

KHANKENDI COMMUNIQUE
New ECO Vision for a Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Future
Chair's Summary of the 17th ECO Summit
July 4, 2025, Khankendi, the Republic of Azerbaijan

Upon the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Heads of State and Government of the ECO Member States convened for the 17th ECO Summit on July 4, 2025, in Khankendi, the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Summit was preceded, upon the initiative of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, by broader ECO Week events taking place in different cities of the Republic of Azerbaijan that included ECO Youth Forum on July 1, 2025 in Aghdam, ECO Women Forum on July 2, 2025 in Lachin and 6th ECO Business Forum on July 2, 2025 in Shusha.

The participants of the Summit commended the unprecedented large-scale recovery and reconstruction activities undertaken by the Republic of Azerbaijan in its liberated territories, which made it possible for the liberated cities to host ECO Week events in a high-level and well-organized manner. Further, they recalled the Istanbul Declaration and the relevant resolution adopted at the 51st session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on the plight of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis forcibly and systematically expelled from the territory of the present-day Armenia, and reaffirmed the inalienable right of these expelled Azerbaijanis for a peaceful, safe, and dignified return to their places of origin.

The participants of the Summit embraced its theme - “**New ECO Vision for a Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Future**” as a call to renew the strategic agenda of the ECO.

Proceeding from the national statements of the heads of delegations of ECO Member States, as well as the outcomes of the ECO Week events, the Chair of the 17th ECO Summit concluded that we:

- **Reaffirmed** our commitment to the Treaty of Izmir and all previous outcome documents of ECO Summits;
- **Noted** that this Summit comes at a pivotal moment as ECO Vision 2025 reaches its culmination and **agreed** to launch work on a visionary strategic framework for 2026-2035 that will harness the region's vast human capital and natural resources for shared prosperity;
- In line with the Summit theme, **made clear** that economic sustainability and climate resilience must be central to ECO's future;

- **Recognized**, in this regard, the significance of intensifying efforts for transition to low-carbon development by expanding renewable capacity and jointly developing renewable energy infrastructure;
- **Stressed** the importance of protecting the region's ecosystem through sustainable water management, biodiversity protection, and climate-smart agriculture;
- **Underscored** that a healthy environment is an essential requirement for prosperity, and in this regard invited collectively to incorporate shared priorities on climate and environment into all our future policies;
- **In this respect, welcomed** relevant initiatives and high level events organized recently by ECO Member States to tackle the negative impact of climate change on sustainable development in the ECO region, including the ones on Caspian Sea level depletion by Azerbaijan, mountain ecosystems by Kyrgyzstan and preservation of the glaciers by Tajikistan;
- **Highly appreciated** environmental initiatives, put forward by H.E. Mehriban Aliyeva, First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and H.E. Emine Erdogan, First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye and other women leaders in the ECO region, such as Zero-Waste initiative by Emine Erdogan that gained global significance. All these initiatives testified to the growing influential role of women in advancing the green transition across the ECO region;
- **Welcomed** the successful hosting by the Republic of Azerbaijan of the 29th session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) in Baku – first ever Climate Change COP hosted in the ECO region – and the historic breakthroughs achieved therein;
- **Supported** the bid by the Republic of Türkiye to host COP31 in 2026;
- **Welcomed** the establishment of the ECO Clean Energy Center and the completion of the process of ratification by a sufficient number of Member States enabling its full operationalization;
- **Highlighted** that, physical and digital connectivity is vital for inclusive growth and in this regard, called to expand and modernize transport corridors across the region;
- **Stressed** the importance of robust digital infrastructure and **supported** the creation of a single digital platform to streamline Middle Corridor logistics and foster wider e-commerce and e-governance integration;
- **Noted**, in this regard, the need for proceeding with the process of trade liberalization in the ECO region as a driving force for full realization of its development potential;
- **Emphasized**, in particular, the importance of taking decisive measures aimed at removing customs and other administrative barriers in mutual trade;

- **Highlighted** importance of enhancing trade and investment scope of ECO and in this regard **resolved** to at least double intra-regional trade by 2035 through trade facilitation, trade promotion and investment attraction, by realization of the initiatives as “ECO Invest”, ECO Council of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, unified ECO information space and by the strengthened mandate of the ECO Trade and Development Bank;
- **Underlined** that innovation drives future prosperity and **called** for strengthened cooperation in advanced technologies, including cryptocurrency and blockchain technologies, ICT, AI and space applications; and in this regard **took note** initiative on establishment of ECO AI Center;
- **Highlighted** importance of full operationalization of ECO Research Center, as a regional hub for economic research and innovations;
- **Endorsed** closer regional cooperation on disaster-risk reduction and resilient infrastructure, including shared early-warning systems for floods, droughts and earthquakes, and the systematic application of resilience standards to all new transport, energy and urban projects;
- **Acknowledged** the importance of sustainable urbanization which is crucial for creating economically prosperous, socially equitable, and environmentally responsible urban areas **and welcomed**, in this regard, the decision on the 13th Session of World Urban Forum (WUF13) to be hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan – first-ever WUF in the ECO region – from 17 to 22 May 2026 under the theme “*Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities*”;
- **Acknowledged** the growing role of tourism as one of the means of economic development for the ECO Member States and expressed our resolve to continue to promote the tourism potential of ECO Region;
- **Highly appreciated** successful organization of 6th Ministerial Meeting on Tourism on April 26, 2025 held in ECO Tourism Capital of Erzurum, Türkiye and **welcomed** the designation of city of Shusha, Azerbaijan; city of Lahore, Pakistan; city of Mary, Turkmenistan and city of Karakol, Kyrgyzstan respectively in 2026, 2027, 2028 and 2029 as Tourism Capitals of ECO;
- **Reiterated** commitment to engage youth, women and business constituencies of ECO region in the elaboration and implementation of ECO strategic documents;
- In this line **highly appreciated** the organization of Aghdam Youth Forum, Lachin Women Forum and Shusha Business Forum, as part of broader first ever ECO Week organized in the Republic of Azerbaijan, and **noted with appreciation** the recommendations issued therein;
- **Welcomed** ongoing efforts to streamline ECO’s institutional architecture and **requested** the Secretariat, in consultation with Member States, to develop concrete roadmap and regularly report on progress;
- **Encouraged** deeper cooperation with the United Nations, international organizations and financial institutions to amplify ECO’s collective voice on sustainable economic development issues;

- **Emphasized** that lasting regional peace and stability in Afghanistan remain prerequisites for sustainable development and **reaffirmed** support for its gradual engagement into the activities of ECO to ensure the integrity of the Organization;
- **Expressed** concern over the ongoing deteriorating situation in Gaza, particularly on significant number of civilian casualties and **call for** an immediate and permanent ceasefire and unrestricted access to relief and essential humanitarian assistance;
- **Expressed** also concern by the recent military operation carried out by the State of Israel against the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran and **called to** resolve any differences through dialogue and diplomatic means, in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and express concern over civilian casualties;
- **Conveyed** concern regarding the recent escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan that resulted in civilian casualties and while expressing our solidarity with Pakistan **called on** parties to resolve the differences between them through diplomatic means.

The Chair of the 17th ECO Summit expressed gratitude to the Republic of Kazakhstan for its able chairmanship in the Organization for the year 2025 under the motto *“Promoting Regional Transport Connectivity and Sustainable Development”* and welcomed the offer of Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 18th ECO Summit in 2027.

The Chair of the 17th ECO Summit also thanked ECO Secretary General Ambassador Asad M. Khan and his team at the Secretariat for their outstanding support in assisting with the preparations and successful holding of the 17th ECO Summit and ECO Week events.

The Heads of State/Government took note of this Chair’s Summary as a guide for concrete follow-up. The ECO Secretariat will coordinate implementation and report regularly on results.

Issued in Khankendi, Republic of Azerbaijan, July 4, 2025.