Implementation of the Awaza Programme of Action in ECO Region

MCT5 Side Event

United Nations Conference Center, Meeting Room F

Bangkok

18 November 2026, 12:15-13:45 hrs.

Organizers

- Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
- ESCAP
- ECE
- UNOHRLLS

Background

The Awaza Programme of Action (Awaza POA) for Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 24 December 2024 under resolution A/RES/79/233. The APOA intends to mobilize support for the 32 landlocked developing countries across the globe, which includes 7 ECO Member Sates (Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), through addressing challenges emanating from lack of their direct access to the seas, including in trade facilitation, structural transformation, transport connectivity, technology, climate resilience, finance, etc.

Adoption of the Awaza PoA marks an important milestone in strengthening support for LLDCs in addressing their unique development challenges and advancing sustainable, resilient, and inclusive growth. Given the importance of the topic for the ECO Member States and the ECO Region, high level delegations from the ECO landlocked and transit countries attended the “Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries”, hosted by Turkmenistan from 5 to 8 August 2025 in Awaza. They also participated in a sideline ECO gathering under the theme “ECO and implementation of the Awaza PoA 2024–2034 and deliberated on its implementation.

Implementation of the Awaza PoA presents an opportunity to reinforce regional cooperation, improve connectivity, facilitate trade, and promote sustainable economic development in the ECO Region with 7 landlocked and 3 transit developing countries.

The Awaza PoA accords special attention to the role of subregional and regional organizations for its successful implementation. Accordingly, to translate the objectives of the Awaza PoA into tangible regional actions, the ECO Regional Planning Council (RPC) included in the ECO 2026 Calendar of Events the "Kick- off Meeting on the Implementation of the Awaza Programme of Action in the ECO Region".

The Side-Event is, therefore, planned to serve as an initial platform for consultations among relevant stakeholders to discuss regional priorities, exchange views on implementation modalities, and identify opportunities for strengthened cooperation and partnerships among ECO member States toward the realization of Awaza PoA objectives.

Scope and Objectives

The side event aims to introduce the key elements of the Awaza PoA to relevant national and regional stakeholders;

1. Exchange views on regional priorities and common challenges related to the implementation of the Awaza PoA;
2. Identify areas where regional cooperation can accelerate Awaza PoA implementation through existing ECO mechanisms and initiatives;
3. Explore opportunities for ECO collaboration with development partners, regional organizations, and United Nations entities;
4. Gather inputs for developing a coordinated regional approach and possible ECO- led initiatives in support of the implementation of the Awaza PoA.

Expected Benefits

The Meeting deliberations would serve as input for following:

1. A clear understanding of the Awaza PoA and its relevance to the ECO Region
2. Identification of key areas for effective implementation of the Awaza PoA in the ECO Region
3. Establishment of a platform for continued dialogue and coordination among ECO Member States (landlocked and transit countries)
4. Preliminary frameworks for ECO partnerships with other relevant regional and global partners
5. A draft comprehensive roadmap for implementation of the Awaza PoA in the ECO Region as envisaged in PoA

Event Programme

Time	Content
18 November 2026	
12:15-12:50	Opening Remarks (Moderator: **Mr. Weimin Ren**, Director, Transport Division ESCAP) **Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana**, Executive Secretary, ESCAP **Dr. Asad M. Khan**, ECO Secretary General **Ms. Hannie Meesters**, Director, Sustainable Transport Division, UNECE **Mr. Habib Turki**, Secretary General, IRU **Mr. Roland Mollerus**, Acting High Representative, OHRLLS (Pre-recorded statement)
12:50-13:30	Awaza Programme of Action – Challenges and Opportunities for ECO region (Moderator: **Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest**, Chief Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section, Transport Division ESCAP) • Overview of Awaza PoA Priority 3 (transit, transport and connectivity) **Mr. Sandeep Jain**, Transport Division, ESCAP • Interventions by ECO member countries **Mr. Jabbar Ali Zakeri Sardroudi,** Deputy Minister and President of Railway of Islamic Republic of Iran **Mr. Burak Aykan**, Director General of EU and Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, Türkiye **Mr. Nurullo Ruzi,** Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Transport, Tajikistan **Mr. Abdykhanov Nursultan -** Head of the Multilateral and Bilateral Cooperation Division, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Transport, Republic of Kazakhstan

	Ms. Fakhira Akram, Section Officer, Ministry of Communications, Pakistan Other ECO member states • Interventions by other countries and organizations **Mr. Sudhir Gota**, Asian Transport Observatory, Asian Development Bank
13:30-13:45	Closing Remarks **Mr. S. Jalaledin Alavi Sabzevari**, Director for Transport and Communications, ECO **Mr. Weimin Ren**, Director, Transport Division, ESCAP

Contact Us

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