**Statement of Dr. Husnu TEKIN, Director for Human Resources and Sustainable Development Directorate at Economic Cooperation Organization**

**High Level Working Group Meeting on DRR**

**Dushanbe, 16 September 2024-09-14**

**Distinguished Chair**

**Distinguished Participants from our esteemed Member States,**

First of all, in the beginning of my speech, I would like to express my **privilege** to be part of **this august** gathering. Therefore, **I extend** my gratitude to the Government of Tajikistan for hosting 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on DRR. Also I would like to specially thank to our colleagues from the Committee of Emergency situations and Civil Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan for their warm hospitality.

The last but not the least, I express my heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed representatives, participants from our member states for their interest and contributions to this important meeting on DRR.

Let me give brief information about this gathering. Now we have 7 ECO countries here in this meeting. (Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan including Tajikistan which is the host country).

We are conducting 9th Ministerial Meeting on DRR in this year here at Dushanbe. The last Ministerial Meeting, I mean 8th Ministerial Meeting on DRR, was held virtually and hosted by Türkiye in 2021.

**Dear Participants,**

As you all well aware of, the ECO region is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. Due to its geological structure, topography and climactic characteristics, the region is exposed to a wide range of hazards such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, sand and dust storms etc… These disasters have been caused deaths, human suffering and economic losses.

During the past decade more than 70 million of the inhabitants of the region have been affected by disasters, mostly in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Türkiye. For instance, because of the earthquakes happened in the beginning of this year in Türkiye, we unfortunately lost more than 50 thousand people as well as property damages and loss which is estimated around 100 billion USD dollars.

Accordingly, adapting DRM approaches and strategies in our member states is very significant and critical issue to address emerging DRM issues.

For this reason, the ECO vision document which has been the main agenda of the Organization for the decade (2015- 25) states that “A regional integrated disaster risk reduction system/network will be established with the ultimate aim of preventing and reducing disaster losses in lives, and in social, economic, and environmental assets of people of ECO Member Countries”

Out of six directorates at ECO, HRSD directorate is the main department dealing with the matters related to DRR in the region in line with the ECO Vision.

For this aim, in March 2021, the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) and the ECORFDRR Implementation Road Map were adopted during the 8th Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to cope with the disaster related issues in the region.

Therefore, in the first session of today, we are going to review the ECORFDRR and the floor will be open for your contributions/commends on this framework for the consideration of Ministerial Meeting tomorrow. Especially we would like to hear about implementation status of ECORFDRR from our member states and the challenges have been faced.

Since this ECORFDRR is for 2001-2025, we have to review/update this framework according to the Midterm Review of Sendai Framework which is the base for this document next year.

I would like to stop here to open the floor for the statements of our esteemed Member States.

Let me give some information on ECORFDRR. We already circulated this document many times to Member States as we distributed recently for this meeting.

In the context of addressing in ECO region, ECO adopted Regional Plan Action of disaster risk reduction and management for cascading risks and apply a multi-hazard, inclusive and solution-oriented approach to DRR.

The action plan has 3 main purposes which is very much aligned with the goal of SFDRR:

* Reducing impact of disasters through fostering more efficient planning, creating common information systems and exchanging good practices and programmed for cooperation and capacity development in particular to address common and trans- boundary disaster risk and facilitating Member States in developing and implementing the right approaches and sound policies.
* Strengthening DRM capacities of related parties such as institutions, people and member states.
* Guiding and supporting national implementation of SFDRR.

For these goals, the action plan identified 4 priorities toward achieving effective disaster risk reduction and management for cascading risks: Understanding DRR, strengthening risk governance, investing in DRM for resilience, enhancing risk management.

On the other hand, ECORFDRR needs to be updated. For this, we would like to suggest establishing a working group to update this document according to the needs of our member states as well as midterm revives of Sendai Framework for 2025-230

Another agenda item of today’s meeting is projects/projects proposal on DRR. During the 4th Expert Group Meeting in Iran, Iran raised 3 project proposals that we shared you. We would like to hear commends of our Member States on these project proposals as well as the other two projects adopted by Regional Planning Council.

I also would like to inform the esteemed committee about ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM). Upon the decision of 26th ECO Council Of Ministers Meeting in Tashkent in 2023, ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) based in Mashed, Islamic Republic of Iran, was established with the aim to promote cooperation among Member States for effective natural disasters risk management.

Again, I would like to conclude by expressing my sincere gratitude to all participants for your attendance and contributions.

Thank you

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