



## 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM)

### Statements of the Ministers

November 27, 2021  
Ashgabat - Turkmenistan  
**Statement by**  
**H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, the Foreign Minister**

**of the Republic of Azerbaijan**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

Dear Secretary General,

Dear ministers,

Distinguished delegates,

It is my pleasure to participate in the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECO Council of Foreign Ministers. I would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Turkmenistan for their preparations of this meeting, support and warm hospitality. I would also like to thank the ECO Secretariat for the excellent organization of the event. This is also an opportunity for me to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Secretary General H.E Khusrov Noziri on his election.

We look forward to deepening the already strong Azerbaijan-ECO relations under your able leadership. The Turkmenistan chairmanship, supported by the participating countries, has revitalized several dimensions in this platform. ECO successfully finalized the overdue reform process.

However, the reform should remain an evolving process to be occasionally done based on the emerging needs and requirements of the organization. Progress assessment of implementation of the ECO Vision 2025 has been instrumental to reinforcing result-oriented performance within the organization. The Mid-term review of Vision will give us opportunity to fine-tune necessary adjustments and provide guidance to ensure realization of the expected outcomes. We welcome convening of several ministerial meetings, including in the field of economy, transport, energy, health and other high-level events during the Turkmenistan chairmanship, which are expected to step up sectoral regional cooperation.

We appreciate the preparation and facilitation work done by the ECO Secretariat and underline the importance of ensuring sustained follow up to these high-level events.

Next year will mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Azerbaijan's membership to the organization. Since joining ECO our country has constructively participated in various initiatives designed to expand economic and trade ties in the region and remains interested in expanded mutually beneficial cooperation.

To move forward with a greater results-oriented implementation, short-listing priority areas for cooperation based on the measurable results and comparative advantages of the region is needed. It is also vital in the context of implementation of the ECO Vision 2025.

Energy represents one of the priority areas of ECO along with trade and transport. Azerbaijan supports the ECO's energy agenda focusing on promoting the uptake of sustainable energy product and service markets in the region. We hosted virtually the 4<sup>th</sup> ECO Energy Ministerial Meeting in 24 June 2021, as a result of which a number of important documents and decisions were adopted. It is important to mainstream sustainable energy and regional electricity trade in our regional energy agenda. Azerbaijan appreciates valuable support of the ECO Member States to its bid to host ECO Clean Energy Center and is determined to develop the center as a

platform facilitating energy transition of the region's States and invites the Member States to sign the Charter.

A great part of our agenda is dedicated to developing of transport and connectivity projects/initiatives in ECO region and we welcome it. On its part, Azerbaijan has heavily invested in diversification and modernization of its transport infrastructure and promoted a number of transport infrastructure projects to reinforce trade and logistic between Europe and Asia. In this sense, Trans-Caspian International Transport Route is a cornerstone of the East-West transport corridor, linking Europe with East Asia (mainly China). It is significantly strengthened by operationalization of the Baku - Tbilisi - Kars railway link which has a potential to be stretched to Bulgaria, Romania and further to the West. In addition, The Baku International Trade Sea Port was put into operation with cargo handling capacity of 15 million tons per year. "Trans-Caspian International Transport Route", so called Middle Corridor, have immense potential for future boosting the trade within and beyond ECO region. During strict pandemic restrictions this corridor was widely used by ECO member states- our partners Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey. Moreover, Azerbaijan is interested in further development of the North-South transport corridor. To make this corridor fully operational early completion of the missing link - Rasht-Astara (Iran) - Astara (Azerbaijan) railway project is of paramount importance. Mr. Chairman, Since our last online meeting, our region has experienced significant transformation.

As a result of the 44-Day Patriotic War, which began on September 27, 2020, Azerbaijan's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders was ensured in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, as well as numerous decisions and resolutions of other international organizations. The right of about one million Azerbaijani IDPs to live in their native homes has been restored. Reaching sustainable peace, development and progress is the basis of Azerbaijan's vision for the future. It is crucial at this stage to fully implement the trilateral statements, and Azerbaijan expects Armenia to reciprocate the steps taken by Azerbaijan in this direction. Re-vitalization of communications in line with trilateral statements of heads of states of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia will play positive role for laying down the conditions for sustainable peace and stability in our region and significantly boost trade and transportation through Armenia and Azerbaijan for the benefit both of these countries and our partners. A forefront initiative in this sense is the Zangezur Corridor. It holds potential for enhancing better connectivity within the Trans-Caspian International East-West Middle Corridor and we urge all Member States to support endeavors of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for its soonest operationalization. Along with unblocking of the communications in the region Azerbaijan targets transformation of liberated territories into its flourishing business and touristic regions. The Government has launched a large-scale rehabilitation and reconstruction works in the liberated territories. The master plans for resettlement of the liberated cities and towns are underway. Huge transport and energy infrastructure projects, most notably the construction of several highways and power grids, as well as three airports are being implemented. Within 8 months we have put into operation Fizuli International Airport, works on constructing two other airports are in progress. "Green Energy Zone" concept launched in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan will allow us to

move steadily to the cleaner energy mix, such as hydro, solar and wind power. In partnership with the private sector, we already kicked off green growth initiatives in the 3 liberated territories. In fact, BP, which has been our partner in development of fossil fuel projects, is among the first foreign direct investors in the liberated territories. We invite the Member States to support Azerbaijan's post-conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

Sustainable peace in Afghanistan remains a pressing goal. As a country of the region and due to close historical and religious bonds we have with the people of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan follows with great concern the situation in Afghanistan. Security and stability in Afghanistan are closely interlinked with the overall security environment in the region. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Afghanistan must be safeguarded and necessary conditions need to be established for political transformation that ensures peaceful co-existence of its ethnically diverse population. Massive irregular flow of migrants, drug-trafficking and the rise of terrorism and extremist radical groups in Afghanistan necessitates urgent action. Concerted and consistent actions by the international community are needed to address serious security and humanitarian consequences of the crisis in Afghanistan. Transparent and accountable mechanism needs to be established to deliver humanitarian assistance to the population in accordance with existing international standards. It needs to be ensured that assistance is delivered to the most needed and serve to its purpose.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The pandemic continues to rage and Azerbaijan remains actively involved in the global COVID-19 response effort. I wish to recall with honor, in this regard, the successful global initiatives put forward by the Chairman of NAM, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in response to COVID-19, which have received broad international recognition and support. Organization of Summit-level meeting of the NAM Contact Group in response to COVID-19, establishment of a consolidated database on basic humanitarian and medical needs of NAM Member States in their fight against the pandemic, convening of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on COVID-19 and adoption of UN Human Rights Council resolution on equitable, affordable, timely and universal access for all countries to COVID-19 vaccines are only few of them. It is with great pleasure I wish to inform you that most recently, on 18 November 2021 the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly also adopted, upon the initiative of NAM, a resolution on unfair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines with overwhelming majority.

We are looking forward, with great interest and appreciation, to consensual support by international community to further initiatives of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the post-pandemic global recovery.

In conclusion I reiterate our interest to advance our partnership towards greater progress and prosperity in the region. Once again we thank the Turkmenistan Chairmanship for its contribution to our common cause and wish Uzbekistan, the incoming Chair, every success on this path.

Thank you.



**Statement by**  
**H.E. Dr. Mahdi SAFARI, Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy**  
**of the Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

*In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

**Your Excellency Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov,**  
**Honourable Ministers,**  
**Distinguished Secretary General,**  
**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

At the outset and on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to pay tribute to the people and the Government of Turkmenistan and express gratitude for generous hospitality extended to our delegation as well as excellent arrangements for the meeting. I am also grateful to CPR, SOM as well as ECO Secretary General and his team for preparatory work for the Summit.

Allow me to continue by congratulating the ECO Day and the 30th anniversary of independence of Central Asian and Caucasian ECO Member States.

**Dear Ministers,**  
**Distinguished Delegates,**

The international community increasingly acknowledges the value and impacts of multilateralism. This is by far the first best option for collective solutions to global and regional challenges through creating atmosphere of common understanding and spirit of cooperation based on common interests. The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to pursue close and friendly relations with all parts of the world, particularly with neighboring countries. Regional arrangements such as ECO are given top priority in our foreign and neighborhood policy. We have recently expanded our outreach through new institutionalized relations with Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as a SCO new Member. This development will double our efforts for enhancing regionalism in this part of the world. Like other ECO Member States who are SCO Members, the Islamic Republic of Iran will take this opportunity to promote intra and inter-regional cohesion through interaction and synergy among two regional gatherings.

We are grateful to distinguished Secretary General for his comprehensive report on ECO state of affairs since last COM Meeting. We give him our full support. We also thank distinguished Member States for their dedication and commitments to promote our ECO in this challenging and difficult time of pandemic.

In 2017, we approved the ECO Vision 2025 as guiding roadmap of the Organization. This was meant to help ECO prove itself as an effective and efficient multilateral mechanism for the challenges facing our countries and region. We developed four

sectors of enhanced cooperation, namely trade, connectivity, energy and tourism, as well as two cross-cutting areas. The CPR initiative to establish a Vision mid-term review process was timely and necessary. We appreciate the work done by mid-term Review High-level Committee in stocktaking of the progress made and exploring the challenges of implementation of the Vision. We fully support the recommendations by Review Committee which shed light on the way forward. [We are very much disappointed that the Council of Ministers may not be able to endorse the Report today.

One precious recommendation of the mid-term review is to take on board all ECO Member States in all activities and arrangements. This will certainly not only reinforce the sense of ownership towards ECO but also upgrade the level of cooperation and interactions among stakeholders in our region. This should cover ECO agreements and arrangements in trade and finance, transit and transport, energy trade, health, environment, etc. We invite all Member States to react positively to this recommendation. This will enable the ECO to complete some of its important unfinished businesses, including ECOTA and ECO free trade area, ECO Reinsurance Company, ECO Trade and Development Bank, ECO Clearing Union, ECO Standard Institute, ECO POL (ECO Police), ECO Anti-Corruption Center, ECO Research Center, etc.

Iran is either party or in the process of joining to all ECO agreements and arrangements. We are prepared to further enhance our role in this regard. The Charter of the ECO Research Center is now in our Parliament and the instrument of ratification will be deposited in due course. I am also pleased to inform the Council that the Central Insurance of Iran is now prepared to pay its 10 million US Dollar capital share to ECO Reinsurance Company in Karachi.

**Mr. Chairman,**

There have been two important developments since last COM. The restoration of the territorial integrity of Republic of Azerbaijan appears to bring about more strength and capability for our Azeri brothers to play an ever-increasing role in the ECO while portraying a more prosperous future in Caucasus.

As regards Afghanistan we continue to believe that ECO and its Member States' individual and collective arrangements such as "ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan" and its related "Reconstruction Fund" can play a role in mobilizing regional and international humanitarian and development aides for Afghanistan. Iran continues to support people of Afghanistan in their long journey towards peace and prosperity.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentleman**

The 15th ECO Summit is a timely occasion where our Heads of State and Government will provide us with support and guidelines to cope with the challenges ahead. The 15th Summit could be a turning point in the history of cooperation in the ECO context. Within the same spirit, President Raeisi will come to the Summit to renew our commitment towards enhancing regional cooperation within the ECO.

We remain confident that under chairmanship of Turkmenistan, we will have a successful 15th ECO Summit. I also take the opportunity to congratulate honourable Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan as the Chairman of ECO in 2022.

**I thank you for your kind attention.**



**Statement by  
Mr. Shakhrat Nuryshev, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, for warm welcome, hospitality and high level of organization of today's event.

For almost a year, in spite of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, brotherly Turkmenistan has been successfully chairing our Organization.

It is symbolic that the 25th jubilee meeting of the ECO Council of Foreign Ministers is being held in year of the 30th anniversary of Independence of Central Asian member-states.

In this regard, through my colleagues from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, I would like to congratulate the people of these countries and to wish them further development and prosperity.

Taking this opportunity, I congratulate Mr. Khusrav Noziri, the ECO Secretary General on his appointment to this high-level post and wish him great achievements in advancing the ECO agenda.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Since the day Kazakhstan joined the ECO, cooperation with the Organization has always been one of our country's foreign policy priorities.

Kazakhstan has always called for strengthening the project orientation of our Organization. We therefore support the Secretariat's proposal to increase the number and expand the areas of implementation of small scope projects.

We highly commend the signed Memorandum on implementation of Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran (KTI) railway corridor and consider it as a tangible result of our Organization.

This corridor is important not only for Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran. It opens great opportunities for the rest of our ECO partners to enter markets of Eurasian Union and China, as well as it provides our Central Asian neighbors with the shortest access to the markets of the Persian Gulf countries.

Kazakhstan welcomes establishing the Clean Energy Center. But we hope that this Center will really help to increase the share of renewable and clean energy sources in the total energy consumption of the region.

In this regard, we support Azerbaijan's proposal on hosting that Center and propose to establish cooperation with the International Center for Green Technologies and Investment Projects, located in Nur-Sultan.

**Dear friends,**

Today one member of our ECO family is going through hard times. The attention of the whole international community is focused on the growing humanitarian and economic crisis in Afghanistan.

Our President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev emphasized the importance of restoring the existing trade, economic, transport, logistics and energy ties with Afghanistan in order to resolve acute humanitarian problems.

In this regard, upon his instructions Kazakhstan sent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in the form of five thousand tons of flour.

Kazakhstan will keep joining international efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and to stabilize the situation there.

It is obvious that in the post-conflict period, Afghanistan will need further support from the international community, primarily from the UN structures. Given the deployment of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) in Almaty, Kazakhstan's initiative on establishing the UN Regional Center in Almaty is already acquiring concrete forms.

**Dear colleagues,**

Kazakhstan always remains committed to ECO principles and its obligations assumed within the framework of the Organization.

In order to allow the Secretariat to begin its activities from the beginning of 2022 we support the draft budget for next year.

We express our special gratitude to all member-states for supporting our proposal to consider our President's initiative on abandoning the practice of dividing member-states into «founding» and «non-founding» countries.

We believe that it has already outdated and no longer matches the «spirit» of our cooperation.

In this regard, Kazakhstan places high hope that mechanisms on implementation of our initiative will be developed very soon and will be acceptable for all of us.

We are convinced that the further functioning of our Organization on the principles of equality will only contribute to the increasing its effectiveness and will benefit the entire ECO region.

For our part, we stand ready to continue making every effort in order to improve the efficiency of our Organization and advance its project orientation.

I wish all of us fruitful work!

Thank you for the attention!

## Statement by the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyz Republic

### Выступление

**Министра иностранных дел Кыргызской Республики Р.Казакбаева на 25-ом заседании Совета Министров иностранных дел**

**Организации Экономического Сотрудничества**

*(27 ноября 2021 года, г.Ашхабад)*

*(Выступление после министра Азербайджанской стороны*

*(в алфавитном порядке, приоритет отдается министрам*

*до 7 минут каждому)*

**Уважаемый Председатель,**

**Уважаемый Генеральный Секретарь,**

**Уважаемые главы делегаций,**

**Уважаемые дамы и господа,**

Для меня большая честь представлять сегодня Кыргызскую Республику на очередном заседании Совета Министров иностранных дел Организации Экономического Сотрудничества.

От имени делегации Кыргызской Республики и от себя лично хотел бы приветствовать всех участников и поблагодарить уважаемого г-на Мередова Рашида Овезгельдыевича за теплый приём и высокий уровень организации сегодняшнего заседания и пожелать успехов в дальнейшей работе.

Позвольте выразить благодарность председателю 24-го СМВД ОЭС Его Превосходительству Мевлют Чавушоглу за проделанную работу.

Кроме этого, поздравляю с назначением новоизбранного Генерального секретаря ОЭС г-на Хусрава Нозири (*справочно: назначен на должность Генсека в августе 2021гю. от РТ*). Желаю успехов в работе Секретариата. Надеюсь, что под Вашим руководством Организация добьется значительных результатов во всех сферах деятельности нашей организации.

**Уважаемый г-н Председатель,**

**Уважаемые коллеги,**

Разрушительное социально-экономическое воздействие пандемии COVID-19 в ближайшие годы будет продолжаться практически во всем мире. Надежное и устойчивое восстановление экономики региона возможно лишь в том случае, если будут обеспечены соответствующие нынешнему сложному положению инвестиции в экономическую, социальную и климатическую устойчивость.

Региональным интеграционным объединениям, как и отдельным странам, недостаточно просто ждать следующего экономического кризиса, необходимо заранее разработать механизмы сотрудничества и предпринимать меры по скорейшему восстановлению от этих последствий. Ведь только совместными усилиями можно смягчить такие последствия. Наши страны должны выйти на новый уровень сотрудничества, выработать совместные меры по снижению риска влияния пандемии COVID-19 и экономического кризиса в регионе ОЭС, который, несомненно, оказывает и будет оказывать отрицательное воздействие на торгово-экономическое положение наших стран.

**Уважаемые коллеги,**

На сегодняшнем заседании нам будет представлен отчет Генерального секретаря, в котором будут обозначены основные результаты работы.

Пользуясь случаем, хочу поблагодарить команду Секретариата ОЭС за проделанную работу. Уверен, что и в дальнейшем будет приложено не мало усилий для достижения целей указанных в «Видение ОЭС до 2025 года».

Также будет представлен среднесрочный обзор «Видения ОЭС».

И сегодняшнее заседание предоставляет хорошую возможность обсудить проделанную работу стран-членов ОЭС в рамках концептуального документа. Со своей стороны, хочу заверить, что Кыргызская Республика готова приложить свои усилия для реализации поставленных задач.

В данном контексте, хочу отметить актуальность на сегодняшний день следующих направлений:

**Первое, это климатическая повестка.** Необходимы совместные и решительные меры, нацеленные на создание благоприятных условий для экономического роста и защиту окружающей среды.

Необходимо развивать экономическое сотрудничество стран-участниц ОЭС в рамках климатической повестки, в том числе для достижения целей Парижского соглашения и Целей устойчивого развития ООН, включая

формирование необходимых подходов и механизмов, исходя из принципов функционирования нашей Организации.

Пользуясь случаем, хочу поблагодарить Вас, уважаемые коллеги, за поддержку инициативы Кыргызской Республики по созданию под эгидой ООН специального фонда для реализации целевых программ по адаптации к изменению климата с упором на сохранение ледников, лесов и биоразнообразия, повышения подготовленности к природным бедствиям, социально-экономическую поддержку горных сообществ, особенно женщин и детей.

**Второе**, оздоровление **туристического сектора**, который пострадал из-за последствий коронавирусной инфекции больше всех других секторов экономики.

Предлагаю усилить работу по подготовке основных документов по развитию туризма в регионе с учетом нынешних реалий, а также совместных туристических маршрутов. Изучить возможность создания единого информационного ресурса о туристических маршрутах и объектах нашего региона.

**Третье**, это создание и развитие региональной **инфраструктуры**, включающей единую разветвленную транспортную сеть, увеличение транзитного потенциала транспортного коридора в том числе с использованием морских портов. Необходимо разработать конкретные проекты и начать их реализацию в самое ближайшее время.

**Четвертое**, в свете развития цифровых технологий и в качестве извлеченных уроков пандемии в мире **электронная торговля/е-коммерция** стала мировым трендом и играет важную роль в повышении узнаваемости и продвижении продукции, производимой экономиками наших стран. Это соответственно дает значительный толчок к увеличению товарооборота. В этой связи, считаю важным **рекомендовать** уполномоченным органам государств – участниц ОЭС рассмотреть целесообразность обсуждения и **расширения сотрудничества между почтовыми организациями** стран ОЭС, что позволит снизить внутри ОЭС тарифы на почтовые услуги и соответственно увеличить объемы электронной коммерции внутри ОЭС.

Однозначно, мы не можем добиться увеличения торгового оборота между нашими странами, не решив вопросы, связанные с транспортировкой товаров. Считаю весьма важным Секретариату ОЭС сконцентрироваться над транспортно-логистической составляющей, выдать результат и тем самым представить Главам наших государств/правительств и, самое главное, нашим народам/общественности практическую выгоду и мощь ОЭС как перспективной, региональной Организации.

**Пятое, это здравоохранение.** Считаю важным отметить о необходимости принятия действенных мер для сотрудничества в части обеспечения доступности современных достижений в сфере здравоохранения для граждан нашего региона.

Следует изучить вопросы, касающиеся организации и проведения международных форумов по актуальным вопросам в сфере здравоохранения для облегчения доступа к передовым методам и специализированным знаниям, а также сотрудничества в сфере непрерывного медицинского и фармацевтического образования с использованием современных технологий обучения.

Резюмируя вышеизложенное, предлагаю Секретариату подготовить План работы на соответствующий год с конкретными, выполнимыми и эффективными мероприятиями, которые будут направлены на получение практической выгоды всеми странами-участницами нашей Организации.

**Уважаемые коллеги,**

На сегодняшнем Совете нам будет предложено поручить Секретариату внести предложения по вопросу механизма ротации должности Генерального секретаря.

Отмечаю, что всецело поддерживаем данное предложение и полагаем, что ротация должна осуществляться поочередно в порядке алфавита по наименованию государства-участника Организации.

Вместе с тем, сегодня будут заслушаны отчеты специализированных агентств, региональных институтов.

Хочу отметить, необходимость скорейшего решения вопроса по усилению роли Банка торговли и развития ОЭС в экономическом развитии региона.

Всем специализированным организациям необходимо ставить перед собой амбициозные цели и приложить усилия для их реализации.

Кроме того, рекомендуем Секретариату совместно с национальными исследовательскими центрами и институтами в области экономики усилить работу по проведению исследований, разработке актуализированных дорожных карт и практических преобразований по важнейшим вопросам социально-экономической стратегии развития региона ОЭС.

**Уважаемые коллеги,**

Завтра состоится очень приятное событие с участием наших уважаемых Глав Государств, церемония озвучивания победителей Наград ОЭС.

Сегодня мы будем одобрять список победителей премии ОЭС и пользуясь случаем, хочу поздравить всех победителей и искренне пожелать новых успехов и всего самого доброго.

**Уважаемый г-н Председатель,**

**Уважаемые коллеги.**

В заключение своего выступления хочу подчеркнуть, что страны ОЭС, обладая мощнейшим потенциалом и находясь в центре Евразийского материка, в полной мере способны выполнить задачи, стоящие перед Организацией, стать полноценной и важной частью мировой экономической системы при наличии доброй воли всех наших стран и народов.

Узбекской стороне желаю значительных успехов в качестве председательствующего в ОЭС и выразить уверенность, что во время председательствования Республики Узбекистан удастся выйти на новый уровень по всем направлениям Организации, добиться высоких результатов по актуальным вопросам повестки дня нашей Организации.

Позвольте еще раз поблагодарить Туркменистан, а также Секретариат Организации Экономического Сотрудничества за отличную организацию сегодняшнего заседания Совета Министров иностранных дел ОЭС и пожелать успешной работы в предстоящем Саммите ОЭС, а также поздравить всех с «Днем Организации Экономического Сотрудничества» и пожелать всем успехов, мира и процветания.

Спасибо за внимание.

**Statement by  
H.E. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi , Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

**His Excellency Raşit Meredov,  
Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan**

**Secretary-General ECO,  
His Excellency Ambassador Khusrav Noziri**

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Assalam-o-Alaikum**

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Foreign Minister Meredov on assuming the Chair of the ECO Council of Ministers.

It is a privilege to participate in this important meeting, preceding the 15th Summit of ECO leaders.

I thank the Government of Turkmenistan and Secretary-General Noziri for their diligent support to the objectives of ECO and for successfully organizing this meeting and the 15th Summit.

Pakistan attaches high priority to the ECO which groups 10 of our most important regional partners. We believe the ECO has significant potential to emerge as a powerful regional entity: resources, enterprising people, geographical contiguity and a strategic location at the centre of Eurasia.

However, due to lower production and productivity, and minimal regional integration, the ECO's full potential has yet to be realized.

The ECO countries have set themselves ambitious objectives in their Vision 2025 decisions. We appreciate the progress report prepared by the Secretariat.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major negative impact on the economies of all ECO members. We welcome the Secretariat's valuable report on the impact of COVID-19 of member countries. To recover from the pandemic, ECO members must prioritize vaccination and the related health response. We must insist on equity in the production, distribution and availability of the COVID-19 vaccines for all our peoples.

We must also accelerate realization of the ECO Vision 2025 objectives - which are fully aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The opening of the several ECO transport corridors is the most vital objective. I would like to welcome the operationalization of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad (ITI)



road corridor. In addition to Taftan, Pakistan has notified Gabd-Reemdan border Crossing Point as a TIR station.

The full operationalization of the transit corridors through Afghanistan will be critical for the transit trade of all ECO members, especially its 5 landlocked States. Restoring peace and stability in Afghanistan is vital for this purpose. We must all provide humanitarian and economic assistance to Afghanistan and its people to prevent massive human sufferings and economic collapse. We must encourage the new authorities in Kabul to promote inclusive governance, respect for human rights, including women's rights, and action against terrorism, to fully stabilize Afghanistan. The six-neighbours format, which Pakistan initiated, offers an effective modality to promote stabilization in Afghanistan.

In tandem, we must support early implementation of the agreed projects involving Afghanistan: the TAPI gas pipeline, the CASA 1000 electricity grid, and the Trans-Afghan railways connecting Termez-Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar. We hope that the region will also benefit from China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). We must also identify, prepare and implement additional cross-border projects among ECO countries.

A more targeted effort is required to identify and promote trade among ECO members, as envisaged in the ECO's Trade Agreement (ECOTA). It is time to emulate other regional entities, such as ASEAN and African Union, by creating an ECO regional free trade zone. This will encourage larger mutual investments, common supply chains, enhanced productivity and competitiveness of ECO economies.

Strengthening the role of ECO Bank and operationalization of ECO Reinsurance Company can positively contribute to our trade, investment and integration objectives. Financing should also be mobilized through multilateral, regional and national development banks, private markets, to achieve ECO's trade and development objectives.

As recognized in Vision 2025, the ECO economies will be dynamic only if they are knowledge based and digitalized. In this context, we welcome the establishment of the Research and Development Centre in Azerbaijan. This Centre could also serve as a mechanism for scientific and technology information exchange as well as for collaboration in R&D and technology applications.

The integration of ECO members in the emerging global digital economy will determine if they can sustain dynamic growth and stay internationally competitive. We must develop and implement ECO projects for the installation of broadband and other IT hardware and software, and the training of a digital work force.

To derive full advantage from its geographical location, ECO must promote a confluence of interests and cooperation with China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The ECO Secretariat could prepare a study on how best to develop such cooperation.

The ECO should also study the potential for ECO trade and mutual cooperation with all markets adjacent to the ECO region – China, Russia, Europe, ASEAN, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the African Union. This could lead to identification of specific cooperative projects with governments or entities from these regions.

All ECO member states are developing countries. We should work together within the Group of 77 & China to realize our common goals of prosperity and development, particularly through the implementation of the SDGs. The ECO should play an active and influential role within this Group. Next year, Pakistan will assume its Chair. We look forward to the support of the ECO members for advancing our shared objectives.

As members of the ECO, I hope that we will also join hands in countering Islamophobia and promoting the legitimate rights of all Muslim peoples, especially the right to self-determination and liberation of the peoples of Palestine and Jammu & Kashmir.

I thank you.

**Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Tajikistan  
25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

**Distinguished Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Mr. Secretary General,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to H.E. Mr. Rashid Ovezgeldyevich Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan for warm hospitality and the creation of excellent conditions conducive to the successful holding of the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

I would like to also thank H.E. Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu, the honourable Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey and the former Chairman of the Organization. Under his able chairmanship as well as under the kind leadership of H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the honourable President of the Republic of Turkey, the ECO gained a significant progress for achievement of its targets aimed at collective socioeconomic development of the Member States.

I would further like to congratulate the Republic of Uzbekistan for assuming the Chairmanship of the Organization in January 2022, especially H.E. Mr. Abdulazizi Kamilov, the honourable Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan as the next ECO Chairman. I believe that under Uzbekistan's chairmanship the Organization would further advance to enhance cooperation in the region.

Today we have gathered in the beautiful city of Ashgabat not only to reaffirm our commitments, but also to discuss the implementation process of ECO regional programmes and projects and exchange views on further steps to strengthen our cooperation within the Organization.

The Government of Tajikistan highly appreciates the ECO's contribution to expanding and deepening cooperation to promote economic development and social well-being in the region.

We take note of the significant progress have been made in these areas, despite the challenges facing our region. We are convinced that only through taking joint and coordinated actions and steps we will be able to meet these challenges.

In this regard, we believe that the decisions to be made at the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministerial Council and the guidelines to be given at the 15th ECO Summit in Ashgabat should give a new impetus to our cooperation in all six priority areas, strengthen the effectiveness of our Organization, deepen and broaden the integration and coordination of efforts to achieve our common goals and address existing and potential challenges.

**Dear Colleagues,**

COVID-19 pandemic not only had a negative impact on the socio-economic development of all countries and regions of the world, but also created great difficulties in the implementation of the tasks of regional integration. At the same time, the efforts being made to overcome the consequences of the pandemic have once again clearly demonstrated the need for close interaction and cooperation of all countries for the sake of successfully confronting world crises.

In this regard, we believe that ECO activities should correspond to the changed modern conditions and promote the maximum use of the Organization's potential for the benefit of further development of economic cooperation, sustainable development and overcoming the consequences of the pandemic in the ECO region.

**Dear Colleagues,**

It is well known that the ECO region is endowed with rich reserves of hydrocarbon resources and huge hydropower potential. In this regard, the coordinated and efficient use of the region's energy advantages provides an opportunity to strengthen the potential of the ECO member states to mitigate, to a certain extent, the negative impact of fluctuations in the global energy market. Therefore, cooperation in the energy should be one of the most important direction within the ECO.

Tajikistan is interested in implementing projects aimed at increasing intra-regional energy trade by combining the advantages of the countries of the region, both in renewable energy sources and in traditional sources. In this context, the implementation of the CASA-1000 project - an energy bridge between four ECO member countries: Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan, can serve as one of the elements of the future energy market in the region.

This project will not only increase electricity trade, but will also help expand access to affordable and renewable energy in the region.

Along with this, the efficient use of energy resources must be carried out taking into account measures to fight climate change. Climate change negatively affects the intensity and frequency of water-related natural disasters, which is a major obstacle to achieving sustainable development. We are convinced that our efforts should be aimed at disaster risk reductions by strengthening our risk reduction capacity, raising awareness, promoting investment in disaster risk reduction programmes and supporting affected populations and regions.

Tajikistan, as a landlocked country, pays special attention to the development of cooperation in the field of transport, transit and communications. At the same time, we mean not only the establishment of a modern infrastructure, but also secure free movement of goods, labor and capital, which is sometimes hampered by artificial barriers. In this regard, the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement, which aims to expand trade through the development of regional cooperation in transit

transport and aims to facilitate the free movement of goods and services in the region, is of great importance.

**Dear Colleagues,**

Tajikistan attaches great importance to economic cooperation with neighboring Afghanistan and supports the implementation of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Action Plan. Tajikistan calls on international organizations such as the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross and others to provide emergency assistance to the Afghan people. We, in turn, are ready to provide a transit corridor to all donor countries for the delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan.

**Dear Colleagues,**

Our region also has a rich historical and cultural heritage, which provides additional opportunities for our cooperation. In our opinion, cooperation in the economic dimension should be accompanied by adequate cooperation in the field of culture, education and science, which, in turn, enriches interaction between people and business circles of the countries of the region. Cooperation in the sphere of tourism as one of the priority areas of the ECO Vision 2025 could be the key to strengthening ties and expanding cultural and educational exchange between our peoples.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm our commitment to the principles and goals of ECO and our readiness to improve multifaceted cooperation within the Organization.

I thank you for attention.

**Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Uzbekistan  
25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers**

*Dear Chairman!  
Distinguished Secretary-General!  
Esteemed heads of delegations!  
Ladies and Gentlemen!*

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for the organization of the event at a high level and the warm welcome and traditional hospitality.

I want to sincerely congratulate H.E. Mr. Rashid Owezgeldiyewich Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, on his successful chairmanship of the 25<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Council of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

*Distinguished participants!*

The Economic Cooperation Organization space is a region with an enormous potential that shares a common history, cultural and spiritual values. Throughout history, a close and mutually beneficial trade, as well as cultural and humanitarian ties united our friendly people.

In this context, we support the revival and strengthening of the trade-economic relations in the ECO region, the comprehensive development of mutual trade, in particular, through the elimination of trade barriers and the consistent facilitation of trade.

The expansion of the trade and economic interactions of our countries requires the enhancement of communications and connectivity through improvement of existing ECO transport corridors and the establishment of new promising transport, transit and economic corridors.

This is particularly important and relevant in the context of the ongoing pandemic. In order to eliminate the emerged problems, the proper solution would be the adoption of joint and concerted measures to ensure the smooth restoration of the transport communications and trade in our region.

During the 14<sup>th</sup> ECO Summit in March of this year, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has put forward a number of important initiatives to develop the multilateral partnerships to ensure sustainable socio-economic development.

In this regard, we call on the Member Countries to pay a special attention to the joint implementation of the ECO Practical Guidelines on Measures to Facilitate Border Procedures under the COVID-19 Conditions, which was unanimously approved at

the meeting of ECO Transport Ministers on December 15, 2020 to ensure the smooth movement of goods and basic services throughout the region.

*Dear colleagues!*

In recent years, Uzbekistan has significantly intensified its participation in the ECO events in all areas of activity.

In the near future, we will fill the two vacant posts allocated for us in the Secretariat.

We intend to participate in a multifaceted cooperation with the ECO Member States, especially in the implementation of the «ECO Vision – 2025» Program.

Following the outcomes of the 15<sup>th</sup> Summit, Uzbekistan will assume the honorary and responsible mission of chairmanship of the Economic Cooperation Organization in 2022.

During this period, with a goal of further expanding the multilateral partnerships in the main areas of cooperation, we are planning to hold the following activities:

- Meeting of the ECO Agriculture Ministers;
- Fourth Meeting of the Ministers of Tourism of the ECO Member States;
- and other business events and economic activities.

*Distinguished participants!*

This year one of the full-fledged members of the Organization – Afghanistan is not participating in the Ministerial Council and ECO Summit. Along with this, Afghanistan is our common neighbor and its destiny cannot but concern us.

We deem it important to further involve Afghanistan into the regional infrastructure and economic processes, implement the humanitarian and socio-economic projects in the country.

The results of the High-Level International Conference on regional connectivity between Central and South Asia held in Tashkent in July this year have demonstrated how much all of us are interested in Afghanistan becoming a bridge between the two regions rather than an obstacle.

We invite the ECO to become involved in the development of the southern transport corridors. This is especially true for the practical implementation of the Trans-Afghan Railway project «Termez - Mazar-i-Sharif - Kabul - Peshawar».

In conclusion, allow me to thank the esteemed ECO Secretary-General H.E. Mr. Khusrav Noziri and our distinguished colleagues for their readiness to cooperate and assist Uzbekistan during the ECO chairmanship in 2022.

Through our joint efforts, we can open up the new promising opportunities to intensify our multifaceted cooperation.

*Thank you for your attention!*

\*\*\*\*\*