

Draft Report
of the 14th Meeting of the
Council of Permanent Representatives of ECI (ECI-CPR)
(ECI Headquarters, 19 November 2013)

The Council of Permanent Representatives of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) convened its 14th meeting at the ECO Headquarters on 19 November 2013, under the Chairmanship of the representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Tajikistan as well as delegation of the ECO Cultural Institute and Legal Advisor of ECO Secretariat. (List of Participants is enclosed as **Annex. I**).

Agenda of the Meeting

The agenda of the Meeting had been circulated among Member States vide Note No. ECI/402/866 dated 4 November 2013.

With respect to the postponement of the 6th meeting of the Board of Trustees scheduled to be held on 21 October 2013 and the upcoming meeting of the ECO council of Ministers on 26 November 2013 in Tehran, the ECO Cultural Institute convened an urgent and extra ordinary meeting of the Council of Permanent Representatives of ECI for the consideration and adoption of the budget of the Institute for the year 2014. The draft ECI budget for 2014 was circulated vide Note No. ECI/521/804 dated 3rd October 2013 and Note No. ECI/402/866 dated 4 November 2013.

Statement of ECI president

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for your attendance in this CPR meeting convened on emergency.

As you are aware, according to the ECI Charter, the ECI budget for every fiscal year should be approved in advance by the BOT Meeting or ECI's Council of Permanent Representatives in the absence of BOT. Since the 6th BOT Meeting was due to be held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, the issue of ECI budget for the year 2014 was included in the respective agenda which has already been circulated among the Member States. However, since the BOT Meeting has been postponed, ECI-CPR shall be the decision-making body to approve the budget for the year 2014. However, in the absence of BoT meeting, the ECO Secretariat requested to hold an urgent and extraordinary meeting of ECI-CPR to adopt the budget and sent it to ECO-CoM for final adoption.

Regarding ECI financial status, I deem it necessary to inform you that as stated during the previous meetings, ECI shall face critical financial situation if the arrears of the

member states for the fiscal year 2013 is not received in time. While I appreciate receiving the 2013 shares of some member states, I request the other members to immediately inform the respective officials in their esteemed countries of the significance and urgency of the issue and take necessary measures for the payment of their arrears at their earliest possible time to enable ECI continue its activities.

I also seize the opportunity to appreciate the allocation of 5 billion RLS. As the extra-budgetary fund allocated to ECI by the Government of I.R. Iran which was as not been transferred to ECI account yet due to some technical problems which I hope will be removed soon.

As you are aware, ECI has dismissed 30% of its local staff members to save money, improve the efficiency of the Institute and be able to cover the existing expenditures. However, as stated earlier, ECI has not still received the voluntary contribution of I.R. Iran which was intended to cover the salary of the month of October of the local staff members. As it was stated in previous CPR meetings, ECI should rely on its own resources which are mainly official contributions and shares of its Member States. The annual budget of 2014 is now proposed to you with this perspective

Despite the inconvenience occurred, the Institute has made effort to continue its activities. For instance, last month, ECI hosted the exhibition of traditional Turkish-Islamic arts and photos.

Also next week will be a hectic one for my colleagues since we are having two events. On November 26 and coinciding with the 21st ECO Council of Foreign Ministers, we, in cooperation with Tehran Municipality, are going to first hold the opening ceremony of the ECO Park which will serve as a public venue for cultural-artistic activities of ECO member states. The event will be followed by the commemoration of Allama Iqbal on the occasion of International Iqbal Day on November 27th, during which the scholars and academicians will discuss and exchange views on the philosophic aspects of Iqbal`s characteristics, thoughts and his sublime world view.

Let me now just pine point some principles we had in mind when preparing 2014 budget:

First, the total amount is about 10 percent less than the budget of 2011;

Second, the members' shares will remain as it has been in 2013;

Third, there is an increase of only 8 percent compare to 2013. Therefore, there will be a deficit of \$41,000 which will be generated from General Reserved Fund;

Fourth, there is an increase of about 10,000 \$ compare to 2013 in favor of program budget, including the publication and other academic activities;

Fifth, we have done our best to have an independent budget which covers all costs and expenditures of the Institute.

With this explanation, I hope we will be able to adopt the budget for 2014 as proposed by the ECI Secretariat without any need to go into details.

I also seek the approval of the CPR to allow using all possible savings in 2014 in favor of program activities which has always been the CPR expectation.

I thank you very much.

Discussion:

Representatives of the Member States raised questions on the general perspectives of the proposed budget and more explanation on some of the heads account budget as well as salaries and allowances, activities, publication and Transport and so forth.

The executive Director of the ECI clarified more those principles that have been taken for preparation of the proposed budget for 2014.

ECI Financial Officer also made explanation on details of budget items, comparing them with the same items in 2013 ECI budget.

The Representatives of all delegations supported the concept of Independency as the main principal of the ECI Budget for the future.

Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Republic of Tajikistan appreciated the ECI principals of the budget and stated their consent and approval to the proposed budget for the year 2014.

Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the Council that they have sent the ECI proposed budget to their capitals and are still waiting for their approval.

The ECI President appreciating the support of the delegations of Iran and Tajikistan for the proposed ECI Budget for the year 2014 requested the delegations of the other Member States to reach the consent of their capitals till the SoM meeting on the next week as earliest as possible for final approval of ECO Council of Ministers (CoM).

Any other Business

Stating the fact that all reports of ECI-CPR should be adopted by the ECI-CPR and submitted to the next CoM meeting on 26 November 2013 the Executive Director requested the Council to consider and adopt the draft report of the 13th ECI-CPR meeting on 6th October 2013 which was circulated vide Note No. ECI/524/889 dated 6 November 2013.

The Council considered and adopted the 13th ECI-CPR meeting unanimously.

Annex-I

**The 14th Meeting of the
ECI Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

List of Participants

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Hoshmand, Second Secretary

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- Dr. Seyed Jalaedin Alavi, Director, ECO Affairs Bureau, MFA
- Mr. AliReza Ghanavi, Senior Expert , ECO Affairs Bureau, MFA

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- Mr. Muhammad Zeeshan Ahmed, Counsellor

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- Mr. Ekramoldin Nematov, Deputy Ambassador

ECO Secretariat:

- Mr. Bahram Heydari, Legal Adviser

ECO Cultural Institute:

- H.E. Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif, President
- H.E. Ambassador Mohammad Reza Haji Karim Jabbari, Executive Director
- Dr. Seyed Majid Ghafelebashi, External Relations
- Mr. Hossein Ali Samadi, Financial Officer