



# ECO Newsletter

## Economic Cooperation Organization

October, 2024 - No. 1

Dear Friends,



On August 19, 2024, I joined the Secretariat as the 14th Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization. It is not only a great personal privilege but also a unique national honour for Pakistan to assume this important position for the third time.

The importance of keeping Member States and others fully abreast of the latest developments vis-à-vis regional cooperation and our efforts to foster integration and prosperity in the region cannot be overemphasized. To this end, henceforth the Secretariat will be bringing out a monthly newsletter covering key activities and initiatives of the Organization.

The key highlight of my first month and a half at the ECO Secretariat was the participation in the 79th UNGA Session and the UN Summit of the Future. At the Summit, I emphasized the need for strengthened multilateralism and enhanced regional cooperation to tackle the pressing contemporary global challenges and advocated for cooperative regionalism as a foundation for a more inclusive and networked multilateralism. Sustaining momentum of cooperation, we convened Informal Meeting of ECO Council of Ministers. Meanwhile, the 16th Joint ECO-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, another regular feature in New York, manifested our commitment to strengthening regionalism for effective multilateralism.

I also had productive engagements with Foreign Ministers of Member States and international partners in New York. Our interactions with regional and international organizations underscored the pivotal role of multilateralism and cooperative regionalism in navigating the intricate challenges of our time.

As we continue to build bridges across the region, we are inspired by the vast potential that lies within our collective grasp, ready to be harnessed for the greater good of our region. Our commitment to sustainable development, green transformation, and disaster risk reduction reflects our dedication to nurturing a sustainable and resilient future for all.

I am determined to stay focused on consolidating and implementing transformative initiatives that promise to propel our region to new heights- a region that is not only interconnected but also resilient and thriving. Through this newsletter, we seek to make you a part of this journey.

Secretary General  
Economic Cooperation Organization



New York, September 23, 2024

## Building Bridges: ECO Calls for Cooperative Regionalism at Summit of the Future

At the Plenary of the Summit of the Future and during the high-level Interactive Dialogue titled “The Future Starts Now: Enhancing the Global System for Current and Future Generations,” Dr. Asad M. Khan delivered statements emphasizing the need for strengthened multilateralism and enhanced regional cooperation to tackle the pressing contemporary global challenges. His statements at both events highlighted the importance of regionalism in addressing contemporary critical issues.

Dr. Asad M. Khan emphasized the historical significance of the United Nations in maintaining global peace and prosperity through dialogue and cooperation, while acknowledging challenges multilateralism is experiencing presently. He advocated for cooperative regionalism as a foundation for a more inclusive and networked multilateralism.

Welcoming the adoption of the Pact of the Future, Dr. Khan outlined the ECO Vision 2025, which aligns with the Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030 (SDGs) and conveyed ECO’s commitment to incorporate outcomes from the Summit of the Future into its post-2025 strategy.

In conclusion, Dr. Khan stressed the interconnectedness of global challenges and reaffirmed ECO’s commitment to enhancing regional collaboration, expressing confidence that better-connected regions will facilitate stronger multilateralism.



New York – September 27, 2024

## ECO Convenes 26<sup>th</sup> Informal Council of Ministers Meeting

Chaired by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Economic Cooperation Organization held an Informal Meeting of the Council of Ministers in New York.

Delegates Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan attended the meeting. The Turkish Cypriot State participated as an observer. The ECO Secretariat delegation, led by Dr. Asad M. Khan, also attended. The Council expressed its appreciation to the Islamic Republic of Iran for organizing this important event.

Dr. Khan provided an overview of the organization’s activities. He stressed that the need for the membership to redouble their efforts to fully realize the promise and potential of the ECO. He called for greater political commitment and ownership, stressing the need for comprehensive reforms to revitalize the Organization. He also highlighted ECO’s post-2025 strategy and mentioned progress in trade, particularly following the 9th ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting, which resolved a deadlock in Free Trade Area negotiations.

The Council further discussed preparations for the important upcoming ECO events, including the High-Level Committee Meeting and the 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers to be held in Tehran later this year.

## Advancing Together: ASEAN and ECO Commit to Enhanced Regional Collaboration

New York – September 27, 2024

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) convened their Sixteenth Ministerial Meeting. Co-chaired by Malaysia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the event highlighted the enduring spirit of friendship and robust cooperation between two geopolitically significant and dynamic regions.

The meeting served as an opportunity to review the cooperation framework established by the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ASEAN and ECO Secretariats, with a view to strengthening engagement and expanding collaboration between the two regional organizations.

The meeting underscored the importance of multilateralism in promoting dialogue and cooperation for global peace, stability and sustainable development, as well as the need to strengthen ASEAN-ECO partnership across global and regional fora, including, among others, the UN, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the

Global South for the benefit of our peoples. In this respect, the meeting emphasized the need to enhance the ASEAN-ECO cooperation across a wide range of sectors, including finance, trade and investment, new and emerging technologies, connectivity, sustainable development, sustainable energy security and transition, agriculture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.

The meeting concluded with a call to action for both Secretariats to continue coordination towards effectively implementing the FOC. This collaboration is crucial to ensure the partnership not only thrives but also delivers tangible benefits to the peoples of both regions.



## Secretary General Meets Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran

Tehran – September 10, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Sayyid Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Foreign Minister felicitated Dr. Asad M. Khan on his new role as ECO Secretary General. The meeting focused on priorities and opportunities regional economic cooperation as well as preparations for upcoming high-level events.



Both sides underscored the importance of regional cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to bolstering economic diplomacy and enhancing collaboration among Member States.

## Secretary General Meets Kyrgyz Foreign Minister

New York- September 23, 2024

ECO Secretary General Ambassador Dr. Asad Majeed Khan met H.E. Jeenbek Kulubayev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyz Republic.

The Minister congratulated Dr. Khan on his appointment, expressing confidence in his leadership to advance regional economic cooperation within the ECO. He then highlighted Kyrgyzstan's priorities for boosting trade and connectivity, noting the renewed momentum gained from the 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent.

Thanking Kyrgyzstan for the important contributions in advancing ECO objectives, Ambassador Khan noted that ECO is a pioneer in de-



velopment cooperation in a region. He briefed the Minister about his priorities for the Organization. In addition to trade and connectivity, he emphasized tourism as a pivotal sector that can support people-to-people interactions in the region.

## Secretary General Meets Uzbek Foreign Minister

New York – September 24, 2024

Dr. Asad Majeed Khan met H.E. Bakhtiyor Saidov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan in New York.

The Minister felicitated Dr. Khan on his appointment as ECO Secretary General and recalled the 2023 ECO Summit in Tashkent, which endorsed several key proposals from H.E. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. These proposals focused on regional initiatives concerning the environment, climate change and transport corridors. In this context, the Foreign Minister outlined Uzbekistan's priorities in these sectors.

Dr. Khan commended Uzbekistan for its active role in fostering regional cooperation, particularly the "ECO Strategic Objectives – 2035," proposed by President Mirziyoyev during the 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent. He also noted that Shahrisabz had been designated the ECO Tourism Capital for 2024 and assured continued collaboration with local authorities to promote the city throughout the year.

The discussion further emphasized regional connectivity, with Secretary General Khan highlighting Uzbekistan's strategic position as a key player in linking the landlocked region to the world. He also updated H.E. Saidov on the follow-up actions stemming from the 12th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Transport, hosted by Uzbekistan in 2023. Of particular importance is Uzbekistan's proposal to establish an ECO Regional Air Hub in Samarkand, which remains a priority in the organization's civil aviation cooperation efforts, he added.



## Secretary General Meets Turkmen Foreign Minister



New York – September 26, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, H.E. Rashid Meredov at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The Minister reaffirmed Turkmenistan's strong support for ECO initiatives, particularly in the areas of transport connectivity and tourism. He highlighted Turkmenistan's intention to enhance its engagement in ECO frameworks for regional cooperation, including the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA). Additionally, he emphasized Turkmenistan's commitment to sustainable development, citing the First Global Sustainable Transport Conference held in Ashgabat and the Arkadag sustainable city project as notable achievements.

Dr. Khan expressed his gratitude to the Minister for his dedicated attention to ECO's regional cooperation initiatives. He acknowledged Turkmenistan's strategic significance in relation to the ECO rail corridors, and expressed congratulations on the 300th anniversary of the renowned Turkmen poet Magtymguly Fragi, confirming his participation in the commemorative event.

## Secretary General Meets Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan

New York – September 25, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H. E. Jeyhun Bayramov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, at UN Headquarters in New York.

The Minister provided an overview of preparations for COP29, highlighting key side events and anticipated outcomes.

Dr. Khan noted that Baku is rapidly becoming a prominent international conference hub. He informed about the planned Ministerial Meeting on “Empowering Interregional Partnerships for Circular Economy Transition” and the inauguration of the ECO Clean Energy Center, both set to take place on the sidelines of COP29. He also emphasized the importance of promoting Shusha, selected as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2026, and proposed close collaboration with local authorities to maximize the city's visibility and opportunities.

The meeting further addressed other significant upcoming events, including the High-Level Committee Meeting on ECO reforms, aimed at developing substantial proposals for the next ECO Summit, to be held in Azerbaijan in 2025.



# Secretary General Meets Turkish Cypriot State Foreign Minister

New York – September 26, 2024

Secretary General Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Mr. Tahsin Ertuğruloğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Cypriot State, in New York.

During the meeting, the Minister provided an overview of the historical background and current political situation of the Island. Secretary General Khan expressed appreciation for the Turkish Cypriot State's active participation and contributions as an observer to the ECO activities. He also briefed the Minister on some upcoming ECO events within the framework of the Organization.



## CPR Bids Farewell to Ambassador Khusrav Noziri

Tehran – August 8, 2024

The ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) convened an informal meeting to honor ECO Secretary General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri, who concludes his term on August 12, 2024.

During the gathering, the Permanent Representatives to ECO from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan, alongside Representatives from Pakistan and Turkmenistan, expressed their deep gratitude and appreciation for Ambassador Noziri's exemplary service and significant contributions to the Organization throughout his tenure.

Ambassador Noziri conveyed his heartfelt thanks to the esteemed Representatives for their constructive engagement and robust support to ECO during his term in office. He also shared his optimism for the ECO's future, wishing for continued progress and enhanced cooperation for greater economic integration in the region.

The meeting highlighted the vital role of the ECO Secretariat in fostering regional collaboration, reflecting the collective aspirations of the Member States. Additionally, the gathering welcomed the Ambassador of Azerbaijan, who has resumed his responsibilities in Tehran following a pause since January 2023.



## Secretary General Meets Senior Iranian Officials



Tehran – August 26, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Mahdi Safari, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy, and H.E. Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, Iran's Permanent Representative to ECO.

The Iranian dignitaries congratulated Dr. Khan on assuming his responsibilities as the Secretary General of the ECO. Their discussions focused on the organization's priority areas and preparations for important events, including the upcoming informal Council of Ministers (COM) and ECO-ASEAN Ministerial meetings,

as well as the 28th COM meeting to be held in Iran this year. Both sides emphasized the importance of regional cooperation, reiterating their commitment to strengthening economic diplomacy and enhancing collaboration among member states.



## New ECO Secretary General Assumes Responsibilities

Tehran – August 20, 2024

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan, a veteran Pakistani diplomat, officially assumed his responsibilities as the 14th Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Ambassador Khan brings with him a wealth of experience and a distinguished career in Pakistan's Foreign Service. Over the years, he has held various high-profile positions, including as Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Ambassador in USA, EU, Belgium and Japan that have demonstrated his exceptional diplomatic acumen and commitment to enhancing regional and international collaboration.



## Deputy Secretary General Meets Tajikistan’s Deputy Foreign Minister

Dushanbe – September 18, 2024

ECO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev held met His Excellency Sharifzoda Farrukh Homiddin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan. The interaction emphasized the critical need for enhanced regional cooperation among ECO member states. Both sides highlighted enhancing regional connectivity, disaster risk reduction, capacity building and sustainable development, underscoring the importance of collective efforts to address challenges posed by recent pandemic and conflicts.

Both sides highlighted the achievements of the recent 9th Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction, which resulted in consideration of implementation of areas and targets of

the Dushanbe Declaration and the formulation of the ECORFDRR aligning with the Sendai Framework. The Tajikistan side expressed openness to hosting future ECO events, including the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Industry, and showed interest in actively participating in initiatives such as the ECO Veterinary Commission and the ECO RISCAM.



## Secretary General Meets Pakistan’s Permanent Representative

Tehran, August 27, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Ambassador Muhammad Mudassar Tipu, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to ECO. They discussed enhancing regional economic cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to the ECO’s mission of sustainable development. Dr. Khan also expressed condolences over the recent tragic bus accident in Pakistan and the loss of lives.



## Secretary General Meets Tajikistan’s Permanent Representative

Tehran -August 22, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Ambassador Zohidi Nizomiddin Shamsiddinzoda, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to ECO. The meeting focused on exploring strategies to enhance the organization’s relevance and effectiveness. Both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening regional cooperation, discussing new initiatives to support sustainable economic development and integration among ECO member states.





## ECO Secretary General Meets Türkiye's Permanent Representative

Tehran – August 22, 2024

ECO Secretary General, Dr. Asad M. Khan, held a courtesy meeting with H.E. Ambassador Hicabi Kırlangıç, the Permanent Representative of Türkiye to ECO. The discussions centered on the organization's potential and identifying actionable steps to bolster regional economic cooperation.

Both leaders highlighted the need for innovative approaches to deepen collaboration among member states, reaffirming their commitment to advancing the ECO's mission of fostering sustainable development and economic integration across the region.



## Secretary General Meets Uzbekistan's Permanent Representative

Tehran – August 21, 2024

ECO Secretary General Dr. Asad M. Khan held a courtesy meeting with H.E. Ambassador Fariddin Nasriev, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the ECO. The meeting, held over dinner hosted by Ambassador Nasriev, discussed strategies for enhancing ECO initiatives and broadening the scope of regional cooperation.

The conversation centered on exploring new avenues for collaboration and focused on regional integration and fostering economic growth among ECO member states.



## Secretary General Meets Kyrgyz Permanent Representative

Tehran – August 21, 2024

ECO Secretary General, Dr. Asad M. Khan paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Ambassador Turdakun Sydykov, the Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to ECO. During the meeting, they discussed strategic initiatives to strengthen ECO's activities and enhance relevance and impact of the Organization at regional and global level.

Both sides underscored the importance of closer collaboration among ECO Member States, aiming to drive regional development and address shared challenges.



## ECO Secretary General Meets Azerbaijan's Permanent Representative

Tehran – August 21, 2024

ECO Secretary General, Dr. Asad M. Khan paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Ambassador Ali Alizadeh, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to ECO. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on enhancing ECO projects and expanding the framework for regional cooperation.

The discussion focused on identifying new opportunities for collaboration, emphasizing the need to bolster regional integration and economic growth within the ECO member states.



## ECO Welcomes New Deputy Secretary General

Tehran - September 1, 2024

Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev from Turkmenistan has assumed his responsibilities as the ECO Deputy Secretary General (Transport & Communications and Human Resources and Sustainable Development)

Mr. Nurberdiyev is a distinguished career diplomat, who has previously served as Turkmenistan's Ambassador to Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Permanent Representative to UNIDO and IAEA.



## Secretary General Meets Turkmenistan's Charge d' Affaires

Tehran - September 9, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met Mr. Atamyrat Bayramow, Turkmenistan's Charge d' Affaires. They discussed opportunities for regional economic cooperation and ways to strengthen collaboration between Turkmenistan and the ECO.



## 289<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ECO Council of Permanent Representatives

Tehran - September 10, 2024

The 289<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) was held under the chairmanship of Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ambassador Seyed Jalaledin Alavi Sa-bzevari.

Welcoming the ECO Secretary General Ambassador Asad M. Khan and the Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev at their CPR first meeting, the Council expressed strong support to the Secretariat for pursuing the regional development objectives through closer cooperation among the Member States.



Dr. Asad M. Khan outlined his vision for enhanced regional cooperation, identifying opportunities as well as challenges for the Organization and the regional economic prospects.

The meeting then discussed various issues on its agenda, including upcoming important ECO events later in the year.

## ECO and IRENA Strengthen Energy Collaboration

New York – September 24, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), to discuss collaborative efforts in advancing sustainable energy solutions.

During the meeting, Dr. Khan expressed ECO's readiness to build strong institutional linkages with IRENA. He emphasized the importance of enhanced dialogue on sustainable energy, renewables, energy efficiency, and financing clean energy transitions, and highlighted the ECO's commitment to mainstreaming sustainable energy transition and noted two key projects that are pivotal to this transformation: the establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) in Baku and the creation of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM).



Both sides acknowledged the importance of collaboration in achieving sustainable energy goals and agreed to continue discussions to explore further opportunities for partnership.

## Secretary General Meets UNESCAP Executive Secretary

New York – September 24, 2024



Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

Dr. Khan highlighted the ECO's unique cultural fusion and its pioneering role in regional cooperation. He proposed creating a consultation group for regular virtual meetings to strengthen collaboration between ECO and ESCAP. Ms. Alisjahbana underscored ESCAP's expertise in policy dialogue and data processing, inviting Dr. Khan to the 81st Session of UNESCAP in Bangkok in April 2025.

Both sides emphasized the importance of the renewed 2021 MoU that revitalized cooperation between the ECO and ESCAP and explored areas for further partnership, including trade, transport, and disaster risk reduction and discussed the Framework Agreement on Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, noting that five ECO member states are its signatories. They also considered the UN Secretary-General's proposal for a summit to enhance cooperation between UN regional commissions and organizations.

## ECO and OIC Secretaries General Meet in New York

New York – September 26, 2024



Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in New York.

Dr. Khan underscored the pivotal role of the ECO within the OIC, highlighting that all ECO member states are also members of the OIC. He highlighted ECO's pioneering role in promoting regional economic development, proposing ECO-OIC joint initiatives and projects to strengthen their inter-regional cooperation, a crucial component of effective multilateralism. Dr. Khan also recommended the exchange of focal

points between the two organizations to ensure sustained communication and collaboration.

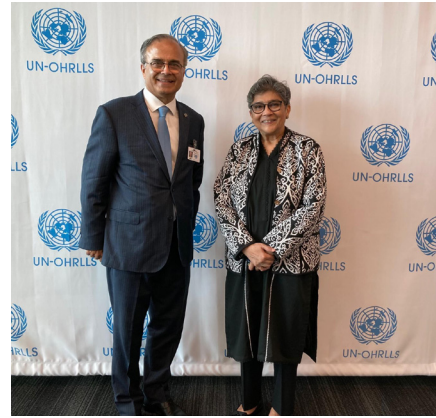
Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha welcomed the proposals, expressing his readiness to receive them formally and assuring the OIC's active support and contributions. This meeting marks a renewed commitment to fostering closer collaboration between the ECO and OIC, laying the groundwork for enhanced regional and multilateral partnerships.

## ECO and UNOHRLLS Explore Enhanced Collaboration on LLDCs

New York, September 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met Ms. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS). The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration between the two organizations to support the development of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) within the ECO region.

Dr. Khan highlighted ECO's active engagement in UNOHRLLS initiatives and reaffirmed the organization's commitment to contributing to future efforts aimed at advancing LLDCs. He emphasized ECO's capability and willingness to leverage its resources and convening power in



support of the implementation of the upcoming Plan of Action for LLDCs, while aligning with new sustainable development frameworks. Dr. Khan noted that a majority of ECO member states are LLDCs, forming a critical subset of the broader UNOHRLLS mandate.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of enhanced ECO-UNOHRLLS cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to deepening collaborative efforts to promote the development and connectivity of LLDCs. They agreed to maintain an ongoing dialogue to explore mutually beneficial partnerships. Ms. Fatima extended an invitation to ECO to participate in the upcoming Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, scheduled to be held from December 10-13, 2024, in Botswana.

## The Coordination Meeting on Establishment of Clean Energy Centre

The coordination meeting on the establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) was held virtually on August 26, 2024. Azerbaijan, the ECO Secretariat, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) participated in the online meeting.

Mr. Orkhan Zeynalov, Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, shared his insights on the operationalization of the Centre. Mr. Fuad Farzalibeyov, Director of Energy, Minerals, and Environment of the ECO Secretariat, briefed the participants on the progress achieved in key cooperation tracks within the preparatory phase of the project, notably the regulatory procedures, project development, and fundraising activities. While emphasizing the need to accelerate the mobilization of funds for the earliest operationalization of CECECO, UNIDO representatives apprised the meeting of their engagements with potential development partners that may financially support the Centre.

The meeting agreed on further steps in the short term to enable the project's operational phase by inaugurating the Centre on the sidelines of the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in November in Baku, Azerbaijan.



## ECO Tourism Expert Visitility Group Meeting

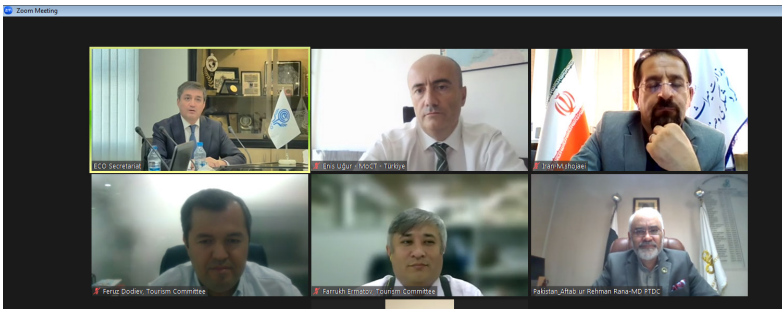
The Expert Group Meeting for the establishment of the ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism was held virtually on August 26, 2024. This meeting follows the initial discussions on establishing the ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism, which took place on April 26, 2024, in Shahrisabz, Uzbekistan.

The discussions covered the objectives, composition, and structure of the Committee, aiming to lay the groundwork for effective collaboration in advancing tourism initiatives within the ECO region.

The meeting marks a significant step towards realizing the Advisory Committee, proposed by H.E. Mr.



Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, during the 16th ECO Summit held on October 8-9, 2023, in Tashkent. The Committee is anticipated to play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable tourism practices, enhancing cultural exchange, and boosting economic growth through tourism across the ECO member states.



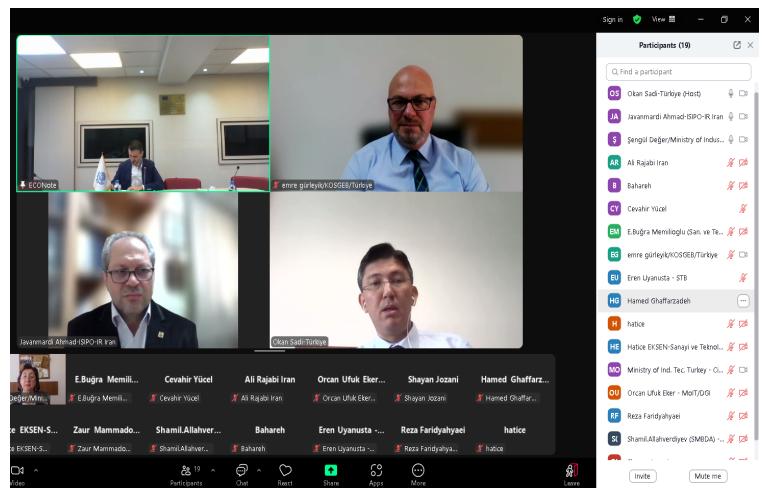
## Workshop on Green Transformation of Industry and SMEs

September 10, 2024

The workshop on “Green Transformation of Industry and SMEs (Türkiye Case)” was virtually co-organized by the ECO Secretariat, Ministry of Industry and Technology and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) of Türkiye. Delegates of Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Turkmenistan attended the workshop.

Mr. Gurkan Polat, Director of Agriculture and Industry Department at ECO Secretariat, noted that green transformation of Industry and SMEs aims to reduce the environmental impact of various industries and sectors of society, encouraging a lifestyle that is less harmful to ecosystems. He mentioned green industry is the concept of promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns in the manufacturing of products, which involves both the greening of existing products and the creation of green industries that deliver environmental goods and services.

During the meeting, the host authorities explained about the Türkiye Green Industry Project and Organized Industrial Zones as the successful



examples in this field. The meeting further exchanged information on the initiatives and solutions on issues pertaining to green transformation of SMEs and entrepreneurship and discussed prospects of strengthening regional cooperation in this field.

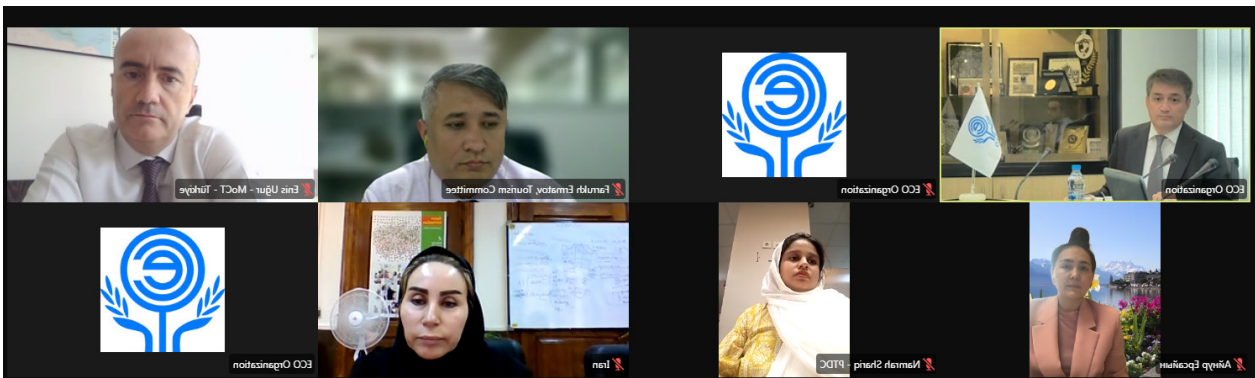
## Experts Discuss Establishment of ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism

Tehran – September 10, 2024

The ECO Secretariat chaired the second Expert Group Meeting for the establishment of the ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism. Representatives of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan attended the meeting.

The meeting considered and discussed the draft concept note on the establishment of the Committee, proposed by the Republic of Uzbekistan during the 16th ECO Summit. The participants were informed about the necessary procedures for the Committee to start its activities.

Following the approval process, the Committee is expected to meet at least biannually to review regional tourism policies and make recommendations for the overall ECO tourism strategy.



## High Level Working Group Meeting on DRR

Dushanbe – September 16, 2024

The High-Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) discussed strategies for enhancing disaster resilience in the ECO region. The officials reviewed and finalized the Dushanbe Declaration, ECO Regional Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Roadmap for the upcoming 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on DRR, ensuring alignment with contemporary challenges and opportunities. The discussions underscored the collective commitment to fostering collaboration and leveraging innovative solutions to mitigate risks and safeguard communities.

Participants expressed strong commitment to advancing the themes of resilience, cooperation, and proactive engagement as central pillars of efforts and outcomes which will lay a solid foundation for future initiatives, further strengthening and dedication to creating a secure and resilient ECO region.



## Training Course on Spatial Data Infrastructure

The Sixth International Training Course on “Current Technologies and Trends in Various Levels of Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)”, was jointly co-organized by the National Cartographic Centre (NCC) of Iran and the ECO Secretariat, was held virtually on September 23-24, 2024.

Azerbaijan, Iran (host), Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Türkiye participated in this capacity-building event.

Dr. Ali Javidaneh, Director General of the NCC emphasized the role of efficient management and leveraging of geospatial data and SDI technologies in sustainable development and economic growth. Dr. Fuad Farzalibeyov, ECO Director, highlighted the importance of capacity-building and awareness-raising activities.



## ECO-UNEP Consultation Meeting



September 19, 2024

The ECO Secretariat and the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) held the Consultation Meeting virtually to discuss the advancement of circular transition in the ECO region.

The Secretariat briefed UNEP about the preparations for the Ministerial Meeting on Circular Economy to be convened tentatively on November 16, 2024 on the margins of the COP29 in Baku, as well as developments in promoting the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability and Circular Economy in the ECO Region (RESCUE).

The brainstorming particularly focused on the UNEP’s possible engagement in ongoing endeavours of ECO towards uptake and advocacy of circular economy transition in the region and a way forward in this respect. Both sides recognized the importance of leveraging the COP29 platform for enhanced dialogue and collaboration as well as identification of pathways for a just transition to a circular economy.

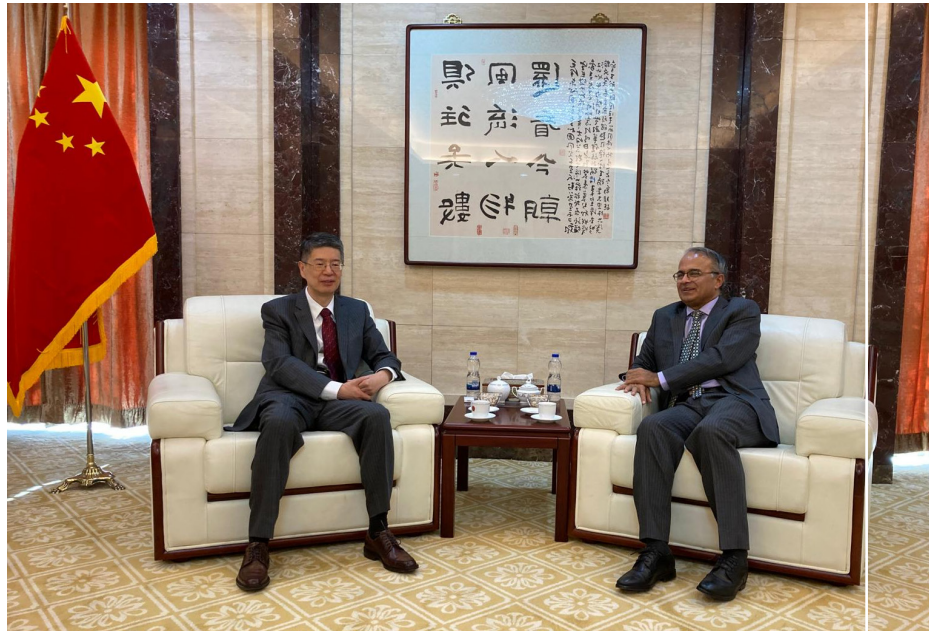


# ECO Secretary General Meets China's Ambassador

Tehran - September 12, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Cong Peiwu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The two sides discussed opportunities for cooperation between the ECO Region and China, particularly in the framework of strengthening the region's connectivity and trade prospects and agreed to continue dialogue to further explore opportunities and identify the areas for possible cooperation.

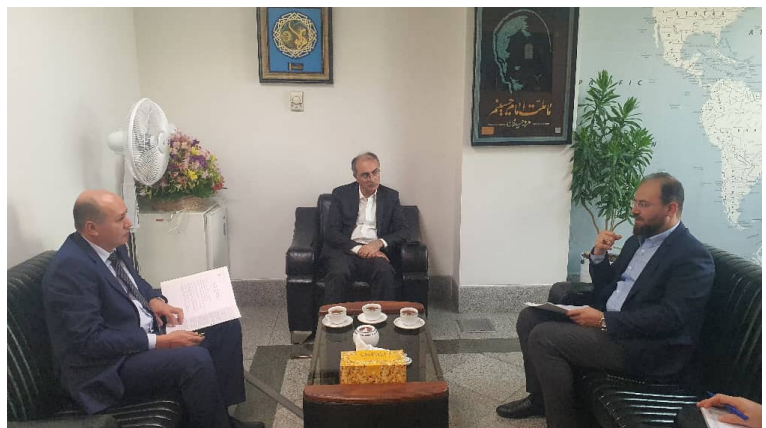


# Deputy Secretary General Meets Director General Transport and Urban Development

Tehran - September 11, 2024

ECO Deputy Secretary General Ambassador Silapberdi Nurberdiyev paid a courtesy visit to Dr. Amin Taraffo, the Director General for International Affairs of the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He felicitated Dr. Taraffo on his newly assigned role and highlighted the importance of the Ministry in enhancing transport cooperation in the Region. He also touched upon the upcoming events, planned to take place in Iran, particularly 13th Transport Ministerial and the 1st Multimodal Transport Committee of the Transit Transport Coordination Council Meetings.



# ECI President Visits ECO Secretary General

Tehran – August 29, 2024

Dr. Saad S. Khan, President of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI), paid a courtesy visit to Dr. Asad M. Khan. The meeting highlighted the rich tapestry of overlapping cultures, shared traditions, and historical ties that unite the ECO Member States into a cohesive regional entity.

The discussion focused on the ECI's activities, emphasizing its mission to showcase and preserve the region's cultural heritage. Dr. Asad M. Khan praised the Institute for its pivotal role in promoting cultural cooperation across the region and aligning with the broader vision and objectives of the ECO. He assured his support in enhancing the Institute's efficiency and effectiveness.

The ECO Cultural Institute, headquartered in Tehran, is one of the three specialized agencies of the Economic Cooperation Organization, established in 1995. It continues to play an essential role in enhancing cultural collaboration among the ECO Member States.



## Secretary General Meets Hungarian Ambassador

Tehran - September 18, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan met H.E. Gyula Petho, Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Hungary currently holds the Presidency of the European Union. Noting that ECO is a pioneer in regional development cooperation, Dr. Khan explained the ECO activities aimed at promoting greater integration through fostering trade and transport connectivity across the ECO region. Ambassador Petho thanked him for the comprehensive briefing. The two sides agreed to continue dialogue to further explore ways in which ECO and EU can cooperate.



# ECO Secretary General Meets WHO Representative

Tehran – August 29, 2024

Dr. Asad M. Khan held a meeting with Dr. Syed Jaffar Hussain, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to Iran.

During the meeting, Dr. Khan provided an overview of ECO's health initiatives, particularly the ECO Action Plan on Health, highlighting the upcoming 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Health in Tehran as a key platform for regional health cooperation. He emphasized health as a critical priority for the ECO and underscored the need for enhanced collaboration with international organizations, particularly WHO and its regional offices—EMRO and EURO. The ECO Secretary General proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding between ECO and WHO could facilitate deeper cooperation.

Dr. Hussain conveyed the strong interest of both EMRO and EURO in collaborating with ECO and confirmed their commitment to participating in its upcoming ministerial meeting. He also extended a formal invitation to Secretary General Khan to attend the seventy-first session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in Doha, suggesting a sideline meeting with the heads of EMRO and EURO, as well as the WHO Director-General, to explore further areas of cooperation.

Both sides acknowledged the essential role of health in achieving sustainable development goals and agreed to maintain close communication to explore potential avenues for coordinated action on regional health issues.





Economic Cooperation Organization



ECO Secretariat, No. 1, Golbou Alley, Kamranieh St., Postal Code: 19519 – 33114, Tehran, Iran  
Web: [www.eco.int](http://www.eco.int), E-mail: [registry@eco.int](mailto:registry@eco.int), Tel: (+9821) 22831733-4, Fax: (+9821) 22831732