

## ECO Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)<sup>1</sup>

### I. Preamble

The “Modalities for Granting Observer and Dialogue Partnership Status at the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)” hereinafter referred to as "Modalities", are being drawn up in accordance with article XIV of the Treaty of Izmir which inter alia, provides for:

*“The Organization may grant observer or dialogue partnership status to other Regional or International Organizations, States and Institutions. The nature and extent of such Status shall be determined by the Council of Ministers by a unanimous vote.”*

### II. Scope and Definitions

- a) **Observer Status:**
2. Observer Status means entitlement conferred upon Regional or International Organizations, States and Institutions whose activities are relevant to and in harmony with ECO’s principles and objectives as laid down in the Treaty of Izmir and other Basic documents of the ECO, to send observers, upon invitation, to those meetings of the ECO which are envisaged in section IV (a) of these Modalities.

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<sup>1</sup> As approved by the 20<sup>th</sup> COM (15 Oct, 2012, Baku)

**b) Dialogue Partnership Status:**

3. Dialogue partnership is a form of an institutional consultative relationship as stipulated in the Article XIV-5 of the Treaty of Izmir to initiate, promote and facilitate productive cooperation in areas of mutual interest especially through implementation of the ECO's projects and programmes aimed at achieving its goals and objectives. This status can be granted to Regional and International Organizations, States and Institutions that share the objectives and principles of the ECO, for cooperation in certain agreed areas of common interest to be identified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Cooperative Partnership Agreement<sup>2</sup>.

**III. Criteria**

4. The Observer/Dialogue Partnership Status may be granted based on the following criteria:
- a). Commitment to regional and international economic cooperation.
  - b). Commitment to promote socio-economic development in the ECO region.
  - c). Commitment to respect Treaty of Izmir and other ECO's Basic documents
  - d). Harmony with the principles of ECO cooperation.
  - e). Potential to contribute to ECO's goals and objectives.

**IV. Rights and Obligations**

**a) Observer Status**

5. An Observer may be invited to attend, without the right to vote, the inaugural and the closing ceremonies of the ECO meetings of Heads of State, Council of Ministers (COM), Regional Planning Council (RPC), and sectoral ministerial or high-level meetings upon invitation by the ECO Secretariat with prior consensus to be reached at the CPR, provided that remaining members choose to abstain and/or are not against the decision.

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<sup>2</sup> An MoU and/or agreement to be entered into by ECO in the sphere of external relations shall be in line with the approved 'ECO Modalities for signing agreements with Regional and International Organizations, States and Institutions.

6. An Observer may also be invited to be present, with special permission of the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), and without the right to vote, in meetings of restricted nature or part of a closed meeting of decision making organs and sectoral meetings during which any proposal or project involving mutual cooperation with the observer is to be discussed.
7. An Observer attending the above mentioned meetings of the ECO may be authorized by the Chairperson to:
  - (a) address the meeting on a matter of mutual interest of ECO.
  - (b) participate in the discussions of technical nature.
  - (c) circulate/submit written statements and/or informative reports on particular item of the agenda concerning mutual cooperation.
  - (d) reply to questions directly addressed to them in a meeting.
8. An observer may participate in ECO's specific projects and programmes subject to the approval of the CPR and invitation of the ECO Secretariat.
9. An Observer shall not have the right to participate in the preparation of the documents and signing ceremonies. An Observer shall also not have the right to participate in decision making process of ECO bodies.
10. An observer may gain access to the documents and decisions of the decision-making bodies of the ECO and of its relevant institutions (Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies) provided that those documents and decisions do not impose any restrictions on their circulation/dissemination and deal with matters of interest to the observer concerned.
11. The level of representation of observers must correspond to the level of representation of the ECO Member States in the meetings to which they are invited.

**b) Dialogue Partnership Status:**

12. Dialogue Partner may be invited to attend, without the right to vote, the inaugural and closing ceremonies of the ECO meetings of Heads of State, Council of Ministers (COM), Regional Planning Council (RPC) and sectoral, ministerial or high level meetings of ECO upon invitation by the ECO Secretariat.

13. Dialogue Partner may also be invited, with special permission of the CPR, and without the right to vote, in meetings of restricted nature or part of a closed meeting of decision making organs during which any proposal or project involving mutual cooperation with the Dialogue Partner concerned is to be considered.
14. Dialogue Partner may be invited to participate, subject to relevance and without the right to vote, in conferences, seminars, workshops and technical or expert level meetings organized or sponsored by ECO.
15. Dialogue partner may also be invited to hold joint meetings with the ECO at different levels to discuss proposals or projects involving mutual cooperation in the areas identified in the MoU or Cooperation Partnership Agreement.
16. Dialogue Partner may enter into cooperation with ECO in following manner:
  - a). Exchange of information and documents of mutual interest.
  - b). Participation in the relevant meetings/ activities/projects/programs of each other.
  - c). Technical cooperation and consultation in the agreed areas of relevance for the advancement of the common goals and objectives.
  - d). Technology transfer to ECO.
  - e). Development of joint projects/programs and activities with ECO.
  - f). Financial cooperation as agreed through mutual consultations by the two sides.
17. Details of scope and modalities of cooperation will be concluded in a MOU or Cooperation Partnership Agreement to be approved by the COM.
18. Dialogue Partner may gain access to the documents and decisions of the ECO and its relevant institutions (Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies), provided that those documents and decisions do not impose any restrictions on their circulation and that are relevant to the dialogue partner concerned.

## **V. Procedure for Applications and Decision Making**

19. Any Regional and International Organization, State and Institution that intends to obtain observer/dialogue partnership status at ECO shall make a formal application/forward a letter signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs of a State or a head of Organization or Institution, as the case may be, to the ECO Secretary General providing the following information:

- a) Kind of status requested (observer or dialogue partnership).
  - b) Specific reasons justifying such an application.
  - c) Identifying proposed areas in which an applicant can contribute to ECO's progress.
  - d) Expressing commitment to respect the Treaty of Izmir, and other Basic Documents of ECO.
20. Upon receipt of application for Observer or Dialogue Partnership status, the Secretary General shall include the request in the agenda of the CPR for consideration<sup>3</sup>. Decision on granting observer and dialogue partnership status will be subject to unanimous recommendation of the CPR and approval of the COM on the basis of unanimity.
  21. Dialogue Partner shall not have the right to participate in the preparation of the documents and signing ceremonies. Dialogue Partner shall also not have the right to participate in decision making process of ECO bodies.
  22. The ECO Secretariat shall inform the concerned party of the decision of the COM and, in case of positive decision, immediately proceed with the appropriate follow up measures envisaged in Article VI of these Modalities.
  23. As regards those Regional and International organizations, States and Institutions with which the ECO has already entered into specific arrangements for cooperation in the form of MoU/Agreement, the ECO Secretariat may recommend grant of observer/dialogue partnership status to them through mutual consultation and in compliance with these Modalities and respective MoU/Agreement. In this regard, final decision on the recommendation of the Secretariat will be taken by CPR on behalf of the COM.

## **VI. Institutional Follow-up mechanism**

24. In case of dialogue partnership status, an institutional follow-up mechanism shall be established at appropriate levels to promote and keep under review various cooperative activities envisaged between the parties.

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<sup>3</sup> The first Working Group Meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2011-ECO Secretariat) took note of the following decision of the 19<sup>th</sup> COM (Dec 20-23, 2011-Istanbul): "While appreciating the efforts made by ECO in strengthening its relations in the light of the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan of Action for enhancement of ECO external relations, the 19<sup>th</sup> Council asked the Secretariat to consult Member States prior to initiating contacts with non-Member States." (Para 61 of the Report of the 19<sup>th</sup> COM)

Details of such mechanism shall be determined in the MoU/Cooperative Partnership Agreement.

25. The Secretariat shall submit review reports on annual basis to the CPR on the progress of cooperation with ECO Observers and Dialogue Partners.
26. An MoU/ Cooperative Partnership Agreement shall be signed between the ECO Secretary General and Executive Head of relevant regional/international organizations and institutions in accordance with the approved ECO Modalities for Signing Agreements with Regional and International Organizations States and Institution. In the case of States (non-ECO countries), it shall be signed between ECO Secretary General and the Foreign Minister concerned.

## **VII. General Provisions**

### **a) Duration:**

27. Observer/Dialogue Partnership status shall be granted for an initial period of 3-years. It may be renewed for 3-year periods upon receipt of a request from Regional & International Organizations/States/Institutions to continue their observer/dialogue partnership status, and keeping in view the progress made by ECO in promoting mutually beneficial cooperation with the concerned partner.

### **b) Entry into force:**

28. Grant of Observer or Dialogue Partnership status shall enter into force immediately after the approval of the COM.

### **c) Financial Obligations:**

29. The ECO Secretariat shall not assume any financial obligations resulting from participation of Observer/Dialogue Partner in the meetings to which they may be invited.

### **d) Suspension and withdrawal:**

30. Observer/Dialogue Partnership status shall come to an end upon the written withdrawal notification of the concerned party in question for

withdrawal. The Secretary General would inform the CPR/COM accordingly.

31. Observer/Dialogue Partnership status may be suspended or terminated by the decision of the COM.

e) **Amendments:**

32. The Member States and/or the Secretariat may propose any amendments to these Modalities, which will be subject to the final approval of the COM.
33. These Modalities, after approval by the COM, shall be made part of the ECO Secretariat's compendium entitled "ECO's Modalities and Guidelines".