



ECO Newsletter

Economic Cooperation Organization

January, 2026- No. 17



Dear Readers,



As we step into January 2026, we take a moment to reflect on 2025 - a year marked by consistent progress and revitalized collaboration in the region under the ECO framework. Throughout 2025, the Organization moved forward with important initiatives focused on deepening regional partnerships, broadening sustainability-oriented programs, and achieving tangible results. These successes were driven by the shared dedication of our member states and partners.

In 2025, we convened five ministerial meetings, as well as the 17th ECO Summit which was a truly path-breaking event for ECO, thanks to the leadership shown by the Republic of Azerbaijan in organizing the first ever ECO Week as part of the Summit process. We also commend Kazakhstan not only for its able stewardship of the Organization in 2025, but also for the energy, dedication and personal engagement brought to our work throughout the year by Amb. Ontalap Onalbayev. For this, I extend my deep appreciation to Kazakhstan.

A major milestone as we begin 2026 is the transfer of the ECO Chairmanship from Kazakhstan to Pakistan for the next two years under the new arrangement approved by the Member States; a change that is expected to enhance coherence, efficiency, and impact of ECO's initiatives. I warmly congratulate Pakistan on assuming the Chairmanship of the Council. I am confident that ECO will make significant progress under Pakistan's stewardship given its long-standing record of commitment and distinguished contributions to ECO. The Secretariat assures Amb. Muhammad Mudassir Tipu, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan, of its full support and cooperation in this regard.

In January, the 7th High-Level Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction, followed by the 10th Ministerial Meeting on DRR was convened in Pakistan. The 303rd session of the CPR also took place, where members discussed the implementation of the AWAZA Programme of Action. Furthermore, the ECO-CCI held its 20th General Assembly and 30th Executive Committee Meetings in Karachi, Pakistan, highlighting the important role of the private sector in driving economic growth and regional development.

Looking ahead, we have received commitments and indications from Member States for convening 11 ministerial meetings during 2026 which I believe is historic in itself. This would clearly make 2026 a year focused on action and results. Building on our earlier work, ECO will in the new year prioritize high-impact projects, improved regional connectivity, and stronger collaboration in areas such as sustainable development, trade, energy, and environmental resilience.

We thank all member states, partners, and stakeholders for their continued support and look forward to a successful year under Pakistan's leadership.

Secretary General
Economic Cooperation Organization

Highlights from 2025



Azerbaijan Hosts 17th ECO Summit
Khankendi – July 4, 2025



First ECO Women Forum convenes in
Azerbaijan Lachin – July 02, 2025



ECO Holds 6th ECO Business Forum
Shusha – July 2, 2025



Azerbaijan Hosts First ECO Youth Forum Adgham
– July 01, 2025



29th ECO Council of Ministers Convenes Tehran
– November 28, 2025



Secretary General Attends SCO Plus Summit in Tianjin
September 1, 2025 – Tianjin, China



ECO Tourism Ministers Convene in Erzurum
Erzurum – April 26, 2025



Tehran Hosts 13th Ministerial Meeting on Transport to Boost Regional Connectivity and Cooperation
Tehran, 2 June 2025



The 5th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Commerce and Foreign Trade Istanbul – November 26, 2025



ECO Interior Ministers Meet in Tehran
Tehran – October 28, 2025



First ECO Forum on Sustainable Development



ECO Prosecutors/Attorneys General Meet in
Tashkent – Sep 25, 2025



7th Meeting of the High-Level Working Group on ITI Road Corridor held in Islamabad
09 September 2025 – Islamabad, Pakistan



Pakistan hosts the 14th Meeting of the High-Level Working Group on ITI Train Corridor
8 September 2025 – Islamabad, Pakistan



Erzurum Hosts 8th Meeting of the High-Level Experts Group on Tourism
Erzurum – April 25, 2025



Tashkent hosts the 7th Meeting of the ECO-UNECE Coordination Committee on the Trans-Caspian and Almaty-Tehran-Istanbul Corridors 14 May 2025, Tashkent



CPR Chairmanship Transfers to Pakistan at 303rd session of ECO (CPR)

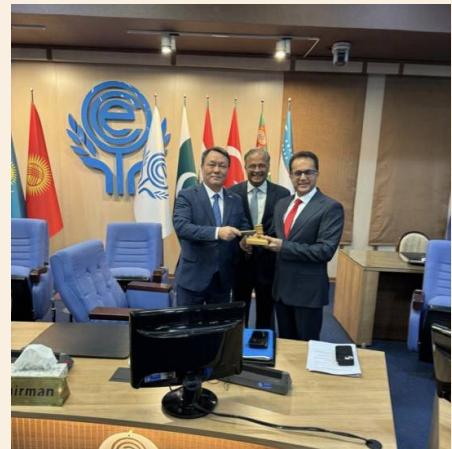
The ECO Council of Permanent Representatives convened its 303rd Session on January 27, 2026. The meeting was opened with Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Ambassador Muhammad Mudassir Tipu, who took over the CPR Chairmanship from Kazakhstan's outgoing Chairman Ambassador Ontalap Onalbayev, in a brief ceremony.

In his remarks, Ambassador Tipu said that Pakistan, as a founding member of ECO, had remained committed to the Organization's objectives and principles since its inception. He emphasized the importance of enhanced regional cooperation, especially given the emerging regional and global scenarios. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to ECO and its objectives for the greater good and collective interest of the member states.

Ambassador Onalbayev expressed gratitude to all delegations for their cooperation and support during Kazakhstan's chairmanship. He emphasized that the CPR had remained an effective forum for practical cooperation. He congratulated Ambassador Tipu on assuming the CPR chairmanship, and expressed confidence in Pakistan's continued commitment to ECO.

The ECO Secretary General thanked Ambassador Ontalap and his team for steering the Organization's work during 2025, noting the successful convening of several ministerial meetings and the 17th ECO Summit. He congratulated Ambassador Tipu on assuming the CPR chairmanship under the newly approved two-year term and expressed confidence in Pakistan's leadership. While noting the busy schedule given several ministerial meetings in 2026 across all various sectors, he urged member states to confirm dates well in advance to ensure effective participation and preparation.

The representing delegations from member countries also congratulated Pakistan on assuming the chairmanship of the Council for 2026–2027 while commending Kazakhstan for its successful chairmanship in 2025 and welcomed the progress achieved by ECO.



Secretary General Attends the 10th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

January 22, 2026-Islamabad

On 22 January 2026, the Secretary General attended the 10th ECO Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction hosted by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Islamabad. This important assembly brought together Ministers and Deputy Ministers from the ECO Member States, alongside representatives from regional and international organizations, to engage in meaningful discussions focused on critical challenges related to disaster risk reduction in the ECO region.

The meeting provided a vital platform for Member States to exchange best practices, identify shared challenges, and explore innovative solutions aimed at enhancing regional collaboration in mitigating disaster risks. Through these collective efforts, participants sought to bolster the ECO region's capacity to effectively respond to disasters and foster resilience against future threats.



During the meeting, the Islamabad Declaration was adopted, reaffirming the commitment of ECO Member States to strengthen regional cooperation and update the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) for the period 2025–2030. The Declaration stresses the importance of enhancing disaster risk reduction through targeted capacity-building initiatives and innovative approaches. Furthermore, the meeting emphasized the promotion of collaboration with international organizations to implement joint programs that enhance resilience against disasters.

This Ministerial Meeting marked a significant milestone in advancing disaster risk reduction efforts across the ECO region. By fostering collaboration among member states and engaging with international partners, the meeting laid the foundation for a cohesive strategy to mitigate the impacts of disasters. The commitments made and strategies discussed will play a crucial role in addressing the urgent challenges posed by disaster risks, ultimately paving the way for a safer and more resilient future for the region.



Pakistan convenes High Level Working Group Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction

21 January 2026

On 21 January 2026, the High-Level Working Group Meeting (HLWGM) on Disaster Risk Reduction (HLWG-DRR) was convened by the National Disaster Management Authority of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This significant gathering brought together senior officials from the ECO Member States and representatives from regional and international organizations to engage in collaborative discussions aimed at addressing critical issues related to disaster risk reduction in the ECO region. The meeting served as a platform for member states to share best practices, identify common challenges, and explore innovative solutions to enhance regional cooperation in mitigating disaster risks. Through these efforts, participants aimed to strengthen the collective capacity of the ECO region to respond effectively to disasters and build resilience against future risks.

The HLWGM also discussed the Islamabad Declaration, which reaffirmed the commitment of ECO Member States to strengthen regional cooperation, update the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) for 2025–2030, and enhance DRR through capacity-building initiatives and innovative solutions. Additionally, the meeting highlighted the importance of empowering women and youth in climate action and fostering collaboration with international organizations to implement joint programs aimed at improving resilience against disasters.

The HLWGM represented a pivotal moment for disaster risk reduction efforts across the ECO region. By fostering collaboration among member states and engaging with international partners, this meeting established a unified approach to mitigating disaster impacts. The commitments made and strategies discussed will be instrumental in addressing the pressing challenges of disaster risk, ultimately contributing to a safer and more resilient future for the region.



Bilateral Interaction

Secretary General Meets Deputy Minister/Federal Secretary for Ministry of National Food Security and Research Development



22 January 2026- Islamabad

On the sidelines of 10th Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Islamabad on 22 January 2026, the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, H.E. Dr Asad Majeed Khan held a meeting with Mr. Musaddiq Ahmed Khan, the First Deputy Minister/Federal Secretary for Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Islamabad.

The meeting underscored the importance of strengthened coordination among relevant national institutions and the ECO Secretariat

to support the effective implementation of ongoing initiatives. The discussions also highlighted the need to accelerate preparations for the upcoming Expert Group Meeting under the ECO technical network, including the timely coordination and confirmation of dates.

In addition, the importance of the early signing and ratification of a key ECO statute was reaffirmed, reflecting a shared commitment to reinforcing the Organization's institutional framework and advancing regional cooperation.



Meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran for Economic Diplomacy



18 January 2026

On 18th January 2026, the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization, H.E Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, held a meeting with H.E. Dr. Hamid Ghanbari, Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran for Economic Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran.

The meeting served as a pivotal platform to review the progress of ECO's multifaceted agenda and to explore new avenues for enhancing economic integration and cooperation among the ten member states. The Secretary General briefed the Deputy Minister on the busy schedule of Ministerial and Regional Meetings ahead in

the new year. The Deputy Minister promised to extend Iran's full support and cooperation to the ECO.

Both sides emphasized the critical role of the ECO region, with its vast resources and strategic location, in fostering sustainable development, economic resilience, and shared prosperity.

The meeting concluded with a shared resolve to maintain close coordination and to prepare for upcoming ECO ministerial and summit-level meetings, aiming to inject renewed momentum into the Organization's initiatives.

ECO Permanent Representatives discussed implementation of AWAZA Programme of Action

The ECO Council of Permanent Representatives in its 303rd meeting held on 27 January 2026 in the ECO Secretariat in Tehran, addressed the issue of implementation of the "Awaza Programme of Action (PoA) for Landlocked Developing Countries (2024-2034) in the ECO Region. The ambassadors and permanent representatives of the ECO Member States were briefed by the ECO Secretariat on the 5 main priorities identified in the PoA to assist landlocked developing countries to address challenges and vulnerabilities arising from their lack of direct access to the seas and global markets.

The Council exchanged views on how the ECO, as one of the most relevant organizations in this Region, can assist United Nations and international community to effectively implement AWAZA PoA in the ECO Region while highlighting that 7 out of 32 landlocked developing countries in the world are located in the ECO Region.

The 303rd Meeting of CPR welcomed some actions for 2026 as proposed by the ECO Secretariat. The Council also welcomed the initiative to have a trilateral meeting among 3 ECO transit countries (Pakistan, Türkiye and Iran) which will generate momentum for the implementation of the AWAZA Programme of Action in the ECO Region.





ECO-CCI Holds 20th General Assembly and 30th Executive Committee Meetings

Karachi – January 22, 2026

The 20th General Assembly and 30th Executive Committee Meetings of the Economic Cooperation Organization Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) were held on January 22, 2026, in Karachi. The meetings were hosted and chaired by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President of ECO-CCI.

Mr. Yousaf Hussain Hallawi, President of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also participated as a guest speaker.

Delegations from eight ECO Member States- Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan (host), Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan participated in the meetings.

Ms. Amina Batool, Director for Trade and Investment, represented the ECO Secretariat and delivered an opening statement on behalf of the ECO Secretary General, H.E. Asad M. Khan. She highlighted recent developments in trade and investment, including the adoption of the ECO Trade Agreement Negotiation Strategy and Roadmap, as well as the ECO Trade Facilitation Strategy, emphasizing their role in promoting regional connectivity and integration. Representing Ambassador Khan, she underscored the private sector's role as a key driver of economic growth and regional development.

In their statements, business leaders and dignitaries stressed the importance of private sector involvement in stimulating economic growth, particularly through investment in regional infrastructure and connectivity to better utilize human and natural resources.

The meetings concluded on a positive note, reaffirming commitment to strengthening regional cooperation. Participating delegations expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the host.





Economic Cooperation Organization



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