

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

At the outset, let me convey the warmest greetings and felicitations from the President of Kazakhstan, **H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev**, to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, **H.E. Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian**.

I also extend deep gratitude to my friend, the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, **H.E. Dr. Abbas Araghchi**, for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of this ministerial meeting in the **historic and sacred city of Mashhad**.

Mr. Chair,

Unfortunately, for the past several decades, we often criticize many **multilateral structures**, including the United Nations, **for their failures or not solving** this or that problem.

At the same time, we have to admit that **this state of the international situation** is the result of **lack of trust, political will and diplomacy**.

In a nutshell, **it's a reflection of relations among member states** themselves.

However, despite current geopolitical tensions and economic turbulence at the global scale, the **Economic Cooperation Organization** continues to demonstrate **resilience** and aspiration to create **positive dynamics**.

From Kazakhstan's perspective, the **ECO is a relevant multilateral mechanism** with **great potential** for promoting **multifaceted cooperation** for the benefit of all its members.

I have no doubt the ECO region is **self-sufficient** and **blessed by many talented people**.

In this vein, Kazakhstan **highly commends Iran's Chairmanship** in advancing the noble objectives of **our unique Organization**, especially amidst serious challenges we are facing.

Dear brothers,

Astana attaches **utmost importance** to developing **meaningful dialogue, constructive and mutually beneficial ties** with all your states.

Over the past two years, Kazakhstan's **trade** with ECO countries has steadily **exceeded 8 trillion Kazakh Tenge, or 15 billion dollars**.

I am sure it's **not the limit of our potential**.

We are committed to expanding partnerships across diverse sectors, including **trade, investments, transportation, cutting-edge technologies, mining, agriculture, food security, tourism** and many other fields to be mentioned.

As Kazakhstan prepares to assume the **ECO Chairmanship next year**, we have chosen the motto “***Advancing Regional Transport Connectivity and Sustainable Development***” to reflect our joint vision and potential.

Now, let me outline Astana’s **main priorities** and present some **proposals** to further enhance our **shared values and strategic objectives**.

FIRST. In the current realities, **transit and transport connectivity** is the backbone of global trade and a key to **effective economic integration** within the ECO space.

Kazakhstan envisions itself as a **reliable logistics hub**, between **East and West, North and South**, leveraging its geographic position, infrastructure and resources.

A top priority for us is the **development of new transcontinental transport corridors**, such as the **Trans-Caspian International Transport Route** and **North-South Corridor**, including **Kazakhstan – Turkmenistan – Iran** railway, multimodal transportation via **Azerbaijan** and **Türkiye**.

This **May**, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan signed an agreement to

build a major **logistics hub in Herat** province.

To add, Kazakhstan is interested in accelerating the **construction of maritime and dry port** infrastructure in **Iran and Turkmenistan**.

These steps are meant to **give a new impetus to improving logistics and services** for all of us. We see it as a **common benefit**.

SECOND. **Food security** is yet another priority topic for the modern world.

To date, **over 733 million people lack reliable access to nutritious food**, with **12 out of 22 global hunger hotspots** located in Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States.

For its part, some years ago Kazakhstan put forward an initiative to establish the

Islamic Organization for Food Security with headquarters in Astana.

It is tasked to consolidate international **know-how in the agriculture sector, develop profitable logistics** and sustainable growth.

In its capacity as Chair, Kazakhstan will work to establish **formal cooperation** between the ECO and the IOFS.

I call on all your countries to join this organization and ratify its Charter.

THIRD. In times of technological competition, we must **ensure equal access to cutting-edge technologies for all.**

Kazakhstan is ready to **share its best practices and experience** in building **advanced banking ecosystems, e-commerce platforms, and e-government infrastructure** within the framework of its Chairmanship.

Last month, the Kazakh Government launched special **Digital Nomad Visa** and **Digital Nomad Residency programs** for leading IT specialists from around the world.

On top of that, the “**Astana Hub**” **international techno-park** is open to all ECO states for **expert and B2B collaboration**.

FOURTH. Our nations should be **firm and united** in the fight against **climate change**.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to **congratulate our Azerbaijani brothers** on the successful outcomes of the **COP29** in **Baku**.

Effective implementation of the UN Climate Change Agenda at every level is essential to effectively addressing and reducing the **impacts of climate**

challenges on our nations and peoples.

Central Asia stands on the **frontline of global warming**, despite accounting for only **1% of global emissions**.

To illustrate this point, experts predict an above average **2.5 degree increase** in temperatures for our region by **2050**.

The Kazakh delegation is therefore **deeply committed** to engaging within the **ECO's environmental dimension**.

To amplify our efforts on **climate resilience** and **green transition**, Kazakhstan will host a **UN Regional Climate Summit in 2026**.

We look forward to the **active participation of your countries** in this important event.

LAST but not LEAST, **tourism** is a promising area for our closer interaction as

an additional catalyst for **economic development**.

We see greater economic advantages from the **mutual promotion of information about tourist sites and routes** in the vast ECO area.

For instance, today in Kazakhstan we are developing **Turkestan**, a sacred city for all Central Asian and Turkic countries, as well as other top destinations like the **Charyn Canyon** and **mountains of Almaty region**, the **beaches of Mangystau** and **Burabay resort area**.

By capitalizing on the **rich cultural heritage** and **natural beauty** of the ECO area, we can elevate the tourism industry, driving **sustainable economic growth** and fostering **even stronger P2P and B2B ties**.

Dear friends,

Hosting today's meeting in **Mashhad** – a holy place for Muslims – adds a **special raison d'être** to all initiatives voiced today.

As we approach a significant milestone of the ECO's **40th Anniversary**, I invite all states to join us in drafting a new **strategic document – ECO Vision 2035** – that will guide our Organization in the coming decade.

Kazakhstan stands ready to lead in this effort during its **Chairmanship**, working hand in hand with all Member States to **further unlock the potential** of the ECO.

I thank you.