



**293rd MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES
(CPR)**

February 23, 2025
ECO Secretariat, Tehran

Agenda Item No. 1

Adoption of the Draft Agenda of the 293rd CPR Meeting



Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No /2025/165

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 9/2/2025

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 293rd Meeting of CPR to be convened on February 23, 2025 (10:30 hours) in ECO Secretariat in Tehran.**

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) 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





Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO/CPR/293rd/2025/1
February 9, 2025

293rd Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Draft Agenda and Annotated Draft Agenda

February 23, 2025
ECO Secretariat, Tehran

Draft Agenda

1. Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 293rd CPR Meeting;
 2. Adoption of Draft Report of the 292nd CPR Meeting,
 3. Preparation for the
 - 17th ECO Summit (*July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan*);
 - 35th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC) (*February 24-27, 2025*).
 4. Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM);
 5. Follow-up of the outcomes of First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers,
 6. Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan;
 7. Administrative and budgetary matters:
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 8. Any other business,
 9. Date of the next CPR Meeting.
-

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 293rd CPR Meeting,
 - Adoption of Draft Report of the 292nd CPR Meeting;
 - Preparation for the
 - 17th ECO Summit (*July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan*)
 - 35th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC) (*February 24-27, 2025*).
 - Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM);
 - Follow-up of the outcomes of First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers,
 - Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan;
 - Administrative and budgetary matters.
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel.
 - Any other business;
 - Date of the next CPR Meeting
- 2 The Council may consider the above Draft Agenda for adoption.

Agenda Item No. 2

Adoption of Draft Report of the 292nd CPR Meeting

- 3 The Draft Report of the 292nd CPR Meeting held on January 26, 2025 at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran was circulated amongst the Member States vide Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/117 dated January 29, 2025.
- 4 The Council may consider the adoption of the Draft Report

Agenda Item No. 3

Preparation for the:

- 17th ECO Summit (*July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan*)
- 5 As per the decision of the 292nd CPR Meeting held on January 26, 2025, the Secretariat vide its Note Verbale No. IR/2025/101 dated January 27, 2025 extended invitations to all ECO Observers for participation in the 17th ECO Summit scheduled for July 3-4, 2025 in Azerbaijan
 - 6 Also, the 292nd CPR meeting deferred the deliberation on the intention of the Republic of Azerbaijan to invite special guests for the Summit till the next CPR. The Secretariat via its Note Verbale No. CFU/2025/100 dated January 26, 2025 circulated the mentioned proposal among the Member States for consideration.

7 Also during the last CPR, the Azerbaijani side was requested to provide details of the Summit's programme.

8 The Council may consider the above matters and request the Azerbaijani side to provide more details on the tentative programme of the Summit

- 35th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC)

9 As per the approval of the 292nd CPR Meeting, the Secretariat via its Note Verbale No. CFU/2025/109 dated January 27, 2025 communicated the new dates of February 24-27, 2025 for organizing the 35th RPC Meeting at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran and requested the Member States to convey the composition of their distinguished delegations for participation in the RPC Meeting.

10. The Council may be informed regarding the status of confirmations and preparation for the 35th RPC Meeting

Agenda Item No. 4

Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM)

11. Based on the task given by the 291st CPR Meeting, the Secretariat prepared a draft Plan of Work on the proposals and initiatives reflected at the 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) held on December 3, 2024 in Mashhad, and circulated it among the Member States via its Note Verbale No. CFU/2025/93 dated January 23, 2025

12. The Council may consider the mentioned draft and make necessary decision.

Agenda Item No. 5

Follow-up of the outcomes of First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers

13. The First HLC Meeting at the level of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers was held on February 3, 2025 in ECO Secretariat in Tehran. The HLC deliberated on crucial organizational reforms, including financial and budgetary matters, enhancing the efficiency of the Secretariat and refining recruitment policies. The Meeting explored viable options to enhance the organization's operational framework and ensure its effectiveness in addressing regional challenges. The HLC also reviewed progress under the ECO Vision 2025 and challenges encountered during its implementation.

14 The Report of the First HLC Meeting will be shared among the Member States via Secretariat's Note Verbale in due course

15. The Council may consider the proposed Report.

Agenda Item No. 6

Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan

16. In 292nd CPR Meeting, by the proposal of the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the "Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan" was deferred for discussion in the next CPR meeting

17. The Council may consider the mentioned proposals

Agenda Item No. 7

Administrative and budgetary matters.

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

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

Agenda Item No. 8

Any other business

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

Agenda Item No. 9

Date of the next CPR Meeting

20. The Council may decide the date of its next (294th) Meeting in consultation with the Member States and the ECO Secretariat.

Agenda Item No. 2

Adoption of the Draft Report of the 292nd CPR Meeting



Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No CFU /2025/117

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 29/1/2025

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 292nd Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) Meeting held on January 26, 2025 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





Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

292nd Meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)

Draft Report

January 26, 2025
ECO Secretariat, Tehran

Draft Report

Under the Chairmanship of the Republic of **Kazakhstan**, the 292nd CPR Meeting was held on January 26, 2025, 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**.

At the opening of the meeting, the delegations from the Member States, along with the **Chairman** and the **ECO Secretary General**, conveyed their sincere appreciation to H.E. Mr. Seyed Jaleddin Alavi Sabzevari, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for successful ECO Chairmanship in 2024. They extended their congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Ontalap Onalbayev, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan, on assuming the Chairmanship in 2025. They also congratulated H.E. Mr. Ylyas Gayypov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan and the Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to ECO, on his appointment and conveyed their best wishes for success in his new responsibilities and future undertakings.

Ambassador Ontalap Onalbayev, as the new Chairman, expressed his honor and pleasure in presiding over the CPR session. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of his predecessor.

While welcoming the participants, the Chair formally started proceeding of the meeting.

Agenda Item No. 1

Adoption of the Agenda

1. The Secretariat proposed the following Draft Agenda for adoption:
 - 1) Adoption of Draft Agenda of the 292nd CPR Meeting;
 - 2) Adoption of Draft Report of the 291st CPR Meeting,
 - 3) Preparation for the:
 - 17th ECO Summit (*July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan*);
 - First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (*February 3, 2025*);
 - 35th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC).
 - 4) Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM),
 - 5) Deliberation on Afghanistan's participation in ECO Winter Drill and Technical Expert Group Meeting on DRR in Erzurum, Türkiye;
 - 6) Participation of HRSD Director in 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Review Meeting in Bangkok;
 - 7) Administrative and budgetary matters.
 - Recommendations of the Selection Panel
 - 8) Any other business,
 - 9) Date of the next CPR Meeting.

2 The **Council** adopted the above Agenda taking into account the proposal of the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to defer the Agenda Item No 5 "Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan" for discussion in the next CPR meeting

Agenda Item No. 2

Adoption of Draft Report of the 291st CPR Meeting

3 The **Council** adopted the Draft Report of the 291st CPR Meeting held on December 24, 2024 in the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.

Agenda Item No. 3

Preparation for the.

- 17th ECO Summit (July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan)

4 The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** began by expressing gratitude to the Secretariat for disseminating the note verbal and highlighting the proposal to invite heads of state/government, and international organizations to the upcoming ECO Summit in Azerbaijan schedule for July 3-4, 2025. He emphasized the importance of finalizing the guest list to expedite organizational and protocol preparations, noting that nine countries and 17 International Organizations were proposed for invitation. The format of the Summit would align with ECO practices, and he called on the **Council** to consider and approve the proposal to ensure timely planning. Additionally, Azerbaijan confirmed receiving verbal and official confirmations from several participants, underscoring the significance of the initiative for the Organization's visibility and success

5. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** acknowledged the initiative's potential benefits but requested more detailed information on the Summit's format, venue, and program to facilitate briefing their presidency and expedite confirmation. He highlighted the need to clarify whether there would be a separate ECO meeting or ECO Plus segment and sought background information on previous summits for reference. He also raised concerns regarding the rationale behind the list of invitees and emphasized the importance of clarity on the Summit structure before moving forward

6 The **Secretary General** described Azerbaijan's initiative as a welcome and unprecedented step to enhance the organization's visibility. He noted that ECO had not previously pursued inviting foreign heads of state to its summits and emphasized the need for member states to provide guidance on the invitees' list. Addressing questions about the summit program, he highlighted the significance of a business forum, proposing it be rebranded as a business summit. The Secretary General assured the Council of the Secretariat's commitment to support organizational preparations once further details were provided by Azerbaijan

7. The Permanent Representative of **Kyrgyz Republic** expressed strong support for the initiative, describing it as an excellent opportunity to expand ECO's international recognition. He confirmed that Kyrgyzstan had already communicated its participation and would soon provide details on the delegation's composition. He also raised the

importance of addressing any regulatory or procedural matters related to inviting non-member states and International Organizations

8 The **Legal Advisor** clarified that, under Chapter 11 of ECO's Rules of Procedure, the participation of invitees in high-level meetings is subject to the Council of Permanent Representatives' approval. Following this, the host country would handle subsequent procedures.

9 The Representative of the Republic of **Turkiye** requested Azerbaijan to share draft agenda and program of the Summit as soon as possible, noting that their capital required this information for decision-making.

10. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** sought further clarification on whether the Summit would involve a single or dual format for participants and questioned the inclusion of certain invitees. He specifically raised concerns about the Syrian Arab Republic, asking whether Azerbaijan intended to invite the head of the National Transitional Council, given the current political situation, and questioned the suitability of the International Transport Forum's leadership level for participation in the Summit.

11. Responding to these queries, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** reiterated the Summit's alignment with ECO practices and clarified that Syria's head of state or government would be invited. He emphasized the importance of the initiative in promoting ECO's regional and international relevance and called on member states to support the proposal to begin preparations. He proposed that the matter be placed under a two-week silence procedure to avoid delays, allowing the Council to reach a timely decision and proceed with organizational arrangements.

12. The **Chair** proposed initiating a two-week silence procedure to allow Council members to deliberate, citing the five months and ten days remaining before the Summit as sufficient preparation time. He suggested the Council's agreement would enable progress in finalizing organizational matters.

13. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** raised concerns, questioning the urgency of the silence procedure given the six-month timeframe before the Summit. He noted the importance of addressing unresolved matters, such as confirming the Summit date and ensuring all members, including Afghanistan, are properly involved. He proposed further discussions and suggested establishing a Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) to address outstanding issues comprehensively. He expressed concern about the potential for silence procedure to be broken, especially when decisions involve sensitive issues such as guest lists.

14. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** emphasized the importance of promptly finalizing the guest list to facilitate protocol and organizational preparations. He argued that delaying the process would only postpone necessary arrangements. Azerbaijan supported the silence procedure to ensure quick confirmation and urged members to address any objections either during the meeting or through the silence procedure.

15. The **Chair** acknowledged the concerns and proposed discussing the matter informally during the upcoming High-Level Committee (HLC) meeting at the deputy foreign ministers' level. He suggested bilateral discussions with Iran if objections persisted, to find a way forward without undue delays.

16. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** reiterated his stance, questioning the urgency of the silence procedure when monthly meetings of the Council could address these issues. He suggested discussing and finalizing the guest list first, ensuring a thorough review to avoid unnecessary complications.

17. **Azerbaijan** responded by highlighting the potential delays in protocol arrangements if the silence procedure was deferred. While expressing openness to alternative proposals, Azerbaijan underscored the importance of starting preparations without further delays.

18. The **Secretary General** acknowledged both the urgency raised by Azerbaijan and the concerns voiced by Iran. He proposed a balanced approach: creating a PrepCom to address protocol and organizational matters while allowing member states time to reflect and consult bilaterally. This would ensure that critical issues, such as the guest list, could be addressed thoroughly without wasting time on broken silence procedures.

19. The **Chair** supported the Secretary General's proposal, recommending the immediate creation of PrepCom to focus on summit preparations. He suggested a trilateral meeting between Azerbaijan, Iran, and himself to resolve pending matters. However, noting Iran's opposition, he proposed deferring the decision on the silence procedure to the next CPR meeting. He praised Azerbaijan's experience in hosting international summits and encouraged further consultations.

20. The Permanent Representative of the Republic of **Azerbaijan** then brought up the issue of inviting observers, proposing that invitations be extended promptly. The Republic of **Türkiye** supported this idea and emphasized the inclusion of all observers, specifically mentioning the Turkish Cypriot State. Azerbaijan confirmed that invitations had already been sent, with several countries, including Pakistan and Uzbekistan, officially confirming their participation. Azerbaijan expressed hope that other countries would soon confirm their participation as well.

21. The **Council** reached a consensus that the Secretariat will issue formal invitations to all ECO Observers, ensuring timely communication with observer entities. Regarding the upcoming Summit, the Republic of Azerbaijan will provide detailed information and updates, including any relevant organizational and protocol matters to the Secretariat and Member States. Those updates will be shared in due course to facilitate further discussions and preparations. Also, the **Council** agreed that the proposed list of invitees for the Summit is still under consideration of the member states and will be discussed in next CPR.

- First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers on ECO Vision 2025 Review (February 3, 2025)

22. The **Chair** opened the discussion by stressing the importance of preparing for the first High-Level Committee (HLC) meeting of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers, scheduled for February 3, 2025. He noted that the Secretariat had requested feedback on the working paper by January 13, but Türkiye had asked for an extension for a thorough review. The Chair urged Türkiye to expedite their comments due to limited time for finalizing preparations.

23. Representative of the Republic of **Türkiye** confirmed their ongoing review and promised to share feedback soon. The Chair reiterated the urgency, emphasizing the need for timely input to incorporate proposals, finalize them, and secure approvals from member states before the meeting.

24. The **Secretary General** announced confirmations from six Deputy Ministers and informal confirmations from Türkiye and Pakistan, marking a significant milestone in ECO's collaboration. He clarified that the working paper was a discussion document and not binding. He highlighted the brainstorming nature of the meeting to address ECO's challenges and reforms. Additionally, he proposed hosting an informal dinner on February 2, 2025 to facilitate networking among Deputy Ministers, delegation leaders, and permanent representatives.

25. The **Chair** supported the Secretary General's proposal, noting Kazakhstan's Deputy Foreign Minister would attend the dinner. He suggested ending the February 3, 2025 meeting by lunchtime to accommodate travel schedules and sought agreement from colleagues to adjust the timing.

26. The **Chair** underscored the importance of ensuring the participation of the distinguished Deputy Foreign Minister from Kazakhstan until 3:00 PM to allow for comprehensive discussions. It was proposed that the meeting proceed with a coffee break, continuing until 3:00 PM without a formal lunch break. The Iranian delegation was requested to support the extension of the Deputy Foreign Minister's participation, and the members were invited to raise any comments or objections regarding the proposed schedule.

27. The **Secretary General** provided an overview of the purpose of the working paper, explaining that it identifies the key issues and challenges, outlines the Secretariat's recommendations, and objectively records the views of member states. This document would serve as the foundation for further discussions and would ultimately be presented to the Council of Ministers for approval or to the CPR for reconsideration. It was emphasized that the session would be more of a brainstorming exercise rather than a formal decision-making process. Regarding the protocol and logistical arrangements for the HLC meeting, the Secretary General noted that these would be in line with previous practices and would be finalized in consultation with the host government. The final program would be shared once confirmed, with an emphasis on maintaining flexibility throughout the planning process.

28. The **Chair** highlighted the importance of addressing financial matters as the first agenda item and acknowledged the input from the Uzbekistan's Permanent Representative, who suggested that discussions requiring the attention of the Deputy

Ministers should be prioritized, while more technical issues could be delegated to expert-level discussions

29. The **Secretary General** reiterated that while the meeting would focus on key challenges facing the organization, it was not expected that immediate decisions would be made. The goal was to inform the Deputy Ministers about critical issues, ensuring they are fully apprised, even if formal decisions were not reached during the session.

- 35th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (RPC)

30. The **Chair** introduced the sub-agenda item regarding the date of the 35th Regional Planning Council (RPC) meeting, reminding members that the decision was made at the 291st CPR meeting. The initial deadline for confirming participation was extended to January 12, 2025 but only Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Pakistan submitted their delegation details. The meeting, originally scheduled for January 20-23, 2025, had to be postponed due to the lack of quorum. The Chair asked colleagues to consider new dates for convening the RPC.

31. The **Secretary General** explained the postponement, citing two missed deadlines and the lack of quorum. He proposed February 24-27, 2025, as the earliest possible dates for the RPC to approve the Work Programme and Calendar of Events for ECO activities in 2025. The Chair agreed, emphasizing the importance of the meeting Türkiye's delegation suggested May 30, 2025 as their preferred dates, with alternatives in late November or December 2025

32. The **Secretary General** stressed that without the RPC, the Secretariat could not proceed with the work program, which would require frequent ad-hoc approvals for each meeting. He urged the Council to approve the February 24-27, 2025 to avoid further delays. Azerbaijan's delegation supported the Secretariat proposing the date to streamline the process.

33. The **Council** tasked the Secretariat to propose new dates, February 24-27, 2025 for conducting the 35th RPC meeting. Also, the **Council** authorized the Secretariat for implementation of the Working Papers already circulated on December 11, 2024, for the continuity of ECO activities until the 35th RPC Meeting is held to finalize its sector-wise recommendations on the ECO Work Programme and Calendar of Events for 2025.

Agenda Item No. 4

Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM)

34. At the 28th Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting held on December 3, 2024, in Mashhad, the **Chair** expressed gratitude to Iran for successfully hosting the meeting and noted the positive feedback from delegations. The Chair reminded the Council that the Secretariat is preparing a work plan to follow up on the outcomes of the 28th meeting and requested an update on this mandate.

35. The **Secretary General** informed the Council that a draft plan had been circulated via a Note Verbale on January 23, 2025, and feedback from Member States was requested for incorporation. Additionally, the Secretariat has developed a concept

paper proposing the annual alignment of summits and COM meetings under one ECO chairmanship. The concept paper outlines potential options and is currently under informal discussion with Member States. Once consultations are complete, a formal proposal will be submitted for the Council's consideration.

36. The **Chair** acknowledged receipt of the concept note and invited Member States to share their feedback. It was noted that the document is currently under informal review and not yet ready for formal deliberation by the Council. Kazakhstan is also preparing its input on the matter, he added.

Agenda Item No. 5

Deliberation on Afghanistan's participation in ECO Winter Drill and Technical Expert Group Meeting on DRR in Erzurum, Türkiye

37. The **Chair** introduced the agenda item on the participation of Afghan experts in the ECO Winter Drill and Technical Expert Group Meeting in Erzurum, Türkiye, scheduled for March 4-6, 2025. Türkiye requested that the matter of extending invitations to Afghanistan at a technical level be included in the agenda. While Tajikistan noted that they had not received instructions from the Capital yet but would inform the Secretariat once they had guidance. The Chair emphasized the humanitarian angle of the event and supported Afghanistan's expert-level participation.

38. The Permanent Representative of the **Kyrgyz Republic** expressed support for Afghanistan's involvement, particularly in technical and economic projects like CASA-1000. Türkiye's Representative also requested invitations for observers, including the Turkish Cypriot State.

39. The **Council** agreed to extend invitation to ECO Observers for participation in the said event and awaited Tajikistan's final position regarding participation of Afghanistan at a technical level.

Agenda Item No. 6

Participation of HRSD Director in 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Review Meeting in Bangkok

40. The **Deputy Secretary General** (T&C & HRSD) briefed the Council regarding the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Review Meeting in Bangkok on February 4-6, 2025. He emphasized that the event aims to review progress on the Global Compact for Migration and promote regional cooperation on migration issues. He added that the ECO Secretariat is working with the IOM on a joint project addressing mixed migration flows. He requested the Council's approval for participation of the HRSD Director in the said event.

41. The Council approved the participation of the HRSD Director in the above meeting.

Agenda Item No. 7

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Recommendations of the Selection Panel

42. The Selection Panel met on January 20, 2025 (1100 hrs). The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Çağatay Emrah Öngüt, ECO Deputy Secretary General for (Admin, EME, IR & IT) and Mr. Kuanysh Agaidarov, First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Meeting was attended (virtually) by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Türkiye and the Republic of Uzbekistan. ECO Secretary General along with Deputy Secretary General (TI&AI), Head of Section (Admin) and Legal Advisor were also in attendance.

43. The Selection Panel made the following recommendations for consideration by the CPR:

Director for Agriculture & Industry (Category-I, D2)

44. Mr Can Aygül (**Türkish national**) may be appointed for a full tenure of three (03) years to be effective from the date of joining at the Secretariat against the position of **Director for Agriculture & Industry (Category-I, D2)** which would fall vacant in the ECO Secretariat upon completion of service tenure of Mr. Gürkan Polat (Türkish national), who will be completing his tenure of service at the ECO Secretariat on February 28, 2025.

Head of Section for Project Management (Category-I, D1)

45. Mr Faizrahman M Kassenov (**Kazakhstan National**) may be appointed for a full tenure of three (03) years to be effective from the date of joining at the Secretariat against the position of **Head of Section for Project Management (Category-I, D1)** which became vacant upon resignation rendered by Mr Murat Zhagaparov (Kazakhstan national).

46. The Council approved the recommendation made by the Selection Panel.

Agenda Item No. 8

Any other business

47. The **Secretary General** highlighted the importance of addressing funds and Member States' contributions. He explained that the Secretariat, based on the provisional budget approved by the Council of Permanent Representatives and awaiting final clearance from one Member State, plans to notify Member States of their respective contributions for the 2025 budget. Acknowledging the urgency due to budgetary constraints, he informed the Council that the Secretariat will proceed with issuing these notifications in line with the provisional budget, pending final approval by the Council of Ministers.

48. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TI & AI)** informed the Council that the 34th RPC had requested Member States to host the 4th Coordination Committee meeting on industrial property rights of ECO. Türkiye graciously agreed to host the meeting in Ankara on February 24–25, 2025, covering accommodation and local hospitality expenses. A request was submitted to the Council to approve financing this meeting through the SS Fund, as was done for the previous two meetings.

49. He also noted that the 34th RPC encouraged organizing training courses under the ECO Seed Association to enhance awareness and disseminate information. Türkiye has kindly fulfilled this request. Additionally, the Council was requested to authorize a minor personnel adjustment as concerns participation of the Secretariat in the above-mentioned training course with minor difference on DSA due to participation of the relevant director in place of the expert whose participation had been approved by previous CPR. Both requests were approved by the Council.

50. The **ECO Deputy Secretary General (TC & HRSD)** informed the Council that the Secretariat had received an invitation for the Secretary General to attend the 87th Session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) in Geneva, scheduled for February 11-13, 2025. The session will feature a high-level segment on climate action and connectivity, led by the Netherlands and Türkiye, respectively. The Secretary General's participation would also provide an opportunity to engage with international organizations based in Geneva. The **Council** approved the request for the Secretary General's participation in the said event.

51. Following a joint workshop with the IOM Iran office, a collaborative project titled "*Addressing Mixed Migration Flows Along the Migration Roads in the ECO Region*" was proposed, with an estimated cost of \$785,000. To support the project's funding application to the IOM Development Fund, the IOM Iran office requested a letter of support from the ECO Secretariat. The **Council** approved the issuance of the support letter.

52. The **Secretary General** brought to the Council's attention towards the need for adjustments to the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) rates, which were last revised in 2007. He highlighted that the current DSA allocations are insufficient to meet the significantly increased accommodation costs in cities such as New York and Geneva, where hotel rates have, in some cases, tripled or quadrupled. As an example, during a recent visit to New York, two Secretariat officers incurred out-of-pocket expenses totaling \$1,545 due to costs exceeding the DSA ceiling, despite staying in modest accommodations. To address this issue, the Secretary General proposed two specific measures:

- a. Approval for reimbursing the two officers for the additional expenses incurred during their New York visit;
- b. Creation of a dedicated working group to review the current DSA framework and recommend appropriate updates to ensure it reflects present-day economic realities.

53. The **Council** unanimously approved the recommendations proposed by the Secretary General.

54. Additionally, the **Secretary General** informed the Council about his upcoming visit to Türkiye, which will include bilateral consultations with high-ranking government officials in Ankara. The visit aims to strengthen collaboration with one of the organization's most significant member states. The Secretary General assured the Council that a detailed report on these interactions would be shared upon his return.

Agenda Item No. 9

Date of the next CPR Meeting

55 The Council discussed scheduling the 293rd CPR meeting, with February 23 proposed, but Turkmenistan suggested February 24 due to Sunday being a non-working day. Uzbekistan proposed hosting future meetings outside Tehran, which was supported. The Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of **Iran** suggested flexibility in dates, aiming to finalize plans before Ramadan, with February 23, 2025 set provisionally.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

The Republic of Azerbaijan:

- H.E Mr Ali Alizade, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr Asgar Asgarov, Counselor

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

- H.E Mr Seyyed Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr Behzad Azarsa, Senior Expert, Multilateral & International Economic Cooperation
- Mr. Soheil Khari, Senior 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:

- H.E Mr. Turdakun Sydykov, **Permanent Representative**

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- Mr Ahmed Shami, Deputy Head of Mission

The Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr Bahodur Nazir, Counselor
- Mr Alisher Azamzoda, First Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye:

- Dr Firat Bayar, Deputy Head of Mission
- Mr Murat Sogangoz, Counselor

The Embassy of Turkmenistan:

- H.E Mr Ilyas Gayypov, **Permanent Representative**
- Mr Kemal Atayev, Third Secretary

The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

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

The ECO Secretariat:

- H.E Dr Asad Majeed Khan, Secretary General
- Amb. Mohsen Espen, Deputy Secretary General
- Amb. Silapberdi Nurberdiyev, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr Cagatay Emrah Ongut, Deputy Secretary General
- Mr Sukhrob Mirzoaliev, Head of CFU
- Mr Hojjat Moghavam, Legal Adviser
- Mr Muhammad Ahmed Raza, Senior Desk Officer
- Mr Shahud Hussain, Desk Officer

Agenda Item No. 3

Preparation for the:

- 17th ECO Summit (*July 3-4, 2025, Azerbaijan*)
- 35th Regional Planning Council (RPC) Meeting (*February 24-27, 2025*).



Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No IR /2025/101

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 27/1/2025

Attachment No

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) presents its compliments to the ECO Observers and has the honour to extend invitation to the 17th ECO Summit, scheduled for July 3-4, 2025, in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Further details regarding the event will be shared in due course. The Secretariat would highly appreciate it if the ECO Observers could confirm their participation at the earliest convenience. For additional information, Mr. Alim Ullah, Head of Section-International Relations, may be reached via email at alim@eco.int or through WhatsApp at [+989962239913](tel:+989962239913).

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the ECO Observers the assurances of its highest consideration.

Secretariat of the Organization of Turkic States, Istanbul
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Cypriot State
Energy Charter Secretariat
All ECO Member States, Tehran





Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No CFU /2025/100

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 26/1/2025

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 convey the self-explanatory Note Verbale No. 5-002/25 dated January 25, 2025 received from the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Tehran regarding the intention of the Republic of Azerbaijan to invite heads of state and government of number of countries and heads of international organization to attend the 17th ECO Summit scheduled to be held on July 3-4, 2025 in Azerbaijan.

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





№ 5-002/25

Tehran

Urgent

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization and has the honor to inform that the Republic of Azerbaijan intends to invite heads of state and government of a number of countries, and international organizations to the 17th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization to be held on July 3-4, 2025 in Azerbaijan as special guests

The Embassy hereby encloses the list of countries and international organizations and kindly requests the Secretariat to disseminate the aforesaid information among the ECO Member States, as well as to bring this issue up for deliberation at the next 292nd Meeting of the CPR for consideration and further concurrence

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization the assurances of its highest consideration

Enclosure: 1 page

January 25, 2025

**Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization
Tehran**



List of countries (at the level of Heads of State and Government) and international organizations to be invited as special guests to the 17th Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Summit to be held in Azerbaijan on July 3-4, 2025.

Heads of state and government:

1. United Arab Emirates,
2. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
3. State of Qatar,
4. Malaysia,
5. People's Republic of Bangladesh,
6. Republic of Indonesia,
7. Arab Republic of Egypt;
8. Federal Republic of Nigeria,
9. Syrian Arab Republic

International organizations:

1. UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme;
2. UNESCAP - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific;
3. UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organization;
4. UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme,
5. UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,
6. GCF - Green Climate Fund,
7. ADB - Asian Development Bank,
8. AIIB - Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank,
9. CICA - Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia;
10. ASEAN - Association of Southeast Asian Nations
11. SCO - Shanghai Cooperation Organization;
12. OIC - Organization of Islamic Cooperation,
13. IDB - Islamic Development Bank;
14. D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation,
15. GCC - Gulf Cooperation Council;
16. ITF - International Transport Forum,
17. TRACECA - Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia

No CFU /2025/109

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 27/1/2025

Attachment No

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 the ECO Member States in Tehran, and has the honour to communicate the approval of the 292nd Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) with regard to the following proposals of the Secretariat:

- The postponed 35th RPC Meeting may be re-scheduled to be organized on February 24-27, 2025 at the ECO Secretariat, Tehran;

- ECO activities may be continued as per Draft ECO Working Paper & Calendar of Events - 2025, circulated by the Secretariat on December 11, 2024, until the 35th Meeting of RPC finalizes its sector-wise recommendations on the document(s).

The esteemed Member States are requested to kindly convey confirmations and lists of their respective delegations for participation in the 35th RPC Meeting, enabling the Secretariat to ensure that the important event takes place as re-scheduled.

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



Agenda Item No. 4

Follow-up of the outcomes of 28th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM);



Economic Cooperation Organization

No CFU /2025/93

Priority Normal

Date, 23/1/2025

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 Embassies of the Member States in Tehran and has the honour to enclose herewith a draft Plan of Work of the ECO Secretariat on the proposals and initiatives reflected at the 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the ECO Member States held on December 3, 2024 in Mashhad and the Mashhad Communiqué adopted at the 28th COM Meeting.

The ECO Secretariat has further the honour to inform that the enclosed draft Plan of Work can be discussed and finalised during the upcoming meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR).

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the esteemed Ministry and Embassies the assurances of its highest consideration.



All ECO Member States, Tehran

Cc.



PLAN OF WORK

of the ECO Secretariat on the proposals and initiatives reflected at the 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the ECO Member States held on December 3, 2024 in Mashhad and the Mashhad Communiqué adopted at the 28th COM Meeting

The 28th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of the ECO Member States held in Mashhad, the Islamic Republic of Iran on December 03, 2024 under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr. Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, bearing in mind the Treaty of Izmir as well as targets envisaged in the ECO Vision 2025 and Ashgabat Consensus for Action, adopted the Mashhad Communiqué.

The Honourable Foreign Ministers while addressing the 28th COM Meeting underscored the need to pursue the priorities of the Member States expressed at the 14th, 15th and 16th Summits of ECO Heads of State and Government that are aimed at the expansion of cooperation in various fields, reaffirming their support to the objectives and goals of the Organization for economic development, social welfare, connectivity, peace and stability in the ECO Region.

This Plan of Work serves as guidelines for taking follow-up measures with respect to the recommendations/proposals shared during the 28th COM Meeting held in Mashhad on December 03, 2024.

The following reflects the views, proposals, initiatives and suggestions of the 28th Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of ECO Member States.

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
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TRADE AND INVESTMENT

S#	Para of Mashhad Communiqué	Present Status	Plan for Future
1.	Recognizing the pivotal role of trade and investment for accelerating economic growth (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)	Trade & investment remains core pillars of the ECO. While the Secretariat has operational agreements such as ECOTA and the Agreement on Investment Protection and Promotion, limited progress has been made in their implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and fund more capacity-building programs for member states to operationalize existing agreements. - Enhance cooperation with international organizations (e.g., UNCTAD, WTO) to share best practices on trade and investment frameworks
2.	Promotion of <u>trade and investment</u> is a key strategy to strengthen our security. (<i>Pakistan</i>)	- The connection between trade, investment, and security is acknowledged but not fully integrated into ECO strategies.	- Establish a regional investment promotion task force under the ECO Secretariat to attract intra-regional FDI.
3.	Encouraging non-signatories to join ECOTA (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)	- Five member states (Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Türkiye) have signed ECOTA, but others, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, have not indicated any clear official interest yet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize high-level bilateral consultations with non-signatory states to address specific concerns . - Highlight the potential economic benefits of ECOTA for non-signatories through economic impact studies. - Encourage the ECO Trade & Development Bank to offer incentives (e.g. access to financing) for non-signatory countries to join.
4.	Acknowledging the importance of fostering a meaningful and sustained	The Secretariat conducted a feasibility study titled “ECO Regional Payment System	We will develop training programs for banking officials on innovative financial instruments and risk mitigation strategies.

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>conversation on finance and banking issues to deal with payment related challenges and risks faced by businesses and to secure funding for key economic projects in the ECO region (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>Feasibility Study (ERPS) as a pilot project to explore the feasibility of setting up an ECO Clearing Union. The study recommended setting up a payment system amongst the selected commercial banks of the ECO Member States to ensure transparency, predictability and uniformity in the trade related payment transactions to facilitate trade and reduce costs and time of trade transactions. The study also recommended currency swap Agreements and Transactions through Clearing System to reduce pressure on the Foreign Exchange Reserves.</p> <p>However, progress has been slow due to a lack of will and technical capacity among member states. In this regard the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on Banking, Financial Matters of ECO and Forming ECO Clearing Union (ECU) was virtually hosted by the ECO Secretariat on December 10, 2024.</p>	<p>Develop training programs for banking officials on innovative financial instruments and risk mitigation strategies.</p> <p>In line with decisions of the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on Banking, Financial Matters of ECO and Forming ECO Clearing Union (ECU) the Secretariat is pursuing clarification on some technical points related to the ECO Clearing Union and the ECO Regional Payment System to provide clarity and directions on the way forward whether to continue with the current approach or review the draft agreement, or conduct another study.</p> <p>An Interactive meeting with the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) will be organized with the aim to share experiences, identify best practices, and explore the ways to move forward.</p> <p>We will prepare and distribute a questionnaire to Member States to gather their written feedback and requirements for further progress.</p> <p>We will convene 3rd Experts Group Meeting on Banking, Financial Matters of ECO and Forming ECO Clearing Union (ECU) prior to the upcoming 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting of Finance/Economy, to review the outcomes of the questionnaires, discuss the findings, and determine the inputs to be presented at the Ministerial Meeting.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>5. ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) is overdue for two decades. Our traders and stakeholders in the ECO Region certainly deserve more. They deserve to benefit from an ECO Free Trade Area. (Iran)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECOTA has not been effectively implemented. - No tangible steps have been taken toward creating an ECO Free Trade Area. 	<p>The upcoming Ministerial Meeting is already mandated to review the ECOTA, and if possible, to revise it and/or draft a clear roadmap for transitioning ECOTA into an operational Free Trade Agreement (FTA).</p>
<p>6. Urge all member states to take a broader and more holistic view of the matter and join us in the earliest implementation of ECOTA (Pakistan)</p>	<p>ECO has yet to realize its full potential as a trading bloc due to political and logistical barriers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocate funds for specific studies such as the 4th phase of the ECO-UNIDO Quality Infrastructure Project to address NTBs to trade and recommend specific measures for liberalization. - Mobilize private-sector stakeholders to advocate for the benefits of ECOTA as well as ECO Free Trade Area. - Develop an implementation timeline with clear milestones and accountability measures.
<p>7. To see the ECO Region transforming into a prosperous trading bloc (Pakistan)</p>	<p>Efforts such as the ECO Customs Cooperation Committee (ECCC) have seen limited progress in areas like electronic data interchange (EDI) and customs facilitation. Banking and insurance harmonization efforts remain underdeveloped.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an ECO-wide roadmap for the digitalization of customs and insurance systems. - Expand the scope of EDI to include financial transactions and insurance claims processing. - Provide additional funding to partner with multilateral organizations for technical support in harmonizing trade-related systems.
<p>8. The ECO trading system</p>	<p>The ECO Trade and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for an amendment to the ETDB charter

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
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	<p>also needs to be supported with our financing, banking, customs and insurance systems, whose harmonization and digitalization shall also become a dominant agenda for the ECO. (Mashhad Communiqué)</p>	<p>Development Bank (ETDB) has played a limited role in financing regional trade and projects due to restricted authority and lack of capitalization.</p>	<p>to expand its mandate as a trade promoter and fund-raiser.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase capitalization through member state contributions and partnerships with international financial institutions. - Develop sector-specific financing schemes for SMEs and export-oriented industries.
9.	<p>The ECO Trade and Development Bank needs to be given authority to do what it needs to become a trade promoter and a project financier and fund-raiser across the ECO Region. (Iran)</p>	<p>ECO trade flows remain concentrated in a few sectors (e.g., food, energy, textiles, etc.). ECO efforts to diversify trade portfolios have been minimal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and promote value-added sectors (e.g., electronics, agri-tech) through targeted trade fairs and investment forums. - Launch joint ventures and cross-border projects in underdeveloped sectors, such as tourism and green technology. - Establish sectoral working groups under the ECO framework to promote diversification strategies.
10	<p>Promote greater diversification of mutual trade flows in order to form and promote common economic interests (Kyrgyzstan)</p>	<p>Intra-regional trade accounts for about 7% of the ECO region's total trade, highlighting the need for stronger integration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a regional database of investment opportunities to encourage cross-border projects. - Promote business-to-business (B2B) trade & investment forums under the ECO Chamber of Commerce & Industry. - Develop border economic zones with streamlined customs and trade facilitation measures. - Enhance connectivity between border regions through infrastructure investments.
11	<p>Progress and prosperity of the ECO region is</p>	<p>Bilateral cooperation exists but lacks a coordinated regional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement updated/amended ECOTA after re-negotiation, and start negotiations on the raft Trade

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>hinged upon expansion of Intra-Regional Trade (Pakistan)</p>	<p>framework.</p>	<p>Facilitation Agreement to reduce barriers to intra-regional trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide funding for conducting regional trade facilitation workshops to address practical challenges faced by traders. - Increase the ECOTA Implementation Fund with a view to include funding activities for trade facilitation events.
<p>12 Expand ECO's intra-regional trade (Türkiye)</p>	<p>Intra-regional trade is a measure of level of economic integration of a region. The accounts for about 7% of the ECO region's total trade, highlighting there is a sheer lack of economic integration in the region due to absence of a operational preferential trading system in the form of ECOTA (RTA) of FTA.</p>	<p>The re-negotiations process initiated after the successful outcome of the 9th ECOTA Cooperation Council Meeting, held on 30-31 July 2024 in Islamabad, is being pursued. The process will rope-in the non ECOTA Party Member States to the process on renegotiation to amend the text of ECOTA based on agreement of ECOTA Parties to be mandated by the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce & Foreign Trade (MMCFT), which will be open for joining b y other parties. The 5th ECO MMCFT is tentatively scheduled for June 2025 in Türkiye.</p>
<p>13 Further strengthening of the comprehensive and mutually beneficial cooperation in trade, investment (Tajikistan)</p>	<p>Cooperation in customs matters Committee in areas like electronic data interchange (EDI) and Customs facilitation, harmonization of policies and procedures, overarching trade facilitation framework for the region to reduce trade explicit and hidden trade costs, Implementation of Regional</p>	<p>The following will be pursued :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalization of the draft of Trade Facilitation Strategy (TFS) and Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) by organizing the 2nd JWG Meeting of on TFS/TFA. 2. Pursue cooperation in customs matters by organizing 6th Meeting of the ECO Committee on Customs Cooperation and 10th Meeting of the ECO Council of Heads of Customs Authorities (CHCA).

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
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		Value Chains (RVCs) and connecting them with Global Value Chains (GVCs), attracting investment through investor friendly environment etc need to be operational at the earliest.	3. The 3 rd Meeting of the ECO Heads of Specialized Economic/ Free Trade Zones (SE/FTZs)
14	Develop mutually beneficial cooperation in trade and investment (Turkmenistan)	As above in S No.12	As above in S No 12
15	Engage the opportunities of the trade at the borders and regional trade (Turkmenistan)	Border trade remains not fully utilized due to weak infrastructure and regulatory barriers. The proposal of Turkmenistan, has been pursued in 2023 and 2024 and the Secretariat conducted a border visit to analyse the scope and needs for setting up Border Trade Zones on Iran- Turkmenistan Border.	The team of the Secretariat suggested constituting a working group of the relevant stakeholders to pursue the establishment of Border/ regional Trade Zones among the interested ECO Member States. The 1st Meeting of the Working group was organized by the Secretariat. (Transport Directorate)

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION
Transport

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Underscoring the need for inclusive, sustainable and environmentally friendly connectivity through the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA); Focusing on increasing the region's share in international transit transportation, expanding corridors to global markets and facilitating cross-border transit trade by digitalizing transport, customs and border processes(<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Recall the continued priority of intra-regional connectivity for the ECO and the increasing role of the ECO as transit region to connect neighbouring regions and countries and, (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Call for commercialization and expansion of the ECO corridors to the neighbouring regions and markets as well as facilitation of border crossing and transit procedures within the ECO Region(<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TTFA has been ratified by 8 out 10 MS 2. There is a Study Project on Electronic Information Exchange among Railways and Customs of ECO Member States. 3. There is a proposal to establish the ECO's Digital Transport and Customs Office in Tashkent 4. There is a Project on 'Development of economic corridor along ECO KTI Railway Corridor'. 5. There is a Pre-feasibility Study on Digital Modelling for Advanced Railroad Construction and Maintenance of the ECO Railways. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to join/ratify the Agreement 2. Ensure the complete implementation of TTFA by all Member States. 3. To increase region's share in transportation, study projects, including the specified ones, should be implemented (<i>through signing contracts with the international consultants</i>) Such Economic Corridor e-Model could be scaled up in all ECO MS. 4. To encourage MS to actively cooperate in the given area and also to expedite digitalization of their transport, customs and border processes through implementing different instruments, including the application of eTIR and eCMR; etc.
<p>attach high importance to timely realization of agreements with respect to the International North-South Transport</p>	<p>The ECO cooperates with the UNECE in</p>	<p>Upon completion, the Rasht-Astara</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Corridor, and modernization and expansion of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad as an indispensable element of development of the East-West Trans-Caspian Middle Corridor. Its further extension to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan will significantly enhance our trade and transport capacities. <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p>	<p>the framework of Coordination Committee on the Trans-Caspian and Almaty-Tehran-Istanbul Corridors.</p> <p>Azerbaijan plays important role in the ECO/UNECE Coordination Committee as well as in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).</p>	<p>railway will significantly enhance the North-South Corridor.</p>
<p>earliest finalization of transport communications between the Eastern Zangezur economic region of Azerbaijan and its Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic through the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ongoing infrastructural projects to operationalize this route will serve to mutually beneficial cooperation, and add a new artery of connectivity to boost the transport and transit potential in wider Eurasia. <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p>	<p>The Zangezur Corridor is a transport route aimed at providing Azerbaijan with direct access to Nakhchivan.</p> <p>The project is gradually being implemented.</p>	<p>Request Azerbaijan and Iran to discuss the project details at both the bilateral level and within the framework of ECO.</p>
<p>Given the fact that seven ECO member states are landlocked developing countries, it is of vital importance to promote connectivity in the region through developing robust regional transport, energy, and ICT infrastructure to realize untapped cooperation potential within ECO region <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p>	<p>The construction of the north-south corridor's final missing link Rasht-Astara (164 km) is underway</p>	<p>Complete the project as soon as possible to boost regional trade and connectivity.</p>
<p>Kazakhstan envisions itself as a reliable logistics hub, between East and West,</p>	<p>As a transit country for several</p>	<p>1. To focus on maritime Caspian logistics zones as a key part of the</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>North and South, leveraging its geographic position, infrastructure and resources.</p> <p>A top priority for Kazakhstan 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</p> <p>Kazakhstan is interested in accelerating the construction of maritime and dry port infrastructure in Iran and Turkmenistan as well as in Afghanistan. <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p>	<p>international transport corridors, Kazakhstan plays an active role in their commercialization.</p> <p>The Study Project on ‘Establishment of a common gateway among ECO countries – ECO Gate’, currently in its final stages, aims to identify new potential transport corridors.</p> <p>There is a Project on ‘Development of economic corridor along ECO KTI Railway Corridor’.</p>	<p>ECO Gates Study project.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To analyse maritime cargo volumes that decrease due to water level depletion at the Caspian Sea and propose solutions to tackle the problem to improve littoral effectiveness of Caspian littoral logistics zones. 3. Study projects should be implemented including Economic Corridor along KTI, creating of Digitalizing Modelling and Data Centers. Such Economic Corridor e-Model could be scaled up in all ECO MS
<p>For the Kyrgyz Republic, as a landlocked country, the transport sector is of special interest for cooperation within the ECO framework. <i>(Kyrgyzstan)</i></p>	<p>Kyrgyz Republic is an en-route country in number of transport corridors, including KTAI and KUTIT.</p>	<p>Request the Kyrgyz Republic to enhance its involvement in ECO transport projects and events.</p>
<p>realization of the strategic railroad project “China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan” and will contribute to the growth of international trade and investment, transport and logistics and transit potential of Central Asia. <i>(Kyrgyzstan)</i></p>	<p>China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway construction officially launched on 27 December 2024.</p>	<p>Request the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan to provide detailed information regarding the timeframe for the project’s implementation, as well as the potential benefits expected for the region from its realization, including statistical data.</p>
<p>It is important to create functional, interlinked region-wide transit corridors to</p>	<p>Pakistan plays important role in</p>	<p>Request the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to expedite the construction and</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
facilitate an enabling environment for promoting intra-regional connectivity in its true spirit. (<i>Pakistan</i>)	regional connectivity.	rehabilitation of the Taftan-Quetta segment of the ITI Railway Corridor.
Tajikistan is actively involved in <u>implementation of the multimodal corridors</u> . Tajikistan is also interested in wider cooperation and sufficient using of ECO Member States sea and maritime infrastructures. (<i>Tajikistan</i>)	Tajikistan is an en-route country to regional transport corridors, including KTAI, TUTIT.	Request Tajikistan to consider hosting one of the meetings of Heads of ECO Railway Authorities or TTCC Committee Meetings.
The obvious priority for the ECO is <u>cooperation in the transport sector</u> . Our economic cooperation would develop successfully and become efficient, if there are contemporary transport and communication networks. Construction of roads, bridges, hubs, storages, terminals and other important infrastructural facilities should be one of the main directions of cooperation. We propose creation of joint transport logistics centres. Utilization of existing transport and potential in international cargo transportations. (<i>Turkmenistan</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study Project on 'Establishment of a common gateway among ECO countries – ECO Gate' is in its final stages. 2. There is a Project on 'Development of economic corridor along ECO KTI Railway Corridor'. 	<p>Completion and implementation of the given Projects.</p> <p>Request Turkmenistan to enhance its involvement in ECO transport projects and events.</p>
Communication		
Highlighting the urgency of cooperation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Industry	- Number of capacity building events have organized in the given areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Radically strengthen regional cooperation in ICT, through organizing Ministerial Meeting and Meeting of the ECO High Level

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>4.0, Satellite Internet, and space technologies to address sophisticated challenges and ensure these technologies are accessible and beneficial to all of humanity; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>- Cooperation among the MSs in the given area is unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Working Group of ICT Regulatory Authorities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Cooperate closely with international organizations, particularly with the ITU. 3. Implementation of “2025 ECO Regional Strategy for Information Society Development”. 4. Organize more capacity building events
<p>Acknowledge the challenges and opportunities associated with the rapid pace of new and emerging technologies for countries and peoples, including in the ECO Region and; Task the ECO Secretariat to strengthen its ICT-related capacities, including through <u>creating a special ICT unit</u> in the Secretariat within the current budget. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>Currently, the ICT sector is covered by the T&C as one of several areas.</p> <p>Unfortunately, MSs do not give adequate attention to ICT cooperation.</p>	<p>Establish a dedicated ICT unit within the T&C Directorate by assigning one of the Programme Officers to focus exclusively on ICT matters and granting him a P3 level</p> <p>Include the proposal in the Agenda of next CPR.</p>
<p><u>“Digital Silk Way” project</u> is another important initiative that aims to create a telecommunications corridor connecting Europe and Asia via Azerbaijan, significantly contributing to the</p>	<p>The Digital Silk Way project aims to create a comprehensive digital corridor by laying down terrestrial and subsea fiber optic cables across various countries,</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request Azerbaijan to officially forward the Concept of the Project to the Secretariat. 2. Request Azerbaijan to propose organizing an online presentation of

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
development of digitalization and connectivity in the wider region, including the Caucasus, Central Asia, and South Asia (<i>Azerbaijan</i>)	including Georgia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.	the Project for the MS.
Given the fact that seven ECO member states are landlocked developing countries , it is of vital importance to promote connectivity in the region through developing robust regional transport, energy, and ICT infrastructure to realize untapped cooperation potential within ECO region (<i>Azerbaijan</i>)	There is a Study Project on Establishment and Development of ECO Regional Fiber Optic Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request Azerbaijan to consider hosting the 4th Ministerial Meeting on ICT in 2025. 2. Request Azerbaijan to initiate a comprehensive Study Project on the Region's ICT infrastructure to identify the issues that need to be addressed. 3. Implement the Study Project by recruiting international consultant, who would conduct the study using advanced algorithms for data processing on the test section along the KTI and expand its results to other countries including FOL m/throughout Azerbaijan.

ENERGY, MINERALS AND ENVIRONMENT

Energy

Recognizing that enhancing energy security and sustainability through wider energy access and trade is a	The Secretariat developed the “ECO Strategy for Energy Cooperation 2030” and its Action Plan with a	The success of its implementation will thus depend on the resolve of ECO Member States on how to
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PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>strategic objective of the ECO coupled with the ongoing endeavours of the Organization towards scaling up a just and sustainable energy transition to advance regional energy connectivity, integration and coordination of infrastructure, resources and markets to strengthen energy security and system resilience; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Underscore the significance of energy trade, efficiency and security for the ECO Region in parallel with the need to establish the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM); Welcome collaboration with relevant regional and international partners/stakeholders to take initiatives, including through the UNESCAP's ongoing "Energy Connectivity for Sustainable Development in the ECO Region".</p>	<p>view to add value to regional energy security and sustainability. This Strategy was adopted at the 4th ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting in 2021. It was elaborated and adopted as an outcome of joint efforts of the Member States in line with their national priorities.</p> <p>Both flagship energy projects of ECO, namely the establishment of ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) and establishment of the Regional Electricity Markets (ECO-REM) are expected to contribute to regional energy security.</p> <p>The Secretariat has long been promoting the establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) as a flagship energy project. This Project aims at harmonizing and merging the electricity markets in ECO Region. It is expected to enhance energy trade and supply security.</p> <p>In 2024, ECO revived the momentum of progress of ECO-</p>	<p>leverage it. To facilitate its implementation, each ECO Member State is expected to designate a national focal point for coordination and overseeing of implementation of its in-country components. The follow-up of implementation of the Strategy is sought to be pursued by the ECO Secretariat in collaboration with national focal points and relevant institutions/authorities in the Member States. Meantime, coordination and close monitoring of activities within the Action Plan should be undertaken.</p> <p>The ECO Member States are expected to expedite providing their views and comments on the subject Regional Roadmap and proactively engage in finalization of the relevant ESCAP project by mid of March 2025.</p> <p>Driven by the outcomes of the ESCAP project, the Member States and the Secretariat will revisit the ECO-REM Project and identify the</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p><i>(Mashhad Communiqué)</i></p>	<p>REM project. In January 2024, ESCAP, as the ECO’s international partner launched the relevant project on “Energy connectivity for sustainable development” dedicated to the ECO Region. As its key deliverable, the draft of the “Regional Roadmap on Power System Connectivity – ECO Regional Electricity Market: promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development”, entailing a set of recommendations for policy and regulatory actions that would enable the establishment of multilateral, multi-directional power trading was developed. Its peer-review is nearing completion.</p> <p>On November 27-28, 2024 the 2nd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) was organized by the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan in Dushanbe. The meeting decided to finalize the above Roadmap. The meeting also concluded to further set up a Task</p>	<p>best solutions for leveraging a set of recommendations for policy and regulatory actions reflected in the ESCAP project.</p> <p>The Task Force may be held regularly on a virtual mode bringing together the technical experts and pave the way for identification of next steps for launching ECO-REM.</p> <p>The 3rd Experts Group Meeting on establishment of the ECO Regional Electricity Market (ECO-REM) and the 5th ECO Ministerial on Energy could be a milestone in advancement of this project.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Appreciate soft launch of the ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) within the framework of UNFCCC COP29 held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, while highlighting future important role of the CECECO in facilitating renewable energy efficiency projects in the ECO Region; Call on Member States for the support of early operationalizing of the CECECO; Call on the non-signatory Member States to sign and ratify the charter of the Center. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>We invite all members to sign and ratify the statutory document of the ECO Clean Energy Centre (CECECO) (<i>Azerbaijan</i>)</p> <p>Given the fact that seven ECO member states are landlocked</p>	<p>Force for speeding up the advancement of ECO-REM project.</p> <p>The key overall objective of CECECO Project is to create an enabling environment for renewable energy and energy efficiency markets and investments. In fact, this project represents one of the most promising endeavours within ECO as a future element of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC), being implemented across the globe.</p> <p>The Charter of CECECO was signed by 5 Member States, namely Azerbaijan (8 March 2023), Türkiye (10 October 2023), Uzbekistan (August 2024), Kyrgyz Republic (15 November 2024) and I.R. Pakistan (3 December 2024).</p> <p>The Republic of Azerbaijan in its</p>	<p>The Member States are expected to be actively involved in operationalization process of CECECO, to speed up signing and ratification of the Charter of the Centre, as well as consideration of political, financial and technical support for successful and soonest launching of the Operational Phase of the project.</p> <p>Most notably, three Member States should sign and ratify the Charter of CECECO to enable its full operationalization.</p> <p>The resource mobilization and fund-raising is critical to launch the programmatic activities of the Centre. The Project is expected to be financed through membership</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>developing countries, it is of vital importance to promote connectivity in the region through developing robust regional transport, energy, and ICT infrastructure to realize untapped cooperation potential within ECO region. <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p> <p>Kyrgyz Republic recently (at COP29 in Baku) signed the <u>Charter of the ECO Clean Energy Center</u> and expresses hope that this institution will work effectively and will make a tangible contribution to our common cause of promoting mutually beneficial cooperation in our space. <i>(Kyrgyzstan)</i></p> <p>Kyrgyzstan has put forward an initiative on establishment of the</p>	<p>capacity as the President and host of the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) organized in partnership with ECO and UNIDO the Soft Launch Event of CECECO on the sidelines of COP29 on 15 November 2024 in Baku.</p> <p>Kyrgyz Republic signed the Charter of CECECO on 15 November 2024 on the sidelines of COP29 in Baku. The Ministry of Energy of the Kyrgyz Republic started ratification process of the Charter of the CECECO.</p> <p>This initiative has been discussed with the representatives of the</p>	<p>fees and in-kind contributions of the Member States, as well as the official development aids by international partners.</p> <p>Five project proposals presented by UNIDO and built on success stories across the world, for potential replication in the ECO Region and subsequent implementation by the Centre upon approval are also under consideration. The Member States are awaited to share their respective views and comments on these proposals.</p> <p>The ratification process of the Charter of the CECECO is underway. All signatory Member States may kindly expedite their internal procedures with respect to the entry into force of the Charter.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p><u>Regional Center for the Implementation of the Energy Efficient and Recourse-saving technologies</u> in Bishkek. In this regard Kyrgyzstan calls on the ECO Member States to support this initiative. <i>(Kyrgyzstan)</i></p> <p>Energy projects are strategic investments in our shared future. <i>(Tajikistan)</i></p> <p>Turkmenistan calls on the member-states to widen the joint cooperation in the energy sector with the aim to create a system of energy supply in the ECO area. Turkmenistan is ready to increase the volumes of natural gas supply and electrical energy to the ECO countries through existing capacities as well as through those that will be constructed in the future. <i>(Turkmenistan)</i></p>	<p>relevant ministry and a detailed response and concept note on this proposal are expected.</p> <p>The Secretariat circulated among Member States (NV No. EME/2024/884 and NV No. EME/2024/1855) the draft “Regional Roadmap on Power System Connectivity – ECO Regional Electricity Market: promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development”, developed by the consultants of the ESCAP Project “Energy connectivity for sustainable development”. The views and comments were received from Azerbaijan and Iran. The feedback of other Member States is awaited.</p>	<p>Upon the receipt of the concept and detailed proposal, the initiative may be circulated among the Member States for their consideration.</p> <p>The ECO Member States are expected expedite providing their views and comments on the subject Regional Roadmap and proactively engage in finalization of the relevant ESCAP project.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Uzbekistan has recently joined another ECO structure – the Clean Energy Center. This important step demonstrates Uzbekistan’s strong will and commitment to strengthening in such a promising direction as green energy promotion. (<i>Uzbekistan</i>)</p>	<p>The Republic of Uzbekistan signed the Charter of CECECO in August 2024.</p>	<p>There is a dire need to speed up the ratification of the Charter, as well as consideration of political, financial and technical support for successful and soonest launching of CECECO. All signatory Member States may kindly expedite their internal procedures with respect to the entry into force of the Charter.</p>

Environment		
<p>Highlighting that a <u>healthy environment</u> is an essential requirement and key enabler for sustainable development, and the need to further integrate and mainstream the <u>environmental and climate related issues</u>, including melting glaciers, into all aspects of development activities and</p>	<p>The 34th Meeting of RPC highlighted the importance of exchanging trusted and reliable environmental data among the Member States as a requisite for evidence-based decision-making and exploring regional cooperation opportunities on the environment. The Council and the Secretariat each year remind the Member States to submit their environmental National Progress</p>	<p>Member States are advised to prepare and share annual reports on their environmental state or consider using the existing data on global references like the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) as a reliable basis for depicting a comprehensive image of the current state of the environment in their respective countries and, subsequently, the ECO region.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>cooperation in the region to transform ECO into a greener region in line with “ECO Vision 2025” and Tashkent Communiqué of the 16th ECO Summit, and UNFCCC COP29 Presidency Action Agenda’s global and regional initiatives aimed to align climate action with sustainable development; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Emphasizing that <u>water</u> is critical for sustainable development, eradication of poverty, hunger, and indispensable for human development, health and wellbeing of the people, and is a vital element in achieving the SDGs and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields in line with the main priorities of the ECO, in this regard; Recalling the importance of the International Decade “Water for Sustainable</p>	<p>Reports (NPRs). In the absence of the relevant submissions to the Secretariat by the Member States, we are not in a position to come to a reliable image of the current state of environment and level of mainstreaming environmental and climate-related issues into all aspects of development activities and cooperation in the region.</p> <p>The only existing sources are some global references as the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), which shows that the general state of the environment in our region is not satisfactory at all.</p> <p>Although water is a cross-sectoral matter that has a nexus with different sectors, it is not directly dealt with in the EME Directorate.</p>	<p>Mainstreaming environmental and climate-related issues into all aspects of development activities and cooperation should first and foremost be facilitated and undertaken by the Member States, and only they can provide an inclusive account of this significant matter in their countries.</p> <p>Furthermore, mainstreaming is a cross-sectoral endeavour that requires other Directorates’ engagement in the Secretariat too.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Development, 2018-2028; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Support gradual <u>transition</u> to <u>resource-efficient, low-emission and nature-positive regional cooperation</u> within the ECO through partnerships and access to globally available funds and technologies; and Welcome the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability and Circular Economy in the ECO Region (RESCUE), jointly launched by the ECO Secretariat and the Republic of Azerbaijan at the UNFCCC COP29. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Addressing the <u>climate change</u> and associated serious challenges is of vital importance in terms of</p>	<p>RESCUE could be instrumental in building regional resilience and sustainability in a long-term perspective based on a resource-efficient, circular and regenerative economy, and thus position ECO Region as a proponent of just and innovative transition in international arena.</p> <p>Following the launch of the RESCUE Initiative, we in the ECO Secretariat have been consulting with potential regional and global partners (UNEP, UNIDO, ESCAP, etc.) and interlocutors on how they can contribute to us in carrying out the concrete activities enumerated in the relevant "Joint Statement", or any other collaboration to facilitate circular economy, transition, and practices in the ECO region.</p> <p>The ECO Secretariat during last three years has actively participated in the UN Climate Conferences to enhance</p>	<p>At this stage, our priority in the ECO Secretariat is to agree with one of the few competent international organizations on their engagement to initiate and develop a needs assessment and feasibility study project for a just transition to a resource-efficient and circular economy in the ECO region. This project as a mapping exercise is necessary to create a solid foundation for implementing the RESCUE Initiative and a just transition to a resource-efficient and circular economy in the region.</p> <p>The ECO Secretariat will continue to use the opportunities of the regional and global environmental events to</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>sustainable development globally and at the regional level. In this regard, the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, successfully held in Baku from 11 to 22 November 2024 — the first time such an event has taken place in the ECO region- proved to be historic. <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p> <p>It is also important to highlight that COP29 provided a platform for promoting ECO’s international visibility and standing with the <u>soft launch of the Clean Energy Centre</u> for the ECO region in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Republic of Azerbaijan. <i>(Azerbaijan)</i></p> <p>Our nations should be firm and united in the fight against climate change. Central Asia stands on the frontline of global warming, despite</p>	<p>its international visibility in line with the ECO Vision 2025, and to look for possible ways and means to promote climate action in the region. Convening the COP29 in Baku was also a great opportunity in this respect during which we could co-organize several important events including the Ministerial Meeting on Circular Economy and the Soft Launch Event of the ECO Clean Energy Centre.</p> <p>These realities should be highlighted and contemplated upon during the ECO environmental events especially the Ministerial Meeting on</p>	<p>highlight the climate-related opportunities and challenges of the ECO region.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Member States need to take climate change and its associated challenges more seriously, show further ownership in this regard, and proactively convene and engage in the ECO environmental events, particularly the Ministerial Meeting on Environment which has not been held for a decade. These are requisite for coming to a clear understanding of the relevant challenges and opportunities and agreeing upon consensus-based solutions for the chronic environmental challenges in the region.</p> <p>As mentioned above. The Member States are expected to make sure the high-level participation in environment-related events. Their active engagement in collective</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>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. Kazakhstan is deeply committed to engaging within the ECO's environmental dimension. To amplify our efforts on climate resilience and green transition, <u>Kazakhstan will host a UN Regional Climate Summit in 2026.</u> Kazakhstan looks forward to the active participation of ECO countries in this important event. <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p> <p>Kyrgyzstan will summarize the results of the "Five-Year Action Plan for Mountain Regions 2023-2027" in 2027 in Kyrgyzstan at the Second Global Mountain Summit "Bishkek+25". In this regard, Kyrgyzstan invites ECO member-states to participate in the Mountain Summit in Bishkek at a high level and make their practical</p>	<p>Environment before reflecting to the relevant global meetings and forums. It is a real pity that this significant meeting has not been convened for a decade, due to lack of collective interest among the Member States.</p> <p>Hosting a UN Regional Climate Summit by Kazakhstan in 2026 is a great opportunity which should be utilized by all the ECO Member States and the Secretariat for highlighting our region's concerns and potentials to advance climate action.</p> <p>Hosting such a Summit by Kyrgyzstan as an ECO Member States is also another great opportunity which should be leveraged by the other Member States and the Secretariat for highlighting our region's concerns and potentials to promote environmental action.</p>	<p>environmental action and cooperation in the ECO Region is critical for promoting the ongoing ECO initiatives/projects in this field, addressing the regional and global environmental challenges, and streamlining ECO's relevant agenda.</p> <p>The host countries are kindly requested to announce the exact dates and modality of the Summits and provide the necessary details in due course. The ECO Secretariat will be pleased to consider active participation in these events following the receipt of invitations from the host countries and the detailed information on their agenda and modality.</p> <p>The host countries are kindly requested to announce the exact dates and modality of the Summits and provide the necessary details in due course. The ECO Secretariat will be pleased to consider active participation in these events following the receipt of invitations from the host countries and the detailed information on their agenda and modality.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>contribution to the development of mountain ecosystems (<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>)</p> <p>Tajikistan as one of the leading countries in addressing climate change issues and the Global Water Agenda, welcomes the efforts and supports of the international community in this direction. Tajikistan produces 98% of its electricity from hydropower, which counts as a renewable source. In terms of the percentage of "green energy" production, Tajikistan is ranked sixth in the world. Tajikistan has decided to increase this figure to one hundred percent by 2032, that is, to produce electricity entirely from "green energy" resources, and to turn Tajikistan into a "green country" by 2037.</p> <p>Another threatening trend that has caused concern in the international community today is the accelerated melting of glaciers and the reduction of water resources. It is worth noting that over the past</p>	<p>The current state of affairs on green energy production and the reflected prospect of Tajikistan as a "green country" by 2037 is quite impressive and inspiring.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the development of green energy corridors and the long-term perspective renewable power interconnectors among Central Asia, Caucasus and Europe are currently underway within different platforms. These corridors will enhance supply security and accelerate the transition to clean energy while addressing grid resilience, wider integration of renewables between/among regions, and ensuring balancing.</p> <p>The ECO Secretary-General has received the invitation letter from the Honourable Minister of Foreign</p>	<p>Tajikistan may become one of the pivotal countries of the ECO-REM and unlock its vast green energy potential within this Project.</p> <p>We look forward to receiving the event detailed program outline and the information for the participants to be</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>few decades, more than one thousand of the 14 thousand glaciers in our country have completely melted. This is despite the fact that Tajikistan's glaciers are the main source of up to sixty percent of the water resources of the Central Asian region.</p> <p>With the proposal of Tajikistan, the UNGA by its resolution declared 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, and established special UN Trust Fund to promote the conservation of glaciers. (<i>Tajikistan</i>)</p>	<p>Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan for the High-Level International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation from 29 to 31 May 2025.</p>	<p>shared by the Republic of Tajikistan in due course.</p>

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

Industry		
<p>Recognizing the need for developing quality management infrastructure and harmonization of standards in the region, as complementary and compulsory pillars 3 of trade, in close cooperation and coordination with</p>	<p>The ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation, and Metrology (ECO-RISCAM) was established to advance regional quality management infrastructure and harmonize standards,</p>	<p>RISCAM's first General Council Meeting, crucial for activating the Institute and its workstreams, is anticipated in 2025. As RISCAM's highest policy and decision-making body, the General Council defines its vision, mission, and objectives,</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>the ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (ECO-RISCAM); (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>facilitating sustainable trade and industrial development. Following numerous high-level working group meetings, Iran virtually hosted the 9th HLWG Meeting in November 2023, requesting Member State feedback on draft basic documents. To date, only Azerbaijan, Iran, and Türkiye have responded. With ratification by Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Türkiye, the RISCAM Statute has entered into force, and the Central Secretariat and Conformity Assessment Technical Management Board (TBM) have established in Tehran.</p>	<p>convenes annually by rotation among Member States, and elects the President. Despite efforts, this inaugural meeting has been delayed. Originally planned for 2023 in Iran (following the 33rd RPC Meeting), it was postponed due to Pakistan's climate emergency, despite achieving quorum. The 34th RPC subsequently requested Iran to host the meeting in 2025.</p> <p>Pakistan and Türkiye will be urged to expedite establishing their TMBs and provide the details for their first meetings. Iran will be asked to confirm the details for hosting the first General Council meeting in 2025. Member States (especially Statute signatories) will be urged to actively participate in this meeting and provide feedback on the Institute's draft basic documents. Technical Management Board meetings (focusing on standardization, accreditation, and metrology infrastructure) are also anticipated to take place in 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Acknowledge the challenges and opportunities associated with the rapid pace of new and emerging technologies for countries and peoples, including in the ECO Region. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>The ECO's industry sector activities focus on seven priority areas: policy cooperation, quality infrastructure, nanotechnology, industrial property rights, SMEs and entrepreneurship, privatization, and relations with international organizations. primary focus remains on operationalizing ECO-RISCAM to harmonize standards and quality infrastructure, alongside developing a regional green industrial strategy, strengthening the nanotechnology network, and enhancing collaboration with UNIDO and WIPO to facilitate sustainable industrial development.</p>	<p>Further ratification of the Statute by Member States will make RISCAM more operational and better positioned to drive forward the region's quality management efforts.</p> <p>To advance industrial development and address emerging needs in 2025, concerted action is required on several fronts. Efforts to expand SMEs and integrate nanotechnology, including finalizing the terms of reference and securing approval for the nano-based water treatment pilot plant project under the ECO Nanotechnology Network (ECO-NANO), must be prioritized. More importantly, decisive action is needed in 2025 to overcome the long-overdue 4th Ministerial Meeting on Industry. This meeting, crucial for strategic direction and regional cooperation, has been stalled by the lack of a host.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>Following the ECO-WIPO MoU signed in January 2018 and their latest bilateral meeting in Tehran (September 12, 2023), WIPO agreed to host a high-level meeting of Heads of IP Centers/Offices of ECO Member States to promote IP within the region. While WIPO has confirmed its willingness to host and the ECO Secretariat ensured to support for this meeting in 2024, concrete action is still pending.</p>	<p>Therefore, securing a host and dates for the 4th Ministerial and 3rd HLEG Meetings must be a top priority, addressing broader industrial policy. These meetings are essential for driving regional industrial cooperation and must be brought to fruition in 2025.</p> <p>A range of other initiatives planned for 2025 address the challenges and opportunities of emerging technologies. These include the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting on the ECO Nanotechnology Network, promoting a key emerging technology; workshops on quality infrastructure and green technology patent protection; meetings on SMEs development and financing mechanisms for startups; and meetings on privatization and a regional green industrial development strategy. These activities, while mostly pending, aim to build capacity, foster regional cooperation, and facilitate the adoption and development of new technologies.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Highlight the importance of introduction of energy efficient and</p>		<p>Among the 2025 ECO initiatives addressing emerging technologies, two key events have confirmed dates: the 4th Coordination Committee Meeting on Industrial Property Rights in Ankara, Türkiye (February 24-25) for furthering regional IPR awareness, and the First ECO International Innovation and Technological Exhibition (ECO-TEX) in Tehran, Iran (April 29-May 2).</p> <p>Continued and proactive follow-up with WIPO is crucial to solidify arrangements and ensure the timely implementation of the agreed MoU.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>resource saving technologies and, in this regard; Take note for consideration the initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic to establish a regional center in Bishkek. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>(MAINLY MANDATE OF EME DIRECTORATE)</p> <p>Reaffirm the role of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction in the region; and Encourage the relevant authorities/stakeholders (public/private partnership) of the member states to share their experiences with other member countries in this regard. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>Expanding Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Member States offers a valuable platform for industrial goods production, contributing to industrial cooperation and sustainable economic growth. To this end, four Steering Committee Meetings (SCMs) on Entrepreneurship and MSMEs Development have already been held. While Iran offered to host the 5th SCM in 2023, details regarding the meeting are still pending. This</p>	<p>To reaffirm the role of MSMEs in sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction, and to encourage experience sharing among Member States, several key actions will be taken. Iran will be requested to propose precise dates for the 5th Steering Committee Meeting on Entrepreneurship and MSMEs Development in 2025, with an invitation for all Member States to actively participate. Member States will also be requested to host expert-level meetings to explore</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>In times of technological competition, we must ensure equal access to cutting-edge technologies for all.</p>	<p>underscores the need for renewed efforts to facilitate experience-sharing among Member States' public and private stakeholders, as encouraged by the call to reaffirm the role of MSMEs in poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth.</p> <p>Several important initiatives in this respect, such as technology transfer, women's entrepreneurship, and the establishment of financial mechanisms to boost MSMEs and startups, have seen little progress.</p>	<p>financial mechanisms supporting start-ups, SMEs, and entrepreneurs; while Iran has expressed readiness to host the first of these meetings, details are still required. Furthermore, the First ECO International Innovation and Technological Exhibition (ECO-TEX), hosted by Iran from April 29 to May 2, 2025, will provide a platform for showcasing innovations and fostering collaboration.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>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. <u>“Astana Hub” international technopark is open to all ECO states for expert and B2B collaboration.</u> <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p> <p>(MAINLY MANDATE OF TI DIRECTORATE)</p> <p>Promotion of cooperation in the field of industrialization and the production of goods and services is essential for the expansion of trade. Tajikistan believes that it is necessary to encourage investment for the establishment of manufacturing facilities, given all factors ensuring their balanced and concerted operation. <i>(Tajikistan)</i></p>	<p>As recognized in ECO Vision 2025, ECO members are at varying degrees of industrialization. The extent of industrial and technological development particularly in the hi-tech arena is very limited thus requiring particular attention. Promoting investment is the key policies to</p>	<p>Realizing this agenda for industrial development and technological advancement, including promoting industrialization, production, and investment in manufacturing (as proposed by Tajikistan), requires robust policy consultations and high-level engagement. Therefore, the convening of the long-overdue</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>help introduce new technologies and manufacturing facilities in the ECO region. However, coordinating multiple countries with varying priorities and resources has posed significant hurdles. This issue is particularly evident in industrial initiatives where countries have varying levels of industrial potential. Currently, there is no effective mechanism to follow up on Secretariat efforts to motivate States to cooperate.</p>	<p>4th Ministerial Meeting on Industry and the preceding 3rd HLEG meeting is the best forum for strategic dialogue, aligning regional priorities, and driving forward regional cooperation.</p>

<p>Agriculture</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Emphasizing that water is critical for sustainable development, eradication of poverty, hunger, and indispensable for human development, health and wellbeing of the people, and is a vital element in achieving the SDGs and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields in line with the main priorities of the ECO, in this regard; Recalling the importance of the International Decade “Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>Water management is one of seven priorities of the A&I Directorate, reflected in one of its three ongoing projects: the Project on “Feasibility Study for the Establishment of the ECO Centre of Excellence for Efficient Water Utilization for Agriculture (ECO-CEEWUA)”. This Centre aims to advance regional water management and policy through research, outreach, and education, promoting regional cooperation, establishing a knowledge-sharing system, supporting national strategies and policies, and building capacity through training.</p> <p>Pakistan has taken a leading role in establishing the ECO-CEEWUA. Following the 4th ECO Ministerial Meeting's approval in 2008 for the centre to be established in Islamabad, Pakistan developed the project proposal. The 144th CPR Meeting (February 2009) approved allocating USD 50,000 for seed financing from the ECO-FGPF, and the 18th and 19th COM formally</p>	<p>To advance water management within the ECO, several actions are required: Pakistan will be followed up with to expedite the establishment of ECO-CEEWUA, address ongoing communication delays, and submit a progress report to the Secretariat. The remaining Member States will be requested to nominate national focal points to join those already designated by Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, thereby establishing a collaborative network to facilitate the Centre's establishment. Finally, efforts will focus on finalizing the project leveraging nanotechnology for water management.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>approved the centre's establishment in Islamabad, Pakistan further hosted two working group meetings (2010 and 2016) to finalize the draft Statute and Plan of Action, and chaired the third virtual working group meeting in 2021, which finalized these documents. The ECO-CEEWUA Statute will enter into force 30 days after receiving the fifth instrument of ratification. Despite repeated attempts by the Secretariat to engage Pakistan in bilateral virtual meetings to expedite the process, no response has been received. The Secretariat has also requested Member States to nominate national focal points to facilitate the establishment process.</p> <p>In addition, there is an initiative to leverage nanotechnology for water management purposes. A ToR has been developed for a small-scale project establishing a coordinating platform for nano-based water treatment pilot plants in the ECO region. While Member States expressed support at the 2nd</p>	

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Emphasizing the need to enhance capacity of the Member States, individually and collectively through regional cooperation, to address <u>food insecurity</u> and its underlying environmental causes; Cognizant of the crucial <u>role that agriculture plays</u> in advancing the economies of the ECO region towards food security and sustainable socio-economic development; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>Steering Committee (July 2023), final project approval is pending.</p> <p>Food security, through the implementation of the ECO Regional Program for Food Security (ECO-RPFS), is a top priority of the A&I Directorate.</p> <p>The ECO Secretariat, in cooperation with the ECO Seed Association (ECOSA), has also taken steps to improve seed sector infrastructure in the ECO region. To enhance the quality of agricultural production and seed trade, the ECO Regional Seed Agreement was prepared, and 8 seed trade congresses have been organized, including the 8th in Taraz in March 2024, which successfully attracted active multi-stakeholder participation across the ECO region.</p> <p>To leverage technology, two rounds of expert meetings have been held</p>	<p>To reinvigorate regional capacity to address food insecurity and its underlying environmental causes, and recognizing agriculture's crucial role in regional economies, the following actions are prioritized:</p> <p>Following Iran's expression of willingness to host the 8th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and the preceding 7th HLEM, follow-up with Iran is needed to confirm dates and logistical details for these crucial meetings.</p> <p>Efforts will continue to encourage Member States to prioritize the signing and ratification of the ECO-VECO Statute to fully operationalize this agency dedicated to enhancing animal health activities. Holding the 4th Meeting of the ECO Heads of Veterinary</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>with the ECO Agricultural Biotechnology Network (ECO-ABN) to enhance regional cooperation in this field. One of the A&I Directorate's three ongoing projects is the establishment of the ECO-ABN. After a long interval, and following requests from the Secretariat after the 33rd RPC Meeting, Iran hosted the 2nd Expert Group Meeting and a Workshop on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) Bio-Safety and Regulation virtually on October 24-25, 2023. During the 34th RPC meeting, Member States were requested to consider hosting the 3rd Expert Group Meeting of the ECO-ABN.</p> <p>Promoting animal health and preventing transboundary animal diseases is another key focus, with ongoing activities by the ECO Permanent Veterinary Commission (ECO-VECO), including three technical committee meetings and the development of a 2023/4-2028 work plan. Member States are urged to ratify the ECO-VECO Statute for</p>	<p>Organizations in Iran would be important in this regard. To accelerate ECO-VECO's activities, appointing an interim Director until the Statute enters into force is recommended.</p> <p>Regarding the ECO-ABN, Member States will be requested to consider hosting the 3rd Expert Group Meeting in 2025.</p> <p>The Secretariat will also work with relevant Member States to confirm dates and logistical details for the 9th ECOSA International Seed Trade Conference and the 4th Technical Committee Meeting for the ECO-VECO Work Plan.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Recognizing the need for developing quality management infrastructure and <u>harmonization of standards</u> in the region, as complementary and compulsory pillars 3 of trade, in close cooperation and coordination with the <u>ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (ECO-RISCAM)</u>; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>(REPITITION. IT IS EVALUATED UNDER INDUSTRY TITLE)</p> <p>Accentuate the importance of strengthening cooperation among the member states to <u>ensure regional food security</u>; Call for member states to participate in the activities to be conducted within the</p>	<p>its full operationalization.</p> <p>With a view to achieving higher food security and safety in the region, significant efforts have been made through ECO-RPFS. Two main steps have been the updating of the RPFS to address emerging challenges and the transformation of</p>	<p>The exact date for the 5th Steering Committee Meeting of the ECO-RCCFS should be secured. Follow-up will also focus on developing concrete RPFS-related project proposals to promote coordination</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>framework of ECO Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS); and Commend the efforts made by ECO Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS) for its continued endeavours. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>ECO-RCCFS from a programme-based organization into a self-sustainable institution to enhance its capacity to implement comprehensive food security and nutrition policies. This transformation was supported by the project funded by the Government of Türkiye under the FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programme (FTPP-II). The project, initiated in 2020, concluded on June 30, 2023, as announced at the 19th PMG Meeting. Türkiye plays a significant role in this area, having been elected as the RPFS coordinating country in 2010 and hosting the ECO-RCCFS in Ankara since 2012. The RPFS, updated with the cooperation of the ECO Secretariat, Member States, ECO-RCCFS, and FAO, is actively being implemented. Four steering committee meetings have been held to date, emphasizing the region's commitment to enhancing food security and agricultural cooperation, with a fifth anticipated in 2025.</p>	<p>in regional efforts and enhance food security through technical cooperation.</p> <p>To further advance food security cooperation within the ECO region, the following actions will be prioritized: The ECO Secretariat will continue its collaboration with Türkiye to have a progress report on the ECO-RCCFS transformation project prepared for presentation at the 8th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture. Follow-ups will be undertaken to secure active cooperation from all Member States in implementing the ECO-RPFS and participating in related projects. Member States will be encouraged and supported, with periodic follow-up, to contribute relevant studies, inputs, experiences, and best practices to enrich the ECO-RCCFS website (www.ecorccfs.org).</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Food security is one of the top priority issues. Kazakhstan initiated and established the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) with headquarters in Astana. It is tasked to consolidate international know-how in the agriculture sector, develop profitable logistics and sustainable growth.</p> <p>In its capacity as Chair, Kazakhstan will work to establish formal cooperation between the ECO and the IOFS.</p> <p>Kazakhstan calls on all ECO countries to join this organization and ratify its Charter. <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p>	<p>The establishment of formal cooperation between the ECO and the IOFS is being pursued to enhance regional food security, given that six countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Türkiye) are members of both organizations. The IOFS has expressed its intention to strengthen this cooperation and has proposed revisiting a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was initially under consideration in 2022.</p> <p>The IOFS has suggested some minor amendments to the draft MoU, including rephrasing the clause on mutual visits to “facilitate mutual visits at various levels to strengthen collaboration and enhance bilateral engagement”, discussing a proposed Joint Action Plan, explicitly including the ECO-RCCFS as a key mechanism for cooperation, designating an ECO focal point for communication, and updating leadership names. These</p>	<p>The IOFS Director General's upcoming visit to Tehran and the MoU process will be facilitated, and the draft MoU, incorporating the agreed amendments, can be shared with Member States for further brainstorming and consultation. The rephrased clause on mutual visits seems acceptable. IOFS will be encouraged to initiate a zero draft of the Joint Action Plan for further collaboration. Regarding the ECO-RCCFS, while Türkiye initially proposed a direct MoU between IOFS and RCCFS, legal adviser already recommended signing the MoU with the ECO Secretariat instead, due to the RCCFS's ongoing institutional transformation and its current lack of independent institutional identity. Therefore, a clause will be included stating that IOFS may share its experience and provide support to the ECO-RCCFS during its transition through the ECO Secretariat.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>amendments aim to create a more robust and effective framework for joint activities.</p> <p>The IOFS Director General plans to visit Tehran in 2025, likely in March, providing an opportune moment to finalize and consider signing of the draft MoU, as may be revised. This visit is expected to facilitate high-level discussions and solidify the commitment of both organizations to enhanced collaboration in addressing food security challenges within the region.</p>	

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (HRSD)		
<p>Highlighting that a healthy environment is an essential requirement and key enabler for sustainable development, and the need to further integrate and mainstream the environmental and</p>	<p>The ECO Vision 2025 envisions the establishment of "a regional integrated disaster risk reduction system/network with the ultimate aim of preventing and reducing disaster losses in lives, as well as in</p>	<p>1st Meeting of the Heads of National Societies in ECO Region is unofficially scheduled to hold it on May 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>climate related issues, including melting glaciers, into all aspects of development activities and cooperation in the region to transform ECO into a greener region in line with “ECO Vision 2025” and Tashkent Communiqué of the 16th ECO Summit, and UNFCCC COP29 Presidency Action Agenda’s global and regional initiatives aimed to align climate action with sustainable development; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Emphasizing that water is critical for sustainable development, eradication of poverty, hunger, and indispensable for human development, health and wellbeing of the people, and is a vital element in achieving the SDGs and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields</p>	<p>the social, economic, and environmental assets of the people of ECO Member Countries.</p> <p>For this aim, bilateral meetings were held with relevant national and international organizations including UNESCAP, UNDRR, ASEAN, APDIM, IFRC, GIS, and IRIMO to enhance the mutual level of cooperation. Moreover, a training course on “Application of Geospatial Data in Disaster Risk Reduction” was conducted at the end of 2024 and the 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), preceded by the HLWGM on DRR, was held in Dushanbe, hosted by the Tajikistan.</p>	<p>As following up the 9th Ministerial Meeting on DRR in Dushanbe, technical expert group meeting on DRR and ECO Winter Drill will be held in Erzurum, Türkiye on 4-7 March 2025. The technical expert group will revise the ECO Regional Framework on DRR and its roadmap and carry out expert analyses for the necessity of disaster fund for ECO Region.</p> <p>Additionally, it is planned to have a joint workshop APDIM-ECO-AFAD about earthquake management within 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>in line with the main priorities of the ECO, in this regard; Recalling the importance of the International Decade “Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Recognizing the need for strengthened regional cooperation on natural disasters and health issues which is essential for enhancing resilience and ensuring a more coordinated and effective response to cope with the current and emerging challenges; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>ECO Secretariat attended “3th High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028, 10-13 June 2024, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.</p> <p>The 9th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), preceded by the HLWGM on DRR, was held in Dushanbe, hosted by the Tajikistan Committee for</p>	<p>HRSD added an ECO event to the working paper for 2025 on “ 1th Water Conference on Sustainable Clean Water and Sanitation in ECO region”</p> <p>ECO maintains its interactions and collaborations with national and international institutions on DRR by attending relevant national and international events including 8th Session of the Global Platform for</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Recognizing that strong family institution and sustainable population growth are foundational to economic stability and prosperity; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Call on the non-signatory/non</p>	<p>Emergency Situations and Civil Defense on September 16-17, 2024. The meeting aimed to bring together representatives from ECO Member States and other international agencies to discuss and adopt a harmonized framework for mitigating the risks and impacts of disasters in the ECO region. This gathering sought to foster regional cooperation, share knowledge and expertise, and identify collective actions to enhance disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.</p> <p>As for the health sector, ECO Vision 2025 encourages</p>	<p>Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025) in Switzerland which was included to working paper for 2025.</p> <p>As following up the 9th Ministerial Meeting on DRR in Dushanbe, technical expert group meeting on DRR and ECO Winter Drill will be held in Erzurum, Türkiye on 4-7 March 2025. The technical expert group will revise the ECO Regional Framework on DRR and its roadmap and carry out expert analyses for the necessity of disaster fund for ECO Region.</p> <p>Additionally, it is planned to have a joint workshop APDIM-ECO-AFAD about earthquake management within 2025.</p> <p>The last but not the least it is planned to 10th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.</p> <p>Signing a MoU with WHO to improve the visibility of ECO on</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>ratifying Member States to sign/ratify founding documents of the Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM). (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Support gradual transition to resource-efficient, low-emission and nature-positive regional cooperation within the ECO through partnerships and access to globally available funds and technologies; and Welcome the Regional Initiative on Resource Efficiency, Sustainability and Circular Economy in the ECO Region (RESCUE), jointly launched by the ECO Secretariat and the Republic of Azerbaijan at the UNFCCC COP29. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Welcome the initiatives such as ECO High-Level Sustainable Development Working Group (HLSDWG) and ECO Forum on Sustainable Development for further fostering collaboration and coherence among member countries</p>	<p>“Cooperation, focusing on non-communicable diseases as well as universal health coverage system”</p> <p>The Secretariat approached relevant international institutions particularly the regional offices of WHO to enhance mutual collaboration by signing a MoU between ECO-WHO.</p> <p>Following the commitment of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the 34th RPC Meeting to host the ECO 6th Ministerial Meeting on Health, the Secretariat sent note verbals to Islamic Republic of Iran inquiring about the planned date of the meeting, however it is still pending.</p> <p>This issue was raised by the member states during the 28th COM Meeting. HRSD Directorate contacted with the relevant authorities in the Ministry of Family and Social Services of the Republic of Türkiye since Türkiye requested this item to include into Mashhad</p>	<p>this priority area.</p> <p>It is planned to have 6th Ministerial Meeting on Health within 2025 if Islamic Republic of Iran confirms date for the event.</p> <p>Türkiye announced the year of 2025 as Family Year. Therefore, they would like to have several activities within the scope of this. Therefore, as ECO Secretariat we informed them about the readiness of the Secretariat to organize an event on this issue. The Secretariat is waiting for proposals by Türkiye.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>to address the challenges of the regional dimensions for sustainable development. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Addressing the climate change and associated serious challenges is of</p>	<p>Communiqué.</p> <p>Draft Statute of the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) was finalized in 26th COM Meeting in Tashkent in 2023. Only Islamic Republic of Iran signed the agreement document.</p>	<p>Member States should join the protocol of ECO-RCRM in order to take result-oriented steps for its full fledge and effective functioning.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>vital importance in terms of sustainable development globally and at the regional level. In this regard, the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, successfully held in Baku from 11 to 22 November 2024 — the first time such an event has taken place in the ECO region- proved to be historic.</p> <p>It is also important to highlight that COP29 provided a platform for promoting ECO’s international visibility and standing with the soft launch of the Clean Energy Centre for the ECO region in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Republic of Azerbaijan. (Azerbaijan)</p>	<p>In alignment with the SDGs set by the United Nations (UN), the ECO has identified "sustainability" as one of the core principles of ECO Vision 2025, aiming to enhance the standard of living, quality of life, economic welfare, and overall well-being of people in the region.</p> <p>The HRSD Directorate participated in several important events and undertook various initiatives on SDGs. Including establishment of The High-Level Sustainable Development Working Group (HLSDWG)/Ad-Hoc Coordinating Group to prepare an Action Plan for enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), aimed at assisting Member States in policy planning and capacity building for relevant national institutions and conducting ECO-IOM Joint Workshop on</p>	<p>It is planned to hold several expert group meetings to prepare Action Plan for enhancing Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) in the ECO Region.</p> <p>As following up the joint workshop held in 2024, IOM Iran proposed to conduct a joint project on “live simulations addressing trafficking in person and smuggling along mixed migration routes in the ECO Region” IOM Iran made a presentation about the details of the proposed project. It will be considered by upcoming CPR meeting.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>“Combating Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Human Smuggling (HS)”, held on July 29-30 at the ECO Secretariat.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECO wants to hold 1th SDG Forum in the ECO Region. It was expected to be held within 2024 however is still pending. ECO Secretariat prepared and sent the concept note of the event to Turkmenistan in the beginning of 2024.</p> <p>The Secretariat is conducting a project to prepare a comprehensive SDGs Performance report for the ECO Region.</p>	<p>Turkmenistan has unofficially informed the Secretariat about their intention to host the “1st ECO Forum on Sustainable Development” end of April 2025. ECO Secretariat is waiting for confirmation of the exact date of the forum from Turkmenistan.</p> <p>The draft report is about to finish. Therefore it is planned to finalize the draft report as send it to Member States for their consideration as soon as possible.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
TOURISM		
<p>Recognizing the <u>tourism sector</u> as a vital driver of economic growth, job creation and cultural exchange, and its potential to boost regional development through enhanced cooperation, infrastructure improvement and preservation of natural and cultural heritage; <i>(Mashhad Communiqué)</i></p>	<p>According to ECO Vision 2025, tourism sector is recognized as one of the priority areas of ECO agenda. The ECO Member States agreed to develop a coherent regional policy approach for sustainable tourism in the ECO Region.</p>	<p>A joint tourism programme is imperative to provide the ECO region a more attractive, competitive, powerful and recognizable product image as a tourism destination.</p> <p>An ad-hoc specialized working group comprising experts of the Member States will be established to prepare a framework document for investigating and identifying the potential and opportunities for diversification of intra-regional tourism.</p>
<p>Reaffirming our profound appreciation for the visionary establishment of the ECO Tourism Capitals tradition, showcasing the rich cultural and tourism heritage of selected cities; <i>(Mashhad Communiqué)</i></p>	<p>Launched in 2020, the ECO Tourism Capitals initiative is one of the most important achievements of the organization. Each year, one city from our member states is highlighted and celebrated as the ECO Tourism Capital, both inside and outside the ECO region, showcasing its unique attractions, cultural heritage, and local</p>	<p>ECO Tourism Capital for 2027 will be selected during the 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism scheduled to be held on 18 April 2025 in Türkiye.</p> <p>The revised Selection Criteria will be utilized to choose ECO Tourism Capital for 2027 on the condition that it is endorsed by the Member</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>hospitality.</p> <p>So far, six cities from the member states, namely Dushanbe, Sari, Ardabil, Shahrizabz, Erzurum, and Shusha, have been designated as ECO Tourism Capitals.</p> <p>Currently city of Erzurum in Türkiye holds the title which will be taken over by city of Shusha in Azerbaijan in 2026.</p> <p>3 nominations have been received from the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan for the 2027 ECO Tourism Capital.</p> <p>The Secretariat has revised the current ECO Tourism Capital Selection Criteria and it has been discussed in the expert group meeting on 28 October 2024.</p>	States.
<p>Re-emphasize the unexplored potential for enhanced tourism cooperation in the ECO Region which is one of the most attractive tourism destinations in the world ,</p>	<p>The 34th RPC Council welcomed the project proposal of the Secretariat called “Honorary ECO Tourism Ambassadors” to support the promotion of tourism</p>	<p>The Secretariat is waiting for the feedback of the Member States on the project proposal “Honorary ECO Tourism Ambassadors”. Upon receiving the views and proposals</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>and Urge the Member States to upgrade regional tourism cooperation through enhanced tourism initiatives and strategies while welcoming adoption of ECO Tourism Capital annually (with Erzurum, Türkiye and Shusha, Republic of Azerbaijan, as ECO Tourism Capitals for the years 2025 and 2026 respectively), ECO Tour Operators Forum, Honorary ECO Tourism Ambassadors, ECO tourism visa facilitation. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>destinations in ECO Member States. The Secretariat prepared draft Concept Note on this proposal and circulated it to the MSs through Notes Verbales No. Tourism/2024/635 dated 14 May 2024 and No. Tourism/2024/1102 dated 8 August 2024 to get the feedback of the Member States to proceed further.</p> <p>The ECO Tour Operators' Network, which established to this end, has regular interaction among its member to foster collaboration between tour operators and tourism agents. The 1st ECO Tour Operators Forum, hosted by Azerbaijan on 2-3 May 2024, provided a unique platform for the participants to explore opportunities for cooperation and strengthen the relationship, where several B2B agreements were concluded.</p>	<p>they will be incorporated in the Concept Note and the Secretariat is planning to move to the next stage for procuring necessary coordination with the stakeholders.</p> <p>The second edition of the Forum is planned for 2025, with the aim of establishing it as an annual gathering for tourism stakeholders in the private sector.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>Ardabil Declaration adopted during the 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism calls upon the Member States for a cooperative approach to streamline visa procedures, seamless travel by mutual recognition of visas, introduce visa on arrival and e-visa, simplify the visa application process, and to grant visa exemptions.</p> <p>Iran facilitated for the ordinary passport-holders from 22 countries including some ECO Member States traveling to Iran for tourism purposes with effect from 4 February 2024. Pakistan also abolished the electronic visa fee for the tourist and business visa applications for 126 countries beginning from 14 August 2024. Considering all the efforts made, there is a huge progress in the ECO region regarding visa facilitation.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will encourage the MSs to host and participate in the 2nd ECO High Level Expert Meeting on Visa Facilitation to move towards a comprehensive visa free travel regime in the region.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>A pivotal ECO High Level Experts Meeting on Visa Facilitation was held on 23 October 2024</p> <p>in virtual mode, with representatives from the ECO MSs. The meeting underscored the critical need for enhanced travel facilitation and seamless connectivity throughout the ECO region.</p>	
<p>Urge the Member States to engage constructively in the work of the ECO Advisory Committee on tourism to shape regional tourism strategies. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>	<p>The establishment of the ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism (ECO-ACT) was initially proposed by His Excellency Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the Honorable President of Uzbekistan, during the 16th ECO Summit with the aim of strengthening regional tourism initiatives and fostering cooperation among the Member States.</p> <p>The 34th Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council supported the initiative and included it in the ECO Tourism</p>	<p>The Secretariat will collect the nominations from the MSs for the members of the ECO-ACT. Furthermore, the Member States may be requested to consider the possibility of hosting the 1st Meeting of the ECO-ACT in 2025.</p> <p>ECO-ACT will serve as overall guiding platform to monitor the regional tourism trends and policies and provide recommendations for</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>Work Programme for 2024. Uzbekistan prepared a draft Concept Note which was subsequently discussed in a consultation meeting held on April 26, 2024, in Shahrissabz and the virtual expert meetings on August 26 and September 10, 2024.</p> <p>The 291st CPR Meeting approved the establishment of the ECO-ACT, subject to a two-week silence procedure to obtain COM's approval.</p>	<p>new tourism policies and strategies for ECO</p>
<p>Tourism is a <u>promising area</u> 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.</p> <p>In Kazakhstan we are <u>developing Turkestan</u>, a sacred city for all Central Asian and Turkic countries, as well as other top destinations like the Charyn Canyon and mountains</p>	<p>A concerted common action by the ECO MSs to embark on a joint tourism programme is imperative to provide the ECO region a more attractive, competitive, powerful and recognizable product image as a tourism destination. Despite its unique natural and cultural assets, tourist arrivals to the ECO region are below its potential. In this regard, a common approach for marketing, promotion and branding</p>	<p>ECO Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development will be drafted with active involvement of ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism as comprehensive regional tourism strategy document to align with the new Vision document.</p> <p>Top tourism destinations of the ECO MSs will promoted through the ECO Tourism Website and relevant</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>of Almaty region, the beaches of Mangystau and Burabay resort area. <u>By capitalizing on the rich cultural heritage and natural beauty</u> of the ECO area, we can elevate the tourism industry, driving sustainable economic growth and fostering even stronger P2P and B2B ties. <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p>	<p>regional tourism activities is critical and a regional collective promotion and marketing programme to promote the region, as a single destination must be developed with the collaboration of the tourism Ministries and private stakeholders of the region.</p>	<p>YouTube Channel.</p>
<p>We believe that the selection of Erzurum as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2025 will contribute to sustainable tourism in the region. We are confident that the ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism expected to be held in Erzurum in April will be beneficial. <i>(Türkiye)</i></p>	<p>In the end of 2024 the Turkish Side shared the calendar of events for Erzurum, Türkiye, the esteemed recipient of the title ECO Tourism Capital for 2025.</p> <p>The list includes the Winter Games, World Snowboard Cup, Gastronomy Festival, TV Series Festival, International Cycling Tour, and the Palandoken Economic Forum, scheduled for the upcoming year. Additionally, Erzurum will host the 6th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Tourism, along with the Official Inauguration Ceremony, which will</p>	<p>The Secretariat will closely follow-up arrangements for holding events within the framework Erzurum as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	take place on 18 April 2025.	
<p>I would like to highlight the productive results of the Conference of Tourism Ministers of the ECO member states, held in the ancient city of Shakhrisabz in Uzbekistan, and the declaration of this beautiful city as the Cultural Capital of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Granting the city of Shakhrisabz this honorary status will make a significant contribution to further strengthening the bonds of friendship between our fraternal peoples. Given the growing dynamics in the tourism sector, we consider it important to accelerate work on the creating a separate Advisory Committee on Tourism at the ECO Secretariat, consisting of tourism administrations and leading experts from member countries. <i>(Uzbekistan)</i></p>	<p>On 25-27 April 2024, Uzbekistan hosted the festivities and a series of events proclaiming the city of Shahrissabz as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2024. The series of events included a Forum titled ‘Tourism without Border Across ECO’, the Meeting for the Establishment of ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism, Folkore Dance Shows, an International Ethnosport Games activity, an ECO Cooking Competition, a Modest Fashion Show and Exhibition of Plein Arts dedicated to Shahrissabz.</p> <p>The 291st CPR Meeting approved the establishment of the ECO Advisory Committee on Tourism, subject to a two-week silence</p>	<p>The Secretariat will suggest to the MSs to consider the possibility of establishing mechanism for the ECO Tourism Capitals covering all cities selected so far to promote their tourism capacities in a more sustainable and ongoing basis.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>procedure to obtain COM's approval.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will collect the nominations from the MSs for the members of the ECO-ACT. Furthermore, the Member States may be requested to consider the possibility of hosting the 1st Meeting of the ECO-ACT in 2025.</p>

ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND STATISTICS/PROJECT MANAGEMENT		
<p>Call on the non-signatory/non ratifying Member States to sign/ratify founding documents of the ECO Research Center, in order to take result-oriented steps for their full-fledged and effective</p>	<p>Currently three Member States signed the Charter of the ECO-RC (Azerbaijan, Türkiye and Pakistan). Charter of ECO Research Center will enter into force following the deposit of the third instrument of</p>	<p>The I.R. Pakistan signed the Charter of the ECO-RC during the 26th Meeting of COM in Tashkent on January 24, 2023 and thus became the third signatory of the Charter. Charter of ECO Research Center</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>functioning. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>We are proud that Azerbaijan will host two ECO Specialized Agencies—the ECO Research Center and the ECO Clean Energy Center. These institutions will provide additional impetus for achieving the goals set forth in ECO Vision 2025. We invite all members to sign and ratify the statutory documents of these centers to make them operational as soon as possible. (<i>Azerbaijan</i>)</p>	<p>ratification/approval with the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.</p> <p>To ensure all actions necessary for operationalization of the ECO Research Center (ECO-RC) in Baku; Encourage the remaining Member States to sign and ratify the Charter of the ECO-RC;</p> <p>Support the continuation of activities aimed at transforming the ECO Economic Journal – regular publication of ECO-RC - into an internationally recognized, widely disseminated and reputable publication.</p> <p>ECO Secretariat regularly publishes on its website and disseminates socio-economic statistics and information, studies and evaluates economic and social developments in the Member States</p>	<p>will enter into force following the deposit of the third instrument of ratification/approval with the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The work on ensuring accession of other Member States to the Charter of the ECO-RC is ongoing and the subject is being discussed at the Meetings of the Heads of National Statistics Offices and Meetings of the ECO Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Research.</p> <p>Work on establishing the ECO Economic Journal as part of the ECO Research Centre is moving successfully: the issues of the Journal for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 have been published and on the request of the ECO Secretariat ECO Trade and Development Bank has decided to allocate 20000USD and ECO Secretariat itself allocated 10000USD for the launch of the Journal. This work will continue in 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
JUDICIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION AND EAPA		
<p>Acknowledging the critical importance of supporting Afghanistan in its pursuit of peace, stability and socio-economic development including through implementation of currently suspended “ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan”; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Reaffirm strong commitment to the timely resumption of activities under the currently suspended ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan; Urge the international community to take decisive actions in addressing the challenges facing Afghanistan, with a focus on promoting stability, sustainable development and ensuring that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Acknowledge the encouraging interests among Member States to cooperate against crimes, including</p>	<p>Due to the current situation in Afghanistan, all ECO activities and projects within the country are currently on hold. Issues related to Afghanistan have been discussed and considered by the ECO Member States during the 289th and 290th sessions of the Council of Permanent Representatives. However, the resolution of these matters remains for the membership to decide.</p> <p>I. <u>Judicial/ Legal Cooperation:</u> The 5th Meeting of the Attorneys/Prosecutors General of ECO Member States, held in Dushanbe on May 16, 2024, approved the Plan for Interactions among the Attorneys/Prosecutors General Offices of the ECO Member States. Under this plan, interested Member States will have opportunity to organize capacity-building programs and events for relevant officials from the Prosecutors General Offices, sharing best practices in judicial and legal matters. In this context, Tajikistan has already shared its best practices on judicial cooperation. The Secretariat is also in close contact with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Iran to</p>	<p>I. <u>Afghanistan:</u></p> <p>1. In relation to efforts concerning Afghanistan, the ECO Secretariat emphasizes the necessity of a cohesive and unified approach from the Member States to effectively achieve the established objectives for this country.</p> <p>II. <u>Judicial Cooperation</u></p> <p>2. The ECO Secretariat has officially requested the Member States to implement the Plan of Interaction. Accordingly, interested Member States are kindly requested to organize capacity-building programs for officials from the Prosecutors General's offices and share their best practices on judicial cooperation with the ECO Secretariat.</p> <p>III. <u>ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen:</u></p> <p>3. The Islamic Republic of Iran is requested to provide all necessary documentation to facilitate the operationalization of the Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen (RCCACO) at the earliest possible opportunity.</p> <p>4. Interested Member States are</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>through legal and judicial cooperation by offices of the ECO Attorneys/Prosecutors General, ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen, the envisaged ECOPOL, etc.; and Value the dedication of the parliaments in the ECO Region to support the Member States' governments, including through Parliamentary Assembly of the ECO (PAECO). (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Kyrgyzstan <u>is interested</u> in a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. As we all know, Afghanistan is a key participant of our region, with which we are historically linked by close economic, cultural and humanitarian ties. In that regard, Kyrgyzstan supports the full involvement of Afghanistan in the processes of regional economic cooperation as a guarantee of its sustainable development and stabilization. (<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>)</p>	<p>facilitate the implementation of the aforementioned plan</p> <p>II. <u>Anti-corruption Cooperation:</u> In 2011, during the first meeting of the Heads of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen, Member States agreed to establish the ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen (RCCACO) The draft statute was prepared by Iran and finalized in 2012, with the second meeting in Dushanbe approving it and Iran offering to host the Secretariat in Tehran. The statute entered into force in 2020 after ratification by Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Pakistan At the First General Assembly Meeting of State Parties to RCCACO in September 2023, Iran reaffirmed its commitment to prepare operational documents by mid-2024, and the Secretariat has requested prompt provision of these documents to facilitate the Center's operationalization.</p> <p>III. <u>PAECO:</u> The First General Conference of PAECO took place in Islamabad on February 11-12, 2013, where Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Türkiye signed the</p>	<p>encouraged to consider hosting the 2nd General Assembly of the State Parties to the ECO Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen in the year 2025. The primary agenda for this meeting will focus on the review and finalization of the essential documentation required for the effective operationalization of the RCCACO.</p> <p>5. Interested Member States that have not yet signed or ratified the Statute of the Regional Center for Cooperation of Anti-Corruption Agencies and Ombudsmen are encouraged to consider signing or ratifying it.</p> <p><u>Parliamentary Cooperation:</u></p> <p>6. The Islamic Republic of Iran is requested to provide the necessary information regarding the organization of the 4th Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO).</p> <p>7. Interested Member States are encouraged to consider signing or ratifying the Charter of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO).</p> <p><u>ECOPOL</u></p> <p>8 The Islamic Republic of Iran is invited</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Tajikistan upholds the establishment of enduring peace and stability, as well as economic and social development in brotherly Afghanistan. Afghanistan must be a country free from terrorism and other forms of threats and challenges, as well as drugs, so that the long-term dreams of its suffering people could be realized.</p> <p>This country can play an effective role in expanding regional economic and trade relations and integration. Connectivity projects such as CASA-1000, KTAI multimodal project (Kyrgyz Republic -Tajikistan - Afghanistan - Iran) and others, are not merely economic projects, they are also strategic investments in our shared future.</p> <p>In pursuit of these goals, Tajikistan supports the revival and development of various sectors of the Afghanistan economy and will provide any necessary assistance. (Tajikistan)</p>	<p>Charter.</p> <p>Although the 2nd Conference was postponed due to COVID-19, it was eventually held from May 31 to June 2, 2021, in Islamabad, where the Charter was ratified by four member states (Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, and Türkiye), allowing it to enter into force. The 3rd General Conference was hosted by Azerbaijan in May 2022, further advancing PAECO's objectives.</p> <p>The 4th Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO) has been postponed at the request of ECO Member States, specifically Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Additionally, the postponement is due to the inability of some Member States to attend the conference because of prior commitments to pre-planned events.</p> <p><u>ECOPOL</u></p> <p>The ECOPOL's Draft Statute was prepared and discussed during two Experts Group Meetings as well as 1st ECO Chiefs of Police Meeting. During the 2nd Expert Group Meeting in 2015, the Draft Statute of ECOPOL agreed ad referendum.</p> <p>During the 34th Meeting of the</p>	<p>to provide the necessary information regarding the hosting of the 2nd Meeting of Chiefs of Police of ECO Member States, during which the Draft Statute of the ECOPOL will be approved.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
	<p>Regional Planning Council (RPC) in January 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed to host the 2nd Meeting of the Chiefs of Police of ECO Member States in Tehran on July 30-31, 2024. Although a quorum for the meeting could be achieved, it was postponed due to the scheduling of the oath-taking ceremony for the new President of Iran.</p>	

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS		
<p>Commending the Secretariat for its ongoing and future efforts to strengthen the Organization's ties with the United Nations, ASEAN, SCO, ACD, D8, development banks and other key regional and international institutions, as well as ECO observers; i) Turkish Cypriot State, ii) Organization of Turkic States and iii) International Energy Charter, thus fostering deeper and more impactful partnerships; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p>		

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Commending the Secretariat for its ongoing and future efforts to strengthen the Organization's ties with the United Nations, ASEAN, SCO, ACD, D8, development banks and other key regional and international institutions, as well as ECO observers; i) Turkish Cypriot State, ii) Organization of Turkic States and iii) International Energy Charter, thus fostering deeper and more impactful partnerships;</p>	<p>During foreign visits, the Secretariat prioritizes engaging with heads of regional and international organizations stationed in host countries to foster meaningful partnerships.</p>	<p>The Secretariat is also planning to convene a briefing session with Ambassadors of GCC, African Union, and ASEAN countries in Tehran, further enhancing its outreach and collaborative efforts. At the upcoming High-Level Committee Session on February 3, 2025, the Secretariat will seek the opinions of Deputy Foreign Ministers on streamlining and reforming procedures to consolidate ties with international partners.</p>
<p>Welcome the convening of the Summit of the Future which adopted the UN Resolution 79/1 entitled "The Pact for the Future" and its annexes; and Call upon the UN system to effectively work with the regional organizations to maximize the development impacts of such global initiatives.</p>	<p>The Secretariat participated in the UN Summit of the Future, advocating for stronger collaboration between UN regional commissions and regional organizations. This proposal was also discussed with the OIC Secretary General in September 2024 and received positive feedback.</p>	
<p>We express our gratitude to the</p>	<p>As per established practice, the</p>	<p>The Secretariat has increased its</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for its proposal to host the 17th ECO Summit on 3-4 July 2025 in Azerbaijan.</p>	<p>ECO Awards will be announced and presented during the Summit. To make the ECO Awards more impactful, relevant, and useful, the Secretariat plans to initiate discussions on this matter. It is expected that the Deputy Ministers will deliberate on streamlining the ECO Awards during the upcoming High-Level Committee meeting on February 3, 2025.</p>	<p>engagements with UN entities and is preparing for a visit to attend the 87th Session of the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). During this visit, sideline meetings with heads of Geneva-based UN entities are planned to further strengthen collaboration between ECO and the UN system.</p>
<p>8. Formulate a new Vision Document for beyond 2025, building upon the ECO Vision 2025, and aligning with the proposals made by the 63onourable ECO Heads of State and Government with a view to deepening economic and trade cooperation among member countries, and fostering development and implementation of resultoriented programmes and projects; Request the Organization to develop a roadmap to accomplish the objectives agreed upon by all member state.</p>	<p>The Secretariat is also working on formulating a new Vision Document for beyond 2025, building upon the ECO Vision 2025 and aligning with the proposals made by the ECO Heads of State and Government. The aim is to deepen economic and trade cooperation among member countries and foster the development and implementation of result-oriented programmes and projects.</p>	<p>To make the new vision more inclusive and comprehensive, the Secretariat proposes including a dedicated section on International Relations, as the current ECO Vision 2025 does not address this area.</p>
<p>Underscore the significance of the integrity, coherence and</p>	<p>The Secretariat regularly requests non-members at relevant forums to</p>	

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
consolidation in the ECO, and accordingly; Call upon the Member States, who have not done so, to join/sign/ratify the ECO agreements, centers and agencies, arrangements, activities and projects.	become members of ECO Specialized Agencies to enhance their impact and efficiency.	

HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE OF ECO DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTERS		
<p>Emphasize the need for continued comprehensive reforms to enhance the Organization's effectiveness and align its activities with emerging national and regional four priorities/ needs, as well as the global agenda, and in this regard; Acknowledge the significant role to be played by the ECO High Level Committee (HLC), established at the level of deputy foreign ministers of Member States, as highlighted in the <i>(Mashhad Communiqué)</i></p>	<p>The first meeting of the ECO High-Level Committee of Deputy Ministers will be organized on February 3, 2025, at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran.</p>	<p>The recommendations of HLC Meeting will be submitted to the relevant ECO decision-making bodies, with a view to ensuring actionable and effective implementation.</p>
<p>We welcome the establishment of the ECO High-Level Committee at the level of deputy foreign</p>	<p>The ECO Secretariat has prepared and circulated a Working Paper among Member States for</p>	

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>ministers, a new cooperation mechanism aimed at enhancing the Organization's effectiveness and its ability to better address the needs of Member States. (Azerbaijan)</p> <p>The upcoming meeting of the ECO deputy foreign ministers at the ECO Secretariat in Tehran will provide an opportunity to build upon the ministerial discussions today. (Iran)</p>	<p>consideration at the HLC meeting.</p> <p>The meeting will focus on developing specific proposals and recommendations to further enhance the Organization's activities.</p>	

ECO VISION 2025 AND BEYOND		
<p>Realizing the imminent conclusion of ECO Vision 2025 as an opportunity to craft a new course for regional cooperation; Highlighting the importance of adopting a forward-looking framework that addresses the evolving priorities and challenges of the region; (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Welcome and endorse the outcomes of the Review Committee</p>	<p>Based on the declarations made by 27th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Shusha, Azerbaijan, ECO 284th Meeting of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) established the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee to evaluate the progress made under the guidance of vision document and the guidelines provided by ECO vision Midterm Review 2021.</p>	<p>The HLC will evaluate the progress and challenges of the ECO Vision 2025 and provide relevant recommendations for the development of the Organization's post-2025 vision.</p> <p>To be developed a roadmap to accomplish the objectives agreed upon by all member state.</p> <p>To establish an ad-hoc working</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>of the ECO Vision 2025, including priorities selected for implementation until its completion; Support the upcoming measures in 2025 under the chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan to develop a new ECO Vision for beyond 2025. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Recall the need to take into consideration the instructions and initiatives by the ECO Heads of State and Government in the process of developing the next ECO Vision, including the initiative of strategic goals of economic cooperation-2035, proposed by the honourable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. (<i>Mashhad Communiqué</i>)</p> <p>Formulate a new Vision Document for beyond 2025, building upon the ECO Vision 2025, and aligning with the proposals made by the honourable ECO Heads of State and Government with a view to deepening economic and trade cooperation among member</p>	<p>From April to July 2024, the ECO Vision 2025 Review Committee held its five meetings.</p> <p>The committee explored avenues to extend or renew the ECO Vision beyond 2025. Options include building upon the current framework to capitalize on existing momentum and achievements or issuing a renewed mandate that addresses emerging challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>group to draft a strategic document beyond 2025.</p>

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>countries, and fostering development and implementation of result-oriented programmes and projects; Request the Organization to develop a roadmap to accomplish the objectives agreed upon by all member state. (<i>Mashhad Communique</i>)</p> <p>Effective implementation of the ECO Vision 2025 is crucial for reaching our shared objectives. We reaffirm our commitment to the goals outlined in ECO Vision 2025 and look forward to developing a new strategic document that will set fresh targets for addressing the current and emerging challenges our region faces. This will align us with the global agenda and advance our progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. (<i>Azerbaijan</i>)</p> <p>The “ECO Vision 2025” is approaching its last year and the “Vision Review Committee” in Tehran has done a great job and identified some priority projects to</p>		

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>be given special attention and resource. ECO may also need some paradigm shifts and re-designing of its architecture. <i>(Iran)</i></p> <p>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. <i>(Kazakhstan)</i></p> <p>We need to assess our progress with reference to ECO Vision 2025 and redefine our targets and priorities keeping in view the evolving regional and World Order. Now that we are at the cusp of welcoming 2025, we should also give due importance to Uzbekistan’s proposal of 2035 Strategic Objectives, which has the potential to contribute to the Organization’s goals. <i>(Pakistan)</i></p> <p>Tajikistan supports the ECO initiatives, as well as the areas of cooperation stipulated in the ECO-Vision 2025. We believe that the next ECO Vision will be result-</p>		

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
<p>oriented, and include projects and programs in accordance with the needs of member countries. <i>(Tajikistan)</i></p> <p>Turkmenistan attaches high importance to the ECO Vision 2025, considering it as a foundational document that outlines the key directions for our cooperation in the medium-term perspective. <i>(Turkmenistan)</i></p> <p>We must advance the implementation of the ECO Vision 2025 targets, the Ashgabat Consensus for Action, and the reform process with a clear focus on 2035. <i>(Türkiye)</i></p> <p>Key areas of cooperation should be reflected in the draft concept paper «Strategic Goals of Economic Cooperation - 2035», initiated by President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, during the Tashkent summit of the ECO. We request the Secretariat to establish an ad hoc working group to draft this</p>		

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS	CURRENT STATUS	ACTION TO BE TAKEN
document. (<i>Uzbekistan</i>)		

Agenda Item No. 5

Follow-up of the outcomes of First Meeting of High-Level Committee (HLC) of ECO Deputy Foreign Ministers;



Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No CFU /2025/188

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 15/2/2025

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 the Member States in Tehran and has the honour to enclose the Draft Report of the First High Level Committee (HLC) Meeting on ECO reforms held on February 3, 2025 for consideration of the esteemed Member States.

The esteemed Member States are requested to kindly convey their feedbacks, if any, on the document by February 27, 2025 for further necessary action at Secretariat's end. It is kindly noted that the HLC's Report will be considered by the 293rd CPR Meeting scheduled for February 23, 2025.

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





**First Meeting of the
High-Level Committee (HLC)**

DRAFT REPORT

**ECO Secretariat, Tehran
February 3, 2025**

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INAUGURAL SESSION

The 1st Meeting of the High-Level Committee (HLC) on ECO Reforms convened with the participation of Deputy Foreign Ministers/Heads of Delegation from ECO Member States, ECO Secretary General and relevant staff of the Secretariat. List of Participants is placed at **Annexure-I**.

2. Chaired by **Mr. Alibek Bakayev, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan**, the HLC served as an important forum to evaluate the current structure, operational mechanisms and future strategic direction of ECO.

3. Addressing the gathering, **H.E. Mr. Alibek Bakayev** acknowledged that the Organization's current role in economic and business relations does not fully reflect its members' potential. He emphasized the need for innovative approaches to overcome challenges, enhance mutual trade, strengthen transport and transit links, ensure energy security and promote tourism. He highlighted Kazakhstan's commitment to advancing regional connectivity, trade, food security and energy cooperation, aligning these goals with sustainable development and regional integration. His complete statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

4. In his presentation, the **ECO Secretary General Amb. Dr. Asad M. Khan** provided a brief assessment of the Organization's progress and challenges. He highlighted the lack of comprehensive institutional reforms since ECO's inception and emphasized the need for stronger commitment from member states to foundational agreements, financial contributions and institutional participation. He underscored the direct correlation between regular ministerial meetings and tangible progress in key sectors such as transport and tourism. Stressing the imperative of regional cooperation in an evolving geopolitical landscape, he called for collective efforts to enhance ECO's operational efficiency and strategic impact. His presentation is placed at **Annexure-II**.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BRIEF REMARKS OF THE
DISTINGUISHED HEADS OF DELEGATION**

5 **H.E. Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan**, emphasized the importance of strengthening ECO's institutional framework and regional cooperation. He highlighted Azerbaijan's support for the organization's reforms and the initiation of ECO Vision-2035. Azerbaijan is committed to advancing regional sustainability, as demonstrated by hosting the ECO Research Center and ECO Clean Energy Center in Baku. He also underscored the need for a more results-oriented approach within ECO, focusing on regional connectivity, trade facilitation and clean energy transition. He reaffirmed Azerbaijan's dedication to working closely with member states to ensure the successful implementation of ECO's strategic goals, with a particular focus on the upcoming 17th ECO Summit in 2025 as a key opportunity for shaping the organization's future. His complete statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

6 **Mr. Seyed Rasoul Mohajer, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran**, highlighted the importance of building on the collective commitment shown during the 28th ECO Council of Ministers in Mashhad. He emphasized Iran's readiness to support the implementation of ECO Vision 2025 priorities and contribute to shaping a new Vision for beyond 2025. He called for reforms within ECO to increase its efficiency and dynamism, stressing the need for better participation and engagement among member states. He proposed transforming sectoral committees into standing committees and establishing a permanent budgetary and administrative committee to address organizational challenges. He expressed confidence that the meeting would yield positive outcomes for ECO's future. His complete statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

7 **H.E. Amb. Anna Baloch, Foreign Secretary/First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**, emphasized the importance of transforming ECO into a more vibrant and effective platform for regional cooperation. She noted the under-performance of intra-regional trade within ECO, urging the early implementation of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) to foster economic growth. She also underscored the need for a re-assessment of ECO Vision-2025 and supported Uzbekistan's proposal for the ECO Strategic Objectives-2035. She also called for comprehensive reforms within ECO, including improvements in financial, budgetary and organizational matters to enhance bureaucratic efficiency. Pakistan remains committed to actively shaping ECO's agenda and fostering stronger regional trade and connectivity, she added. Her statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

8 **H.E. Mr. Ismatullo Nasreddin, First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan**, emphasized the importance of collective efforts to address global financial and economic challenges. He highlighted the untapped potential for trade and investment within the ECO region and proposed the removal of transit restrictions and tariff barriers to enhance economic cooperation. He also underscored Tajikistan's commitment to energy cooperation, particularly the CASA-1000 project, and the development of a regional energy market. He expressed strong support for a sustainable energy strategy and greater collaboration on food security, climate

change mitigation and tourism. He stated that Tajikistan remains dedicated to advancing the objectives of ECO Vision 2025, inviting member states to participate in the upcoming High-Level International Conference on Glacier Preservation in Dushanbe in May 2025. His statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

9 **H.E. Mr. A.K. Gurbanov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan**, stressed the importance of ECO as a strategic platform for promoting sustainable development and regional prosperity. He proposed several initiatives to enhance cooperation, including the development of a Regional Map of Sustainable Transport Routes and the digitalization of logistics through technologies like GIS and AI. He also highlighted Turkmenistan's commitment to energy security, advocating for a regional platform on renewable energy technologies and sustainable energy projects. Additionally, he proposed a Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Development in April 2025, aimed at fostering collaboration among member states to address economic, social and environmental challenges. His statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

10. **H.E. Mr. Babur Usmanov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, highlighted the growing significance of the ECO in addressing global challenges amidst a complex geo-political and economic landscape. He emphasized the importance of sustainable economic cooperation and digital transformation in strengthening transport connectivity, trade and investment among member states. Reflecting on Uzbekistan's active participation in ECO, including hosting the 16th ECO Summit in November 2023, he expressed full support for Kazakhstan's chairmanship and the successful implementation of its priorities. He also called for the commencement of preparations for the upcoming 17th ECO Summit, emphasizing the importance of enhancing multilateral cooperation within the Organization. His statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

11. **H.E. Ambassador Aylin Sekizkok, Director General of International Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye**, emphasized the need for a strategic transformation within the ECO to enhance its efficiency and focus on trade and economic development. She pointed out that the organization has moved into areas un-related to its core mission, leading to stagnation in flagship projects like ECOTA. To revitalize ECO, she proposed simplifying its focus by eliminating areas with no progress or lack of engagement, deepening economic cooperation, prioritizing concrete and result-oriented projects and re-structuring the Secretariat for operational strength. Türkiye reaffirmed its commitment to supporting this transformation, ensuring that ECO remains a vibrant platform for regional economic growth, she said. Her statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

12 **H.E. Ambassador Turdakun Sydykov, Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic to ECO**, reaffirmed his country's commitment to strengthening the Organization by adopting new approaches to regional integration. He underlined the need to assess progress under the "ECO Vision 2025" and develop a revised strategy that is results-oriented and aligned with current economic realities. He supported comprehensive reforms to enhance ECO's effectiveness, particularly in

trade, transport, energy security and tourism. Additionally, he called for a detailed review of past recommendations and a step-by-step approach to reform discussions, ensuring well-informed and consolidated decisions for ECO's future. His statement is placed at **Annexure-II**.

WORKING PART-I
HLC OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS ON
ECO REFORMS

The High-Level Committee (HLC) conducted a thorough and detailed review of the ECO financial, institutional and operational issues. While recognizing the progress made by ECO in promoting its agenda, the delegates acknowledged that persistent challenges continue to impede the Organization's ability to fully realize its potential. They broadly supported the thrust of the paper and key suggestions made on reforming various aspects of the Secretariat work and functions. The discussion collectively underscored the need of comprehensive reforms within ECO to better align with the evolving needs and ambitions of the member states.

1. Financial & Budgetary Matters

Observations:

The ECO Secretariat remains heavily reliant on member state contributions, which are often inconsistent and delayed, resulting in financial strain. To ensure financial stability within the Organization, it is imperative that all member states make payments of their contributions in accordance with the actual scale of assessments. Timely budget circulation aligned with member states' fiscal cycles is essential to prevent delays in payment processing by member states. A minimum contribution threshold could encourage greater ownership among all member states. Additionally, long-term financial planning and regular reviews of operational expenses are required to ensure resource efficiency. Administrative and operational costs must be managed effectively to ensure adequate funding for the Organization's developmental projects and activities. To address funding shortfalls, the Secretariat often resorts to the General Reserve Fund (GRF), which, though providing temporary relief, gradually depletes critical reserves meant for development initiatives. The establishment of a dedicated Standing Committee, meeting biannually for financial reviews, would significantly enhance financial transparency and oversight and strengthen the Secretariat's fiscal management.

Recommendations:

- Prepare the annual budget (s) in timely manner and submit it to the member states in alignment with their financial cycles to avoid delays in operational processes and obtaining approvals for payment of their respective contributions
- Hold consultations at appropriate levels to ensure that member states fulfill payments of their contributions timely and according to the scale of

assessments approved by the 24th COM, to maintain a consistent and reliable flow of funding.

- Introduce a minimum member contribution at least @ 4%, encouraging greater ownership and commitment from all member states.
- Conduct regular reviews of operational expenses to ensure efficient use of resources.
- Figure out a plan to replenish reserve funds, ensuring that they are used effectively for their intended purposes, without being depleted for budget deficits.
- Establish a Standing Committee composing of relevant officials and experts from member states that could meet biannually on virtual mode to review financial matters and strengthen oversight and accountability.
- Manage administrative and operational costs effectively, ensuring sufficient coverage for the Secretariat's developmental projects and activities, thereby enabling the Secretariat to operate more efficiently

2. Efficiency of the Secretariat and Organizational Structure

Observations:

The Secretariat's staff structure has not undergone a comprehensive review to eliminate inefficiencies and optimize workload distribution. Overlapping tasks that duplicate assignments result in the ineffective use of human resources. Furthermore, the roles of Category-III staff need to be adequately rationalized, to avoid their inappropriate positioning. Currently, Cat-III includes three positions, A1, A2 and A3. To attract highly qualified professionals with significant experience, it may be beneficial to introduce higher-level positions such as A4 and A5 or upgrade some existing positions within this category. This adjustment would help create more opportunities for skilled professionals and further strengthen the Secretariat's capabilities. Moreover, a clear mechanism for defining the responsibilities of desk and program officers is also required to improve workflow efficiency. Empowering the Secretariat to recruit professionals from open markets would enhance institutional expertise and overall efficiency. Introduce a rotation system for key positions within the Secretariat to prevent stagnation and facilitate the exchange of expertise among member states, ensuring that roles remain dynamic and responsive to the organization's evolving needs.

Recommendations:

- Secretariat to work out a specific proposal for increasing efficiency of the Organization, through elimination of duplications and overlaps and focus on the following in this regard

- Rationalize the roles of Category-III staff, ensuring that their job descriptions and responsibilities are clearly defined and that their positions align with their skills to optimize their contribution to the Secretariat's goals.
- Look in to the possibility of creating or upgrading Category-III positions to establish A4 and A5 positions to retain and attract experienced professionals.
- Re-define the responsibilities of desk and program officers to ensure that their roles are clearly aligned with their respective job descriptions.
- Empower the Secretariat to recruit professionals from open markets, which would bring in specialized expertise and improve operational efficiency in the Secretariat's day-to-day functioning
- Establish a rotation mechanism for some important positions in P and D level levels to avoid stagnation and promote the sharing of expertise among member states

3. Recruitment and Capacity Building

Observations:

The recruitment process within the Secretariat is not consistently aligned with the relevant provisions of the ECO Staff Regulations, limiting the selection to only a single nominated candidate and restricting the opportunity to choose from a broader pool of highly qualified professionals. Recruitment policies, particularly for program officers and experts, require revision and alignment with the evolving needs of the Secretariat. Staff salaries and benefits are not competitive with international standards, making it difficult to attract and retain skilled professionals. Capacity-building initiatives remain under-funded and lack strategic direction, restricting staff development within budgetary constraints. There is currently no structured engagement with academic institutions, to support knowledge sharing and capacity-building efforts. Additionally, the Secretariat has yet to establish a formal internship program to foster the development of young professionals. It is also crucial that the Secretariat has a formal say in the recruitment and appointment process to ensure that selected candidates meet the specific needs of the organization and align with its strategic goals. Since English is the organization's official language, proficiency in English is essential for its smooth operation, including for current Category-III staff. For new staff, English proficiency should be made mandatory, with a certification from an accredited institution.

Recommendations:

- Review the overall recruitment process to ensure it is consistently merit-based, transparent and aligned with the relevant provisions of the ECO Staff Regulations, to enable the selection of highly qualified professionals and prevent the limitation of choices to a single nominated candidate.

- Revise the recruitment policy for program officers and experts to better align with the Secretariat's evolving needs, ensuring that it supports both current priorities and long-term organizational objectives.
- Grant the Secretariat a formal role in the recruitment and appointment process to ensure that candidates are selected based on their ability to meet the specific needs and strategic goals of the organization.
- Ensure staff salaries and benefits are competitive and aligned with international standards to attract and retain top talent, considering annual salary adjustments based on inflation.
- Focus for capacity-building initiatives to maximize staff development within existing budget constraints, helping the Secretariat to better meet its objectives.
- Establish the structured engagement with academic institutions, to foster collaboration and promote capacity-building opportunities for Secretariat staff.
- Develop formal internship programs aimed at nurturing young professionals from the member states, providing them with valuable experience and developing future talent for Organization
- English proficiency should be made compulsory for the Cat-III staff, including for new recruits.

4. IT Infrastructure and Digital Solutions

Observations:

Modernizing the Secretariat's IT infrastructure is crucial for efficiency, security and seamless communication with Member States. Upgrades should focus on advanced systems, secure networks and high-speed connectivity. Strengthening cyber-security, allocating sufficient resources and providing staff training will ensure sustainability. A structured monitoring framework will support ongoing improvements. ECO website should be improved to provide access to in-depth information.

Recommendations:

- Invest in modernizing IT infrastructure to improve coordination, management and reporting capabilities, with a particular focus on enhancing cyber-security and digitalization

- Implement a digital performance evaluation system for staff to improve accountability, transparency and the overall management of staff performance.
- Expand translation capabilities by integrating modern automated tools to improve communication and efficiency across the Secretariat.
- Adopt digital platforms to streamline management, enhance reporting capabilities and improve engagement, thereby optimizing the Secretariat's operations and collaboration.
- Improve the ECO website to provide access to more detailed and up-to-date information on ECO countries, project developments and results

5. ECO Visibility

Observations:

Improving ECO's visibility is essential to strengthening its position both regionally and globally, as well as increasing engagement with stakeholders. To achieve this goal, a dedicated media team and an outreach specialist are needed. One option could be creating a Media Manager role within the current Secretariat team to lead communication efforts. Additionally, using digital platforms, building stronger connections with international organizations and media, enhancing coordination between the ECO Secretariat and ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies and outsourcing some visibility-related tasks could help expand ECO outreach in a cost-effective way.

Recommendations:

- Develop a unified communication strategy that integrates digital platforms, media partnerships and outreach programs, focusing on engaging key stakeholders and the broader public to boost ECO's visibility.
- Explore the option of creating a Media Manager role within the current Secretariat team to lead communication efforts, alongside considering outsourcing media and visibility services, where needed, to enhance outreach efforts in a cost-effective manner.
- Enhance coordination between the ECO Secretariat and ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies, ensuring a more streamlined and cohesive approach to visibility and outreach efforts of the Organization.

6. Resource Mobilization

Observations:

Efforts to diversify funding sources and build strategic partnerships cannot succeed without effective resource mobilization. Establishing a dedicated resource mobilization mechanism would enhance the Secretariat's ability to secure additional funding from multilateral donors, international organizations and national initiatives. This will also enhance the organizational and human capacity of the Secretariat to implement international projects.

Recommendations:

- Diversify funding sources by possibly creating a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy to build strategic partnerships (including with UN, IsDB, ADB, etc.).
- Clarify the financial implications of resource mobilization efforts, if any, to ensure alignment with the Secretariat's financial strategy and an understanding of their cost-effectiveness.
- Enhance the role of ECO Bank as the financial pillar of economic cooperation among ECO member states.

7. ECO Awards

The ECO Awards require clearer criteria to maintain their value, ensure fairness across member states, and preserve their intended impact. Additionally, the practice of giving the ECO Awards should be temporarily suspended until a tangible strategy is finalized that serves the intended purpose.

Recommendations

- Temporarily suspend the practice of giving the ECO Awards until a comprehensive policy is developed, ensuring it aligns with the intended goals of the Organization.
- Develop clear and structured criteria for the ECO Awards to ensure they remain meaningful, fair and impactful, recognizing significant contributions in ECO-relevant areas.

8. Engagement of Member States and Quorum Issues

Observations:

Member States' involvement in ECO activities, agreements and initiatives has been uneven, which has sometimes slowed down decision-making and limited the

full impact of adopted frameworks. In addition, increased involvement from relevant line ministries could help improve decision-making. Developing a direct nexus between the technical teams of the ECO Secretariat and the focal points within the line ministries of member states is crucial. This would complement the existing diplomatic channels and strengthen coordination, leading to more effective outcomes. Furthermore, the ratification of key ECO agreements and institutions is taking longer than expected. Speeding up this process would help put them into action more quickly and increase their impact. Additionally, looking into more flexible event scheduling and direct engagement strategies could help ensure better participation from stakeholders in important meetings, leading to quicker and more effective decisions.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen the role of RPC as a formal nexus between the expert staff of the ECO Secretariat and the relevant focal points in member states' line ministries/departments to ensure that effective communications and timely follow-ups are made, in addition to maintaining diplomatic channels.
- Strengthen diplomatic efforts to expedite the signing and ratification of key ECO agreements and institutions, ensuring their quick operationalization.
- Explore flexible scheduling of meetings to ensure member states' participation in all ECO meetings, ensuring consistent involvement and preventing quorum issues.

9. ECO Observers

Observations:

The process for engaging ECO Observers based on the modalities in some cases leads to inconsistent collaboration and increased administrative burdens. A structured and inclusive approach to observer engagement is required to enhance efficiency and strengthen ECO's partnerships.

Recommendations:

- Establish clear and inclusive approach for engaging ECO observers to streamline the observer invitation process and reduce administrative procedures, fostering more consistent collaboration and stronger partnerships.

WORKING PART-II **ECO VISION**

Summary of Discussions

The High-Level Committee (HLC) discussions on ECO Vision 2025 underscored the need for a future-oriented strategy that builds on past achievements while addressing persistent challenges. There was consensus on the necessity of a pragmatic, results-driven vision with clear goals, strong implementation mechanisms and enhanced coordination among member states. It was emphasized by some delegates that financial constraints, bureaucratic inefficiencies and inconsistent engagement have hindered progress in key sectors of trade, transport and energy. Along with the public representatives, the stakeholders' involvement, including representatives of the private sector, youth and academia was seen as vital for fostering a more dynamic and inclusive approach. Additionally, the importance of reforms within the Secretariat was also underscored to improve efficiency, ensure timely decision-making and enhance regional collaboration.

2. Looking ahead, some delegates advocated for refining the existing vision, while others pushed for a completely new framework aligned with evolving regional and global dynamics. However, there was a strong call for greater financial sustainability, digital transformation and sector-specific commitments to ensure meaningful outcomes. Trade agreements, like the ECOTA, were highlighted as crucial to deepening economic integration, yet challenges such as customs cooperation and regulatory alignment remain to be also taken into account on priority basis. Moreover, concerns were raised about the feasibility of long-term planning amid geo-political uncertainties, with suggestions to adopt a more flexible and adaptive strategy. Overall, the discussions emphasized the need for a well-structured and action-oriented vision that prioritizes economic cooperation and strategic coordination, ensuring that ECO's future direction remains relevant and impactful. Bearing all this in mind and after thoughtful deliberations, the HLC made following recommendations for the formulation of a new ECO Vision to be implemented in the post-2025 period.

Recommendations for Future Vision

1. Formulation of a New Vision

- Prepare a new vision document incorporating past achievements and addressing gaps, aligning with the priorities of member states.
- Ensure that the new vision includes clear, measurable goals, realistic timelines and accountability mechanisms to foster tangible outcomes.
- Explore the possibility of finalizing the new vision before the next Summit in Azerbaijan for presentation to heads of state/government. If this timeline is not feasible, prioritize formulating the post-2025 strategy before the next Council of Ministers meeting.

2. Implementation & Results-Oriented Approach

- Ensure the new vision is action-driven, focusing on practical and achievable initiatives with measurable outcomes rather than just conceptual framework.
- Strengthen financial sustainability by developing a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy, including partnerships with multilateral donors and international organizations.
- Establish concrete tools and monitoring mechanisms to track progress, ensuring timely implementation and effective follow-up.
- Regularly assess and adjust the vision based on evolving regional and global realities to maintain its relevance and effectiveness

3. Trade & Economic Integration

- Prioritize the operationalization of the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) to boost intra-regional trade, with clear targets and regular reporting to track progress
- Strengthen trade cooperation by addressing customs cooperation issues and supporting data-sharing initiatives to streamline cross-border trade.
- Prioritize actions which cover collective interest of the member states, and also encourage multi country-specific and scalable commitments in trade related sectors and areas (transport, agriculture, mining, energy, manufacturing, customs, finance, regulatory framework, technology and SMEs) to enhance regional collaboration, ensuring the active participation of member states in trade integration

4. Sectoral & Cross-Border Cooperation

- Focus on key sectors, particularly trade, transport and energy with specific emphasis on digitalization and green transition
- Address cross-border coordination challenges to enhance the efficiency of regional infrastructure projects, especially through better coordination in the ITI Corridor and within key sectors of trade, transport and energy
- Promote regional cooperation on thematic initiatives, particularly in tourism, agriculture and industry to foster integrated development

5. Stakeholder Engagement & Inclusivity

- Actively involve governments, private sector, academia and youth in shaping and implementing the new vision, ensuring inclusivity at all levels.

- Establish structured platforms for youth participation in ECO's regional development efforts, fostering engagement from the younger generation.
- Organize an "ECO Vision 2035 Forum" to foster dialogue among various stakeholders, including member states, private sector entities and academic institutions, to ensure broad-based support and input for the new vision

Conclusion

The High-Level Committee (HLC) recognized the critical need for comprehensive reforms to enhance ECO's effectiveness, financial stability and strategic direction. To address this, the HLC agreed to establish a dedicated Working Group under the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR). This Working Group will be tasked with developing concrete reform proposals and contributing to the formulation of the New Vision Document based on HLC's recommendations. The composition and structure of the Working Group will be determined by the CPR

The HLC also acknowledged the efforts of the ECO Secretariat in preparing HLC Working Paper prepared, which significantly facilitated the Committee's proceedings.

Agenda Item No. 6

Consideration of the initiatives proposed by the Republic of Kazakhstan



Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO

No /2024/1834

Priority Most Urgent

Date, 25/12/2024

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 convey the self-explanatory Note Verbale No. 30/569 dated December 22, 2024 received from the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Tehran regarding their proposals for inclusion on the Agenda of the 291st CPR Meeting scheduled for December 24, 2024.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the esteemed 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





**EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KAZAKHSTAN
Tehran**

№ 30/569

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization and with reference to the Secretariat's Note Verbale No. CFU/2024/1773, dated December 9, 2024, has the honor to inform that the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Kazakhstan after the consideration of the Mashhad communique, adopted during the 28th ECO COM in Mashhad on December 3, 2024, and the Report of the 21st Meeting of the ECO Project Management Working Group, requests the Secretariat to include in the agenda of the 291st Meeting of the CPR, to be held on December 24, 2024, the issues of accelerating the allocation of the necessary budget to the initiatives of the Kazakh side to research the following areas.

1. Operational assessment of the North-South International Transport Corridor, including on the eastern route of Russia - Kazakhstan - Turkmenistan - Iran - India;
2. Digital Modelling for Advanced Railroad Construction and Maintenance of ECO railways;
3. Study on Electronic Information Exchange Among Railways and Customs of ECO Member States;
4. Study on the establishment of an economic corridor along Kazakhstan - Turkmenistan - Iran (KTI) Railway.

Additional information on the abovementioned initiatives is enclosed.

Attachment p

The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Iran avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization the assurances of its highest consideration.

Tehran, December 22, 2024

**SECRETARIAT
OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION
ORGANIZATION**

Tehran



Agenda Item No. 7

Administrative and budgetary matters:

- Recommendation of Selection Panel.

Agenda Item No. 8

Any other business

Agenda Item No.9

Date of the next CPR Meeting