

**Draft Report**  
**of the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the**  
**Council of Permanent Representatives of ECI (ECI-CPR)**  
**(ECI Headquarters, December 29, 2014)**

The Council of Permanent Representatives of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) convened its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting at the ECI Headquarters on December 29, 2014, under the Chairmanship of the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of Islamic Republic of Iran, Ambassadors of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Tajikistan, as well as delegation of the ECO Secretariat and the ECO Cultural Institute. (List of Participants is enclosed as **Annex. I**).

**Agenda item 1**

**Adoption of the Agenda**

The draft agenda of the Meeting which had been circulated among Member States vide Note No. ECI/524/908 dated December 22, 2014 was adopted unanimously as follows:

1. Adoption of the Agenda,
2. Consideration and adoption of the Draft Report of the 16<sup>th</sup> ECI-CPR meeting,
3. Report by ECI President,
4. Budgetary and administrative matters:
  - Current Financial Situation in ECI,
  - Consideration and Adoption of ECI Audit Report for the year 2013,
  - Consideration and Adoption of the Revised Budget for the year 2015,
  - Consideration of the Situation of ECI Official and Temporary Staff,
5. The Next Board of Trustees (BoT) Meeting,
6. Any other Business,
7. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting.

**Agenda item 2**

**Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Report of the Previous ECI-CPR Meeting**

The draft report of the 16<sup>th</sup> ECI-CPR meeting was adopted unanimously. The report was circulated vide: Note No. ECI/524/888 dated December 9, 2014.

**Agenda item 3**

**Report by ECI president on the ECI Activities**

H.E Mr. Iftikhar Hussein Arif, ECI President made the following statement:

*Mr. Chairman, H.E. Dr. Noor Mohammad Noor, Honourable Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*

*Excellencies and distinguished representatives of the ECI Member States*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

*First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for accepting our invitation to convene the 17<sup>th</sup> ECI-CPR meeting during the Christmas season. Please accept my best New Year wishes for your health, happiness and prosperity. I would also like to congratulate you on the occasion of the birth Anniversary of the holy Prophet of Islam (pbuh) and Imam Jafar Sadiq (s.a.)*

*I hope that with assistance and support of the esteemed ECI Member States and my colleagues, we could further realize the aims and objectives as envisaged in ECI Charter. In this regard, ECI has proposed some plans and programs for the coming year which has been conveyed to you and this calendar of events will be discussed in the next meeting.*

*I would like to inform the meeting that the ECI was honoured to welcome the esteemed Minister of Culture of Tajikistan, H.E. Shamseddin Arombeykzadeh on December 1, 2014 along with the honourable ambassador of Tajikistan, H.E. Nemullah Emomzadeh, and discussed ways of expanding ECI activities in Tajikistan. The honorable Minister of Culture very kindly expressed Tajikistan's overall readiness for hosting the 6th ECI BOT meeting in Tajikistan. Therefore, I hope the meeting will be soon convened in Tajikistan. ECI would also propose a regional and cultural program to be planned alongside this event in Tajikistan.*

*Moreover, following the proposed program mentioned within the previous ECI-CPR meeting, ECI Executive Committee hosted the esteemed Cultural Attaches and senior cultural officers of ECI Member States in its headquarters for the first time, a brief report of which shall be presented. The proposals put forward by the esteemed Cultural Attaches were indeed very significant for planning ECI's 2015 programs. It was also agreed that such meetings of Cultural Attaches shall continue in the future on a regular basis to enhance the commitment and sense of ownership of Member States in the affairs of ECOIC.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

*Unfortunately, once again I have to emphasize on the report presented within the previous ECI-CPR meeting on ECI's critical financial condition because no contribution has been received since after from those member countries which have not yet paid their 2014 contributions.*

*To my utmost regret, I have to inform you that ECI has to stop paying salaries of the staff member as well as all those programs and activities which would be financed through ECI budget. Thus, I trust that with the cooperation and assistance of the esteemed ambassadors and representatives of the member states, this problem would soon be solved.*

*ECI's budget for the year 2014 was previously adopted and approved in this meeting. However, due to the increase in the salaries at the ECO Secretariat during 2014, and according to the directive of the ECI Board of Trustees Meeting regarding the necessity of the equalization of salaries of the ECI staff members with those of the ECO Secretariat, the revised budget of the ECO Cultural Institute for the year 2015 is herewith submitted for consideration and approval. Thank you very much.*

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: appreciated the efforts of the ECO Cultural Institute for performing a great deal of successful activities despite the financial constraints of the Institute. He stated that we benefited from ECI's support and cooperation in organizing some excellent activity as well as Qawwali performance in Iran.

#### **Agenda item 4**

Budgetary matters:

- Current Financial Situation in ECI,

Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran: informed that ECI will receive the whole annual contribution of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the year 2014 equivalent to 171,500.00 US\$ on December 30, 2014.

Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan: informed that payment of the country's contribution is being processed through administrative procedures. He assured that he will follow up the issues with the concerned authorities.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: clarified that the annual contribution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for 2014 is 171,500.00 US dollars, out of which, 60 thousand dollars has already been allocated. But realization of the amount may take a procedure through banking system.

- Consideration and Adoption of the Audit Report for the year 2013,

The ECI's Audit report for the year 2013 including Institute's comments was circulated vide Note No.ECI/402/886 dated 9 December 2014 for consideration of the Member States.

Financial Officer of ECI: stated that no objection to ECI expenditures was mentioned in the Audit report, yet it urged some minor modifications in the form of the statements on accounts prepared by ECI. He clarified that the Institute followed the recommendation and submitted a revised report to the audit board a week later. But it was not considered and the initial report of ECI was returned. He explained that the computer software currently being used by the Institute for accounts is not able to produce reports in the format required by the audit board. Hence, ECI must spend about 4000 dollars to obtain a new accounting software. Annual maintenance of the application also costs about 1500 dollars.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: expressed that the efforts made by ECI for improvement of its report on accounts deserve appreciation.

The audit report and the ECI comments for the year 2013 were adopted unanimously by the Council.

- Consideration and Adoption of the Revised Budget for the year 2015,

The budget of the Institute had been adopted in 16<sup>th</sup> ECI-CPR meeting. As salaries of the staff of the ECO Secretariat had increased by 10 percent in 2014 by the approval of the COM in its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting held in Tehran on 26 November 2013 and keeping in mind that ECI Board of Trustees (BoT) in its 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting held in Mazar-e Sharif on March 21, 2019, agreed to the need for the equalization of salaries and emoluments of ECI staff with those of the ECO Secretariat, the Institute has prepared the revised budget for the year 2015. The revised budget had been circulated vide Note No. ECI/524/906 dated 17 December 2014. The Council was requested for consideration and adoption of the revised budget of ECI for the year 2015 and its consent to increase 10 percent in the salaries of the ECI staff for the year 2014.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: noted that the revised draft budget has been received only two weeks earlier and it needs more time to go through the required administrative procedures to be approved.

Legal advisor of ECO Secretariat: explained that the issue of equalization of the salaries between the ECI and the ECO staff has already been raised in several ECI-CPR meetings in the past, but no agreement was reached. He also noted that the ECI President's position grade is one level lower than the ECO Secretary General and this is applicable to all other job grades in ECI. Therefore, the salaries could not be equalized. He clarified that according to the financial rules and regulations of ECI, any modification in the salaries of the staff is subject to the approval of the Institute's Board of Trustees or the Council of Ministers.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: stated that if the salary scale of the ECI automatically comes in conformity with the ECO Secretariat's decision, there is no need to seek the approval of the member states in this regard.

External Relations Officer of ECI: clarified that the issue of 10% increase in the salaries of the ECI staff, is totally different from the general issue of equalization of salaries and emoluments of ECI staff members with those of the ECO Secretariat as well as the equalization of job grades of ECI President and Executive Director with their counterparts in the ECO Secretariat raised several times in the previous ECI-CPR meetings.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: requested ECI to kindly forward the related documents containing the approval of the ECI BoT meeting in this regard to the member states for consideration. He stated that it will also be useful to be informed that whether the whole ECO specialized agencies follow the same rule and salary scale or each have its own.

President of ECI: agreed to the observation raised by the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan that the approval of ECI's revised budget for the year 2015 will be discussed in the next ECI-CPR meeting.

The council decided to defer this item to be considered in the next ECI-CPR meeting.

- Consideration of Situation of ECI Official and Temporary Staff,

No observation was made under this item.

#### **Agenda item 5**

##### Next BoT Meeting:

President of ECI: explained that in the 5<sup>th</sup> ECI Board of Trustees (BoT) Meeting held on March 14, 2011 in Kabul, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the delegation of Republic of Tajikistan kindly offered to host the 6<sup>th</sup> BOT Meeting in 2013 but due to some administrative issues, it has been postponed. He stated that in his recent meeting with the honourable Minister of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Minister was hopeful the country may hold the meeting in the March 2015.

Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan: assured that he will follow up the issue with the concerned authorities in Tajikistan. He hoped that the ECI member states will receive the formal invitations for the 6<sup>th</sup> BoT meeting in January 2015.

#### **Agenda item 6**

##### Any other business

Representative of the Islamic republic of Afghanistan: proposed that cultural attaches of the member states participate in ECI-CPR meetings in the future which help promote greater cooperation between ECI and the member states in organization of its cultural activities. President of ECI supported the proposal and requested the council to consider the issue.

Representative of the Islamic republic of Iran: expressed its appreciation of receiving ECI's Program of Work and its Calendar of event for the year 2015 and proposed the program to be thoroughly discussed in the next ECI-CPR meeting. He also informed that the distinguished Governor of Qazvin, where is the birthplace of many legendary calligraphers, has proposed to collaborate with ECI to organize a joint exhibition of calligraphy works.

President of ECI: welcomed the idea and hoped that ECI will be able to organize at least one function in a member state annually.

Representative of the Islamic republic of Pakistan: requested the Institute to kindly provide estimations on the costs of functions envisaged in the ECI calendar of events.

**Agenda item 7**

Date and Venue of the next Meeting

The council agreed that the next meeting of the ECI-CPR to be held on Monday 23 February 2015 in the Institute.

**Annex-I**

**The 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
ECI Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

**List of Participants**

**Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:**

- H. E. Dr. Naseer Ahmad Noor, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- Mr. Mohammad Afsar Rahbin, Cultural Attaché

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:**

- H.E. Ambassador Abolfazl Mohammad Alikhani, Director, ECO Affairs Bureau, MFA
- Mr. Aziz Nezafat, Senior Expert , ECO Affairs Bureau, MFA
- Mr. Moslem Chenari, Senior Expert , ECO Affairs Bureau, MFA

**Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:**

- H. E. Noor Muhammad Jadmani, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
Mr. Saghbi

**Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:**

- H. E. Nematullo Emomzoda, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan

**ECO Secretariat:**

- Mr. Bahram Heidari, Legal Advisor

**ECO Cultural Institute:**

- H.E. Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif, President
- Mr. Seyed Majid Ghafelebashi, External Relations
- Mr. Hossein Ali Samadi, Financial Officer