**Draft Report**

**The 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction**

**Preceded by**

**High Level Working Group Meeting (HLWGM)**

**16-17 September, 2024**

**Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan**

**Report**

 The 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction was held on 17th September, 2024 in Dushanbe, hosted by the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Ministerial Meeting was preceded by the High-Level Working Group Meeting (HLWGM) on 16th September 2024. The Honorable Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan (Host), the Republic of Türkiye and Turkmenistan participated in the meeting. Moreover, the meeting was also attended by the representatives of regional and international organizations including Asian Development Bank (ADB), UN World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, World Bank, [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](https://www.osce.org/) (OSCE), Aga Khan Agency for Habitat  (AKAH) and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA). The ECO Secretariat's delegation was headed by the Deputy Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev. The list of the participants is attached as **Annex-I**.

**High Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (HLWGM-DRR)**

1. The High-Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (HLWGM on DRR) held on 16th September, 2024 discussed and finalized the Draft Agenda and Draft Dushanbe Declaration for the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as reviewed implementation status of ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) and Roadmap. Additionally, the HLWG Meeting reviewed proposals, projects and recommendations aimed at improving disaster preparedness and response. Agenda and Annotated Agenda are as **Annex-II**.
2. H.E. Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev inaugurated the HLWG Meeting. While welcoming the senior officials, he extended his gratitude to the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of Tajikistan for their support in enhancing disaster resilience in the ECO region. He said, we aim to foster collaboration and develop effective strategies to mitigate risks and safeguard our communities of member nations.
3. The ECO Director for Human Resources and Sustainable Development (HRSD), Dr. Husnu Tekin, warmly welcoming the Senior Officials, expressed profound gratitude to the host authorities of the Republic of Tajikistan. In his opening statement during the High-Level Working Group Meeting, Dr. Tekin underscored ECO’s unwavering commitment to enhancing disaster risk reduction across all Member States, emphasizing the challenges encountered by landlocked countries. Promoting a robust regional framework, he stressed the necessity of mitigating risks and fostering resilience in accordance with the ECO Vision 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ECO Director further underscored the critical importance of recognizing disaster resilience as a fundamental economic and human right, urging the active participation of all relevant stakeholders. He called for collaborative efforts to promote inclusive development and fortify resilience-building initiatives throughout the region, thereby ensuring a sustainable and secure future for all Member States. Copy of his statement is as **Annex-III**.
4. Mayor-General Kamolzoda Jamshed Jamol, Head of the Department of Population and Territory Protection, warmly welcomed all participants of the High-Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in Dushanbe. He highlighted Tajikistan's pivotal role in the field of disaster risk reduction, noting the country's ongoing efforts to enhance resilience against natural hazards through comprehensive policies and community engagement. Currently, the Republic of Tajikistan stands at the forefront of disaster risk management in the region, actively implementing strategies that align with international frameworks and best practices. In his statement, he urged ECO Member States to collaborate closely in sharing knowledge and resources, emphasizing the importance of collective action to address shared vulnerabilities. He stressed the necessity of implementing recommendations and decisions in accordance with the Dushanbe Declaration, which serves as a guiding framework for future initiatives in disaster risk reduction, ensuring that all Member States are equipped to face the challenges ahead. Copy of his statement is as **Annex-IV**.
5. During the High-Level Working Group Meeting, the senior officials elaborated on disaster risk reduction strategies in the ECO region. They shared proposals and ideas aimed at further enhancing collaboration and harmonizing frameworks to mitigate the risks and impacts of disasters within the ECO Region. This collective discourse underscored the commitment of Member States to work together in creating a resilient and sustainable environment, fostering an integrated approach to disaster risk management that benefits all nations involved of the region. The senior officials also deliberated and reviewed the implementation status of the Road Map and the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) for 2021-2025, as well as projects and proposals, and proposed to establish the ECO Regional Technical Expert Group to update the DRR framework and its roadmap for 2025-2030, in alignment with the principles and objectives outlined in the Sendai Framework. Furthermore, as part of the agenda, the HLWG Meeting shared insights regarding the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, emphasizing practical solutions for financing, inclusive governance, and resilience in both urban and rural contexts.
6. The High-Level Working Group Meeting deliberated upon and assessed the Dushanbe Declaration, emphasizing recent advancements in disaster risk reduction within the ECO region. The senior officials outlined the priorities and targets of Global Frameworks particularly SFDRR, and emphasized to enhance disaster risk reduction in the ECO region, such as capacity building initiatives; research and data sharing; international partnership and collaboration with various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and the private sector, to foster a multi-hazard approach to DRR; funding resources; advocacy and awareness; monitoring process. They further stated the critical role of leveraging the latest technologies and best practices, suggested for integrating innovative solutions, such as early warning systems, data analytics, artificial intelligence machine learning, remote sensing, and integration of data system for enhancing disaster risk reduction in the ECO region.
7. In accordance with the principles set forth in the Dushanbe Declaration, the senior officials proposed the recommendations and decisions for consideration of the Ministers and Heads of Delegations for implementation across the ECO Region. These recommendations and decisions aim to enhance regional cooperation, improve governance mechanisms, and build resilience against disasters in the ECO region, aligning with the broader goals of sustainable development and disaster risk reduction. The meeting culminated in the preparation and finalization of the Draft Agenda, Draft Dushanbe Declaration and Draft Report, for consideration and adoption by the Ministerial Meeting.

**9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction**

**Agenda Item No. 1**

**Inauguration of the Meeting:**

1. In his inaugural remarks, H.E. Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev welcomed the Honorable Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Heads of Delegations, and representatives of international organizations. He outlined the meeting's purpose to review progress since the last Ministerial Meeting in March 2021 to recommend measures for enhancing regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction. He emphasized ECO’s commitment to improving disaster risk management and fostering resilience in the region, acknowledging the vulnerabilities posed by its diverse geological and climatic challenges.
2. Ambassador Nurberdiyev introduced the proposed program, "Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Capacity for Building Resilience to Disasters in the ECO Region," which aims to identify hazards, integrate disaster risk reduction into governance, enhance public awareness, and improve livelihoods, all while aligning with the Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goals. The ECO Deputy Secretary General underscored the necessity of collaborative initiatives that transcend borders, aiming to ensure that no community is left behind in the pursuit of a safer, more resilient future, while promoting sustainable development and shared prosperity across the region. His statement is as **Annex-V**.
3. While delivering his statement, H.E. Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan, warmly welcomed all participants of the Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction. He emphasized the critical importance of collaboration and shared responsibility in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by natural disasters in the ECO region. Mr. Nazarzoda highlighted Tajikistan's commitment to fostering regional cooperation and enhancing resilience through effective policy implementation and strategic initiatives. He expressed gratitude for the presence of esteemed delegates and reiterated the necessity of collective action to safeguard communities and ensure sustainable development amidst increasing disaster risks. Elaborating on Tajikistan’s achievements in disaster risk reduction, he shared ideas for enhancing collaboration and harmonizing frameworks to mitigate disaster impacts in the ECO Region.
4. Mr. Nazarzoda stressed the importance of the implementation status of the Roadmap and the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) for 2021-2025, expressing a strong commitment to advancing these initiatives and proposed to revise the ECORFDRR for the period 2025-2030, ensuring alignment with the Sendai Framework. Copy of his statement is as **Annex-VI**.

**Agenda Item No. 2**

**Election of the Chairman:**

1. In accordance with the ECO Rules of Procedure, H.E. Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the “9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction”.
2. H.E. Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairmanof theEmergency Situationsand Civil Defense of the Republic ofTajikistan thanked the ECO Member States on his election as the Chairman of this important event and continued his responsibilities of the Ministerial Meeting.

**Agenda Item No. 3**

**Adoption of the Agenda:**

1. In the absence of any objection, the meeting adopted its agenda unanimously as proposed by the ECO Secretariat and finalized by the preceding High-Level Working Group Meeting (HLWGM) on 16 September, 2024. Copy of agenda of the meeting is as **Annex-VII**.

**Agenda Item No.4**

**Statements by the Ministers/Heads of Delegation of the Member States and representatives of regional and international organizations on Disaster Risk Reduction in ECO Region**

1. Under this agenda item, the honorable Ministers, Heads of Delegations and the esteemed representatives of the invited international organization delivered their statements and knowledge and best practices to mitigate the disaster risk reduction in the ECO region. In their opening remarks, they thanked and appreciated the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for hosting this important meeting. Copies of their statements are as **Annex-VIII**.
2. During the meeting, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations underscored the importance of enhancing regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emphasized the implementation of the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR). They highlighted the need for capacity building, research, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, recognizing the critical role of innovative technologies, such as early warning systems and data analytics, in strengthening DRR efforts. Inclusivity and gender-responsive governance in DRR initiatives were also stressed as essential for updating the ECORFDRR.
3. The delegations acknowledged the challenges posed by human and asset losses relative to GDP and emphasized the priorities and targets of global frameworks, particularly the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR). The ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR), aligned with the Sendai Framework, serves as a foundation for collaborative action, highlighting the commitment to disaster preparedness and vulnerability reduction across all sectors. Key priorities include integrating DRR into national development plans, enhancing regional cooperation and knowledge sharing, and incorporating climate adaptation into disaster management strategies to build resilient societies. They encouraged for international partnerships with various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and the private sector, to foster a multi-hazard approach to DRR.
4. In their statements, the delegations reaffirmed the need to leverage the latest technologies and best practices, advocating for the integration of solutions like artificial intelligence, machine learning, remote sensing, and comprehensive data systems to enhance disaster risk reduction in the ECO region. The Heads of Delegation emphasized the shared goal of protecting lives and livelihoods from the threats posed by natural and human-induced disasters, particularly in light of challenges from earthquakes, floods, droughts, and climate change, which strain economies, ecosystems, and infrastructure. They said, the innovation and technology are vital in managing transboundary risks, with advanced early warning systems, satellite monitoring, and data-sharing platforms enabling effective mitigation of disaster impacts. Despite the challenges ahead, unity, cooperation, and innovation can safeguard communities and promote long-term economic growth and sustainable development through effective disaster risk reduction measures.
5. UNICEF expressed gratitude to the government of the Republic of Tajikistan for its important initiative on regional disaster risk reduction (DRR). They emphasized the necessity of centering children's rights in climate-related policies, as highlighted by UN General Comment No. 26. Tajikistan stands out as the only country in the region included in the UN's early warning initiative. UNICEF is dedicated to supporting early warning systems, prevention, and response efforts, underscoring that children's voices and data must be integral to disaster planning and response. Highlighting the critical need to strengthen social institutions, such as health and education, to ensure comprehensive safety for all children, especially those with disabilities, UNICEF conveyed readiness to contribute to evidence generation and improve data systems with a child-centered focus. Furthermore, UNICEF is actively participating in an inter-ministerial conference on comprehensive school safety and looks forward to further collaboration within this platform, expressing appreciation for the opportunity to engage as an observer. This commitment reflects UNICEF's ongoing dedication to enhancing the resilience and safety of children in the face of climate-related challenges.
6. Dr. Husnu Tekin, ECO Director of HRSD, expressed gratitude to UNICEF for expressing UNICEF readiness to cooperate on DRR and explained that the ECO has already a project on "The Short Animation Video for Children of the ECO Region on Disaster Prevention and Preparedness." This initiative aligns with the ECORFDRR framework and aims to enhance awareness and interest in disaster recovery and prevention among the ECO community while improving public information. The Director assured future collaboration with UNICEF in this endeavor.

**Agenda Item No.5**

**Consideration implementation of projects proposals discussed by HLWGM on Disaster Risk Reduction on ECO Regional Framework and its Road Map**

1. Under this Agenda item, the esteemed Ministers and Heads of Delegations considered the implementation of projects and proposals discussed by the High-Level Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction. A comprehensive review of the current implementation status of the ECORFDRR and Road Map was conducted, highlighting both achievements and areas needing further attention. Additionally, the Ministerial Meeting considered establishing the ECO Regional Technical Expert Group to update the DRR framework and its roadmap for 2025-2030, in alignment with the principles and objectives outlined in the Sendai Framework. This group will also analyze the establishment of ECO Funds for DRR and enhance collaboration among Member States.

**Agenda Item No.6**

**Adoption of the Dushanbe Declaration**

1. The Meeting reviewed the Dushanbe Declaration and instructed the Secretariat to convey to the Member States for their final views/comments/amendments (if any), and decided that the same will be considered as adopted in case of no objection or any amendments received within two weeks’ silence procedure from the date of circulation. Further, the meeting requested the Member States to ensure effective implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the Ministerial Meeting as reflected in the Dushanbe Declaration after its adoption. Copy of Dushanbe Declaration is enclosed as **Annex-IX**.

**Agenda Item No.7**

**Adoption of the Final Report**

1. The meeting reviewed Report of the Ministerial Meeting as drafted by the High-Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction, held on 16 September, 2024, and instructed the Secretariat to convey to the Member States for their final views/comments/amendments (if any), and decided the same will be considered as adopted in case of no objection or any amendments received within two weeks’ silence procedure from the date of circulation. The meeting requested the Member States to ensure effective implementation of the decisions of the Ministerial Meeting as reflected in the Report after its adoption.

**Agenda Item No.8**

**Date and venue of the 10th Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction**

1. The Ministerial Meeting instructed the ECO Secretariat to coordinate with Member States through diplomatic channel regarding hosting of the 10th Ministerial Meeting preceded by HLWGM on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2025, aiming to continue advancing the region's disaster risk reduction agenda and strengthen the commitment to resilience-building initiatives across the ECO region.

**Agenda Item No.9**

**Any other business**:

1. No any other agenda item was raised by the meeting.

**Agenda Item No.10**

**Vote of thanks and closing remarks:**

1. The Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Member States and representatives of the international organizations expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for excellent hosting of the Meeting and applauded H.E. Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda, Chairman of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense of the Republic of Tajikistan for excellent chairmanship of the Meeting. They also thanked the ECO Secretariat for the professional arrangements and conduct towards the success of this meeting.
2. While thanking the Member States for their active participation, the Chairman announced the closing of the Meeting.

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