

Draft Report
of the 24th Meeting of the
Council of Permanent Representatives of ECI (ECI-CPR)
(ECI Headquarters, 3 October 2016)

The Council of Permanent Representatives of ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) convened its 24th meeting at the ECO Headquarters on 3 October 2016 under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Nematullo Emomzoda, distinguished Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan. The Meeting was attended by the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as delegation of 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/524/516 dated 22 September 2016 was adopted unanimously as follows:

1. Adoption of the Agenda,
2. Consideration and adoption of the Draft Report of the 22nd ECI-CPR meeting,
3. Statement by ECI President,
4. Budgetary and administrative matters:
 - Extension of tenure of the incumbent President of ECI (Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif) for further six months,
 - Adoption of Revised Draft Budget of ECI for the year 2016,
 - Current Financial Situation of the ECI
5. Any other Business,
6. Date and Venue of the Next Meeting.

The members of the council welcomed the new Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Iran. The Ambassador was in attendance at the forum for the first time.

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan expressed his gratitude to ECI President and honorable representatives of the Member States for their warm welcome. He called the ECO Cultural Institute the international organization par excellence for promoting cultural commonalities of ECO countries.

Agenda item 2

Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Report of the 23rd ECI-CPR meeting

- The draft report of the 23rd ECI-CPR meeting which had been circulated among the Member States vide Note No. ECI/524/276 dated 16 June 2016 was adopted.

Agenda item 3

Statement by ECI President

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

Mr. Chairman,

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

Excellencies, Ambassadors and Representatives of ECI Member States,

Ladies & Gentlemen,

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to welcome honorable ambassadors, excellencies and delegations of member states of ECI, ECO Secretariat, especially H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Durrani, the distinguished Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Iran and Mr. Ghulam Husain, in charge of ECI affairs in the Embassy of Pakistan to the 24th meeting of Council of Permanent Representatives of ECO Cultural Institute. During our tenure, we have organized one board of trustees meeting in Khujand and 14 meetings of ECI-CPR as required by the Charter.

This is to put on record that three and a half years my stay in Iran as the president of ECI, is one of the most memorable period of my life. I learned and benefitted much about the great culture and civilization of ECO region and its great cultural, historical and literary heritage of the region especially from Iran. I will always remember my happy memories of Iran, my meetings with Rahbar Muzzam Hazrat Ayatullah ul- Uzma Sayyid Ali Khamenei, in particular, would be a landmark in my life. Also, my meetings with ministers, ambassadors, academia and artists were of great contributions to my personal assets I'm taking back to Pakistan.

Excellencies.

I tried to make ECI truly an international and regional organization in spite of some limitations.

Since the last CPR meeting, due to premises issues, we organized our programs with the cooperation of other cultural institutes in Tehran including Seminar on globalization and its economic and cultural impacts in collaboration with the Central Eurasia Program in University of Tehran , function on publishing in ECO region and veneration of great contribution of Iranian Organization for Researching and Composing University Textbooks (SAMT) to publishing textbooks for ECO Region including Afghanistan, seminar on common culture and history in ECO region in collaboration with Center for International Research and Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, launching ceremony of 30 bilingual books in collaboration with Iranian Poets' Society, contribution to an international conference on Abd al-Rahman Jami, the great Persian classical poet held in his birthplace, Turbat-i- Jam, folklore music performance (سرود عاشقانه) by artists (Aşık) from Iran and Turkey, jointly arranged by ECI and Turkish Yunus Emre Cultural Center, international conference on Rumi held in Afghanistan in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Information of Afghanistan and the governor of Velayat Balkh under the patronage of H.E. Ata Muhammad Nour , walye Balkh, without his financial and logistical support, this would have not been possible. Our friend, Mr. Mohammad Afsar Rahbin, coordinated and organized the whole event very diligently. Poetry symposium/ museeqi sunnati, folk music, Mehfil sama and visit to birthplace, madrasah and related sites in Balkh were also very well arranged.

The launching ceremony of two books of Allama Iqbal, two collections of Urdu poems Bal-I Jebril and Zarb-i- Kalim, both translated by Mr. Mohammad Afsar Rahbin, was held in Kabul, historical Bagh-I Babur in the presence of the H.E. ambassador Abrar Husain, the honorable Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan, khanum Mojgan Mostafavi, Dr. Shams Zartosht, Dr. Taufique Subhani and Dr. Tehsin Firaqi, widely attended by Afghan media and literati and academia followed with fruitful meeting of H.E. Mr. Abdulbari Jahani, the Culture Minister who appreciated the ECI's performance and assured of his full cooperation.

Launching of the book "Yek Beit Parniyan", a selection of Persian articles by Tajik scholars on life and works of Roudaki, the father of Persian poetry edited by Aghay Shah Mansour Shah Mirza who had also greatly contributed to the aforesaid launching ceremony of thirty bilingual books as well as the commemoration of Bobojon Ghafurov, the historian and national hero of

Tajikistan and launching ceremony of the book “Booy-e- Jooy-e Mooliyan”, a selection of Tajik poetry in the past 50 years.

Furthermore, ECI has published the book “Yek Panjereh Mehr”, edited by Jawad Asman, a selection of poetry of Gulrukhsar Safi, the eminent contemporary Tajik poet. This project was commissioned by the former president of ECI.

Another recent publication of the Institute is the seventh issue of ECO Heritage, the cultural quarterly, on performing arts, media, cinema and theater. The earlier issues explored culture and civilization, literature, architecture, handicrafts, music and painting in ECO region. Lastly, we have published a brief report of ECI activities for your perusal and records.

Excellencies,

Taking into consideration inflation, increase in fees, and developing in planned programs and activities, it has become progressively difficult to remain within our budget. Nevertheless, we have formulated the proposed annual budget for the year 2016 to meet the observations of the member states raised in the last CPR-meeting, keeping the annual contribution rates unchanged. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan have already given their consent to the proposed budget, the approval of the other member states is still awaited while it is the 9th month of the year.

Excellencies,

Finally, my compliments to my colleagues.

I had a wonderful staff, willing workers and committed to preserve and promote the aims and objectives of the Institute. I'm sure that the new president of the Institute will lead this professional team to new heights in future. I wish them a very dynamic and progressive regional organization in the future.

During my tenure, we have inked many MoUs with prime cultural and academic organizations, I hope the new management would honor the commitments.

I would have not done this much without the active support of honorable ambassadors of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Nematullo Emomzoda, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, H.

E. Mr. Naseer Ahmad Noor, the former ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Noor Muhammad Jadmani, H.E. Mr. Abolfazl Mohammad Alikhani and H.E. Mr. Abolghasem Tahmasbi.

Thank you

All the Member States appreciated the outstanding performance of the ECO Cultural Institute under the leadership of Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif as President and Mr. Mohammad Reza Haji Karim Jabbari as Executive Director of the Institute.

Agenda item 4

Budgetary and administrative matters:

- Extension of tenure of the incumbent President of ECI (Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif) for further six months,

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: proposed a temporary extension of tenure of the incumbent President till the arrival of the new Executive Director from Pakistan. He also encouraged the incumbent Executive Director of the Institute to stay in office during the period.

All the other Member States welcomed the idea of further stay in office of Mr. Haji Karim Jabbari, incumbent Executive Director and requested him to consider the proposal.

Executive Director of ECI: appreciating the proposal, stated that to respect the decision of all Member States in extraordinary ECI-CPR meeting, he would like to leave the post on 16 October 2016, 6th month earlier, against the fact that the tenure of the Executive Director is four-year as stipulated in the Charter of ECI.

The council concluded the following:

To honor the recommendation of the extraordinary meeting of ECI-CPR convened on 11 April 2016, which was endorsed by the extraordinary session of the ECO Council of Ministers (CoM) held on 23 September 2016 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York, the incumbent President and the Executive Director will leave their position on 16 October 2016 and the new President will immediately take office the next day. New Executive Director will be nominated by the government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and will be appointed accordingly.

- Adoption of Revised Draft Budget of ECI for the year 2016

The president of ECI reiterated the point that the Institute has formulated the proposed annual budget for the year 2016 to meet the observations of the member states raised in the last CPR-meeting, keeping the annual contribution rates unchanged. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan have already given their consent to the proposed budget and payment of their contributions accordingly, the approval of the other member states is still awaited while it is the 9th month of the year. Thus, the other Member states are requested to kindly expedite the settlement of their annual contribution.

The council deliberated the issue thoroughly and agreed with the following:

- 1- The budget as proposed by ECI equivalent to \$ 622,739 was approved.
- 2- The budget deficit will be met through the Institute's General Reserve Fund.
- 3- The amount of annual contribution for each Member State will remain unchanged as it was in the previous years.

Agenda item 5

Any other Business

No issue was raised under this agenda item.

Agenda item 6

Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

The date and venue of the next meeting of the ECI-CPR will be communicated to the Member States by the ECI Secretariat.

Annex-I

**The 24th Meeting of the
ECI Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)**

List of Participants

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

- Mr. Mohammad Afsar Rahbin, Cultural Attaché
- Ms. Bodaghi, Staff Member, ECO Affairs Department

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

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

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

- H.E. Asif Ali Durrani, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- Mr. Ghulam Hussain, Third Secretary

Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan:

- H.E. Nematullo Emomzoda, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan,
- Ms. Manija Rahimi, Third Secretary

ECO Cultural Institute:

- H.E. Mr. Iftikhar Husain Arif, President
- H.E. Ambassador Mohammad Reza Haji Karim Jabbari, Executive Director
- Mr. Seyed Majid Ghafele Bashi, External Relations
- Mr. Seyed Saeed Neghabat, Accounts Officer