint commitment. I encourage all our esteemed member countries to prioritize hosting and scheduling these essential meetings, as they are crucial to advancing our shared economic goals.

Furthermore, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the persistent issue of delays in receiving annual budgetary contributions from our member countries, which is, as you all know, critical for the health of any organization. This recurring problem significantly hampers the smooth and efficient functioning of our Organization, creating financial uncertainties that disrupt our planned activities and initiatives. Timely contributions are essential to ensure the continuity of our programs and to uphold the commitments we have made collectively.

### **Distinguished Delegates**

I wish to further emphasize that fostering engagement between the Secretariat and the top ECO leadership is also of paramount importance.

Inviting ECO Heads of State/Government and Foreign Ministers to the Secretariat, as well as facilitating courtesy calls by the Secretary General on ECO leaders during their visits to Tehran and in their capitals, would help us shake up the inertia and inaction surrounding our bureaucracies in dealing with ECO related issues. Besides, these efforts would enhance our visibility and relevance, which is critical given the lack of follow-up and implementation of ECO decisions that we are witnessing.

I am very happy to see the kind presence of ECO Permanent Representatives and Representatives in my first CPR meeting. This must continue as your close personal involvement in developing ideas and proposals, and regular follow up with your capitals is crucial for the success and ownership of our initiatives. For me, as I mentioned in the bilateral interactions, “consolidation” and “implementation” are the

key words and would remain my topmost priorities in the context of carrying out much needed and long awaited comprehensive reforms in ECO. In pursuing these and moving away from “checking the box” approach, I will need your support, guidance and regular participation.

I know you have other important bilateral business to look at, but we at the Secretariat would like to make CPR meetings shorter and more focused to allow us and ECO to fully benefit from your vast experience and wise counsel. Ideas, in this regard will be presented for your consideration in due course.

I am confident that, with our enhanced collaboration, the ECO will achieve its goal of a more integrated and connected region. Together we can transform our shared vision into a tangible reality, delivering lasting socioeconomic benefits to our people.

**Thank you!**

### Agenda Item No. 3

Preparation for the:

- 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) (December, 2024);
- First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (November 3, 2024);
- 35<sup>th</sup> Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meeting (November 4-7, 2024).

No: CFU/2024/1296

Priority: Urgent

Date: 18/9/2024

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 Member States in Tehran and has the honour to inform that in consultation with the Chair, the date of November 3, 2024 is proposed for organizing the First High-Level Committee (HLC) Meeting of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers at the ECO Secretariat.

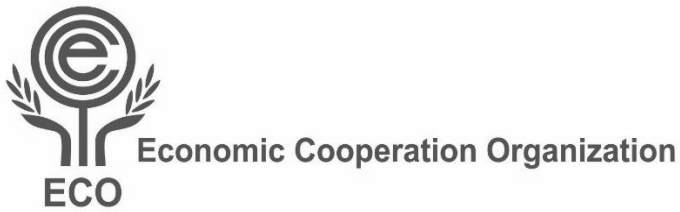
The Secretariat has further honour to enclose herewith the Draft Concept Paper, Tentative Programme, as well as Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda of the said Meeting that will be considered during the 290<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR planned for October 8, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.

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 Member States in Tehran the assurances of its highest consideration.

**All ECO Member States - Tehran**







# **First High-Level Committee (HLC) Meeting of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers**

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

*November 3, 2024  
ECO Secretariat, Tehran*

## **Draft Agenda**

1. Inauguration:
  - i. Welcoming and Introductory remarks by ECO Secretary General;
  - ii. Opening Remarks by the Chair (Islamic Republic of Iran);
  - iii. Statements by the Heads of Delegation of Member States on the ECO Vision 2025 Review.
  
2. ECO Vision 2025 Final Review Process:
  - Deliberation of the Report of Review Committee on evaluation of the ECO Vision 2025;
  - Consideration of proposal of the Honourable President of Uzbekistan on development of a conceptual document titled: "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation – 2035".
  
3. ECO Reforms:
  - Deliberation of the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities with regard to ECO Observers.
  
4. Date and Venue of the next meeting;
  
5. Closing of the meeting.

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## Annotated Draft Agenda

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

#### Inauguration

- i. Welcoming and Introductory remarks by ECO Secretary General
  1. H.E. Dr. Asad M. Khan, ECO Secretary General will open the Meeting and deliver his statement.
- ii. Opening Remarks by the Chair (Islamic Republic of Iran)
  2. The Head of delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (*being the ECO Chair in 2024*) will welcome the participants and deliver his statement.
- iii. Statements by the Heads of Delegation of Member States on the ECO Vision 2025 Review
  3. The Heads of delegation of the ECO Member States will be invited to make their statements (*up to 5 minutes each - in alphabetical order*) on the ECO Vision 2025 Review.

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

#### ECO Vision 2025 Final Review Process:

- Deliberation of the Report of Review Committee on evaluation of the ECO Vision 2025
4. Based on the decision of 284<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on January 30, 2024 a Review Committee was established to conclude the assessment of the ECO Vision 2025 and submit its recommendations for consideration during the HLC Meeting.
5. The Heads of delegation of the ECO Member States will be requested to deliberate the Report of Review Committee on evaluation of the ECO Vision 2025 which was circulated among the Member States on July 1, 2024, and submit its recommendations for approval by the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) scheduled to be held on December 2024 in Tehran.
- Consideration of proposal of the Honourable President of the Uzbekistan on development of a conceptual document titled: "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation - 2035"
6. Under this item, the distinguished Deputy Foreign Ministers will consider the possible actions for implementation of the proposal introduced by the Honourable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan during the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit held on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent on development of a conceptual document titled "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation - 2035".

7. The Meeting will consider ways and means and possible concrete actions to implement the above initiative.

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

#### ECO Reforms:

- Deliberation of the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities with regard to ECO Observers

8. Under this item, the Deputy Foreign Ministers will be requested to consider the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities with regard to delivering direct invitation for ECO Observers to ECO high level meetings and events and granting them right of speech in the agenda of the said meetings.

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

#### Date and Venue of the next meeting

9. Under this Agenda Item, the Committee will decide on the date and the venue of its next Meeting.

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

#### Closing of the meeting

10. The interested Heads of delegation and the ECO Secretary General may wish to make their closing remarks before conclusion of the Meeting.

11. The Chair will deliver his/her final remarks and will adjourn the HLC Meeting.

**Concept Paper**  
**of the First High-Level Committee Meeting**  
**of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers**  
(ECO Secretariat, November 3, 2024)

***Introduction***

Establishment of a High-Level Expert Group (HLEG) to prepare specific proposals and recommendations for further improvement of the activity of the Organization was proposed by the Republic of Uzbekistan at 15<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit Meeting held on 28 November 2021 in Ashgabat.

A brainstorming session at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers of the Member States was convened on 23-24 May 2022, at the ECO Secretariat, to address prospects of cooperation in the ECO Region.

During 264<sup>th</sup> and 266<sup>th</sup> Meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), given the fact that in the light of the proposal of Uzbekistan a twin-track approach has been adopted by the Organization for fulfilling the same objective, agreed on establishment of a High-Level Committee (HLC) instead of HLEG by merging the latter with the Session of Deputy Foreign Ministers.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the High-Level Committee (HLC) prepared by the ECO Secretariat was approved by the 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held on January 24, 2023 in Tashkent.

***Recent developments***

According to the Shusha Declaration (paragraph 35) adopted by the 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers held on October 10, 2023 in Shusha, Azerbaijan, the ECO Member States have agreed to call the High-Level Committee of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers for meeting in 2024 to be held at ECO Secretariat, Tehran to finalize the review process of the ECO Vision 2025, ascertaining appropriate recommendations for the possible extension of the implementation period of this policy document.

As a result, the First HLC Meeting was included in the Calendar of Events for 2024 during the 34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC) held on January 22-25, 2024 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran.

During 286<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) held on April 8, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat, the dates of May 27-28, 2024 proposed by the Republic of Uzbekistan for organizing the First High-Level Committee of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting were agreed by ECO Member States. Due to lack of quorum as per requirement of the HLC's Terms of Reference the meeting was postponed.

Based on the consultation with the Chairmanship (I.R. Iran) the First HLC Meeting is scheduled to be held on November 3, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran followed by 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Regional Planning Council (RPC).

### *Secretariat's consideration and proposals*

#### ECO Vision 2025 Review

The ECO Vision 2025 is the main agenda of the Organization. Implementation of this Vision is streamlined through Implementation Framework that delineates goals, activities and timelines to achieve the objectives of the ECO Vision.

A High-Level Committee (HLC) was established under the decision of 252<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of CPR held on April 26, 2021 and conducted a midterm review of the ECO Vision 2025 taking into account the issues raised by the ECO Heads of State/Government during the 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit organized on March 4, 2021. The Report of HLC on midterm review of the ECO Vision 2025 was approved by the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of COM conducted on November 27, 2021 in Ashgabat.

The ECO Secretary General during the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit organized on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent, the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Meetings of COM held on January 24, 2023 in Tashkent and on October 10, 2023 in Shusha, respectively, submitted annual progress report on the state of affairs of the implementation of the measures and recommendations envisaged in the Report of HLC on Vision midterm review.

It should be also mentioned that the Honourable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan during the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit held on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent proposed to develop a conceptual document titled "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation - 2035".

Based on the decision of 284<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on January 30, 2024 a Review Committee was established to conclude the assessment of the ECO Vision 2025 and submit its recommendations for consideration during the High-Level Committee of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting.

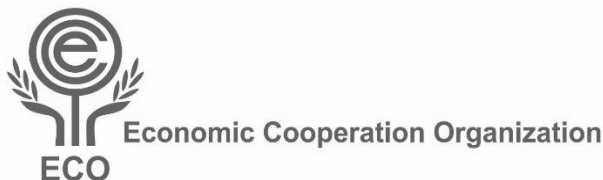
As the result of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee held on July 1, 2024, the Report of ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee was circulated among the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale on July 8, 2024 for consideration.

#### ECO Reforms

As per the decision of the 286<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CPR held on April 8, 2024 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran, the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities for Observers was included to the Draft Agenda of First High-Level Committee of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers Meeting scheduled for May 27-28, 2024 and circulated among the Member States.

*The First High Level Committee's consideration*

- Deliberation of the Report of Review Committee on evaluation of the ECO Vision 2025 and submit recommendations for approval by the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM);
- Consideration of possible actions on the proposal of the Honourable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan made during the 16<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit held on November 9, 2023 in Tashkent on development of a conceptual document titled: "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation – 2035";
- Deliberation of the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities with regard to delivering direct invitation for ECO Observers to ECO high level meetings and events and granting them right of speech in the agenda of the said meetings.



**Tentative Programme**  
**First High-Level Committee (HLC) Meeting of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers**  
*(ECO Secretariat, November 3, 2024)*

**November 2, 2024**

Arrival of the Delegations
Accommodation at the Hotel "Wisteria"

**November 3, 2024**

**Inauguration**

Hours	Agenda
09:30 - 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcoming and Introductory remarks by ECO Secretary General;</li><li>• Opening Remarks by the Chair (Islamic Republic of Iran);</li><li>• Statements by the Heads of Delegation of Member States on the ECO Vision Review.</li></ul>

10:30 - 10:45	Coffee break
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**ECO Vision 2025 Final Review Process**

Hours	Agenda
10:45 - 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliberation of the Report of Review Committee on evaluation of the ECO Vision 2025;</li><li>• Consideration of proposal of the Honourable President of Uzbekistan on development of a conceptual document titled: "Strategic Objectives of Economic Cooperation - 2035";</li><li>• Discussions and Recommendations.</li></ul>

13:00 - 14:00	Lunch at the Secretariat
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**ECO Reforms**

Hours	Agenda
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14:00 - 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliberation of the proposal of the Republic of Türkiye on amendments in the ECO Modalities with regard to ECO Observers.</li></ul>
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**Date and Venue on the next meeting**

16:00 - 16:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consideration of the date and venue of the next meeting of HLC.</li></ul>
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**Conclusion of the meeting**

16:15 - 16:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concluding Remarks by the Chair and ECO Secretary General.</li></ul>
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16:30 - 18:30	<b>Free time for bilateral meetings</b>
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18:30 - 20:30	<b>Dinner hosted by the Chair</b>
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<b>Departure of the Delegates</b>	
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Agenda Item No. 4

Status of Afghanistan in the context of the country's participation in ECO activities

## Agenda Item No. 5

### Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Extension of tenure of Deputy Secretary General (ADM,EME,IR & IT);
- Reallocation of ECO Budget 2024;
- Recommendation of Selection Panel.

No:ADM/2024/1324

Priority: Most Urgent

Date: 22/9/2024

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 herewith a self-explanatory Note Verbale No.Z-2024/99530379/ 38713146 dated September 22, 2024 received from the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Tehran, regarding extension in the service tenure of Ambassador Dr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli, the incumbent Deputy Secretary General (Administration, Energy, Minerals, Environment, International Relations & IT) (Türkiye national) till arrival of his successor. This matter will also be discussed during the 290<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) being held on October 08, 2024.

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**





Z-2024/99530379/38713146 - MOST URGENT

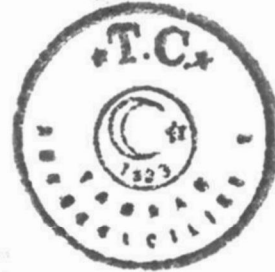
The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and has the honor to recall that the post of Deputy Secretary General (ADMN-EME-IR-IT) (DSG) will fall vacant on 1 November 2024, upon completion of tenure by Ambassador Dr. Hüseyin Avni Bıçaklı. Nomination of Ambassador Bıçaklı's successor is under consideration by Turkish authorities and its outcome will be formally communicated to the Secretariat in due course.

Should the process of appointment and official inauguration of his successor be completed later than 1 November 2024, in order to ensure that this position remains filled for the orientation period between the incumbent and successor DSGs, and for the smooth functioning of the Organization, the Republic of Türkiye requests that the incumbent Deputy Secretary General could continue to perform his duties as Deputy Secretary General, until his successor takes office.

The Embassy further requests that this matter be included in the agenda of the 290th meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives, to be held on 8 October 2024.

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.

Tehran, 22 September 2024



**Secretariat of the  
Economic Cooperation Organization  
Tehran**

Agenda Item No. 6

Any other business

Agenda Item No.7

Date of the next CPR Meeting