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The Secretariat of Economic Cooperation Organization

**The 17th Meeting of the ECO
Council of Ministers, Herat
17-20 October 2007**





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The ECO Secretary General's Message on ECO Day, 28th November, 2007

We are commemorating the 15th anniversary of ECO's expansion from a trilateral organization to one with ten member states. ECO has come a long way over these years, helped by strong commonalities of history and geography, faith and culture. We have been guided by common objectives and convergent goals. One overarching aim is to raise the living standards of our peoples, to strengthen trade and transport linkages, and to achieve a seamless economic integration of the region.



The ECO region has great potential. It has a very important strategic location. It is endowed with rich natural resources – from energy and mineral deposits to fertile land and favourable weather systems as also talented people. We have a population of around 390 million and a land mass of nearly 8 million square kilometers. Our economies are performing well. The total GDP of the region amounted to \$ 891 billion in 2006. The average Growth Rate of the region was 6.9 percent in 2006.

We have to realize the full potential of our region. ECO has, for that purpose, laid the necessary institutional framework. A number of agreements have been signed and important decisions taken. These cover such fields as trade and transport, industry and energy, agriculture and environment, finance and investment and also visa facilitation. We hold regular meetings at various levels to carry forward cooperation. These included, this year, six Ministerial meetings – on Environment, Agriculture, Interior, Industry and Finance as well as the Council of Ministers' meeting (COM) held at Herat last month.

Trade is our highest priority. Our aim is to establish a Free Trade Area by 2015. Under the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), tariff duties have to be lowered in 8 years, to 15 percent on 80 percent of the goods traded. We are also pursuing elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and are conducting a survey in collaboration

with UNIDO. ECOTA's implementation is to be overseen by a Cooperation Council which shall meet once a year, preferably at Ministerial level.

ECO has two important institutions to help promote regional trade. The ECO Trade and Development Bank, set up at Istanbul with an initial capital of SDR 300 million, starts its operations this week. The ECO Reinsurance Company is set up at Karachi, with an authorized capital of US\$ 30 million.

Transport linkages are being strengthened under the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA), effective since May 2006. Its subsidiary committees have already met to implement the rail and road part of TTFA and to clear legal and insurance issues. The 17th COM has set up a Fund for implementation of TTFA. We have agreed to shortly issue a white insurance card for the ECO region. Measures have also been taken to run more efficiently the ECO container train on the Trans-Asian main railway. We have reduced its travel time by 36 hours.

In the energy sector, we aim at promoting power trade and efficient energy management. We are pursuing interconnection of power systems of member states. Two separate studies are being conducted in cooperation with IDB and World Bank. The initial reports of both studies have been circulated to member states. These would be considered at an Expert Group Meeting in Islamabad in early 2008.

Agriculture constitutes 23.4 percent of regional GDP and employs 40 percent of the active working population. ECO is pursuing a Plan of Action for Drought Management and a Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS). We are implementing the ECO Agriculture Ministers' decision (March 2007) to improve seed quality, to strengthen seed supply and harmonize seed regulations. RPFS is meant to increase food production and food trade in the region. An ECO regional centre for management of natural disasters has been established in Mashhad. Work on a permanent commission for control of animal diseases is underway. We will hold the first ECO regional seed conference and trade exhibition in Bishkek, June 2008.

Industry contributes 27.6 percent to regional GDP. ECO countries have a rich resource base for raw materials. The Ministerial Meeting (Lahore, November 2006) agreed measures to enhance the share of industrial goods and services in trade, initiate viable joint projects, create investment-friendly environment and encourage the private sector.

On environment, the ECO Plan of Action has been extended up to 2010. Its implementation would be monitored through annual national reports. On Biodiversity, the Work Plan has been adopted for 2007-15. Progress on this subject would be reviewed at the 4th Ministerial Meeting on Environment in Islamabad in 2008.

Terrorism, narcotics and transnational organized crimes pose a threat to regional stability. The 17th COM called for accelerating efforts, as agreed at the 1st Interior Ministers' Meeting (Tehran, October 2006). The second Interior Ministers' meeting will be held in Ashgabat in 2008 to review progress.

ECO is contributing to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We have already initiated one project (Deh Mazang Park and Kabul Zoo) and are considering two more projects (a maternity hospital in Faryab and a comprehensive health centre in Kabul). Pakistan and Turkey have contributed \$ 5 million each and Iran US\$ 1 million to a special fund created for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The 17th COM appealed to other ECO states to contribute to this fund.

In conclusion, ECO is moving on, guided by its aims and ideals. It has made progress in important fields. We have laid the necessary institutional framework. We are focusing more and more on implementation of agreements. Improvement is in evidence. However, the pace is not fast enough. This and other challenges have to be met. It is most encouraging that there are no obstacles to progress. The way forward is open. We shall press ahead together – all Member States hand-in-hand.

Messages received from the Heads of State / Government and Foreign Ministers of Member States on ECO Day

ECO Day is celebrated on November 28 each year. On this occasion, Heads of State / Government and Foreign Ministers of member states as well as ECO Secretary General exchange congratulatory messages.

Some of the messages received from ECO dignitaries on the occasion of ECO Day celebrated on 28th November 2007 are highlighted below:

Message from President H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad to H.E. Hamed Karzai, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



On the occasion of 28 of November, commemorating the establishment of Economic Cooperation Organization and ECO Day, I congratulate Your Excellency, People and the Friendly and brotherly Government of Afghanistan.

15 years ago, ECO witnessed the valuable decision of Afghanistan and number of newly independent countries of the region to join this Organization. A decision which caused such a day could be registered as the ECO Day.

As Your Excellency is aware, ECO has faced many challenges and has been able to overcome them with the continuous support of member states. Yet, to achieve its magnificent goals envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir, it has a long way to go.

In the course of the ECO developments over the last two years, our hopes to boost the Organization to safeguard the objectives and interests of the nations of the region have materialized more than before.

I am confident that with Your Excellency's support the growing process of the cooperation

among the member states in line with the interests of our nations will be more dynamic.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the founder members of ECO and host of the Secretariat, is willing to use all ECO capacities and existing facilities for more and profound regional and bilateral relations.

Message from President Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad to H.E. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

On the occasion of 28 of November, commemorating the establishment of Economic Cooperation Organization and ECO Day, I congratulate Your Excellency, People and the Friendly and brotherly Government of Azerbaijan.

Holding the successful meeting of 9th ECO Summit in the beautiful City of Baku last year was an important turning point in the history of ECO activities.

15 years ago, ECO witnessed the valuable decision of Azerbaijan and number of newly independent countries of the region to join this Organization. A decision which caused such a day could be registered as the ECO Day.

As Your Excellency is aware, ECO has faced many challenges and has been able to overcome them with the continuous support of member states. Yet, to achieve its magnificent goals envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir, it has a long way to go.

In the course of the ECO developments over the last two years, our hopes to boost the Organization to safeguard the objectives and interests of the nations of the region have materialized more than before.

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The Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the founder members of ECO and host of the Secretariat, is willing to use all ECO capacities and existing facilities for more and profound regional and bilateral relations.

I pray to God for Your Excellency's health and success and prospect of the friendly and brotherly nation of Afghanistan.

Message from H. E. General Pervez Musharraf the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



It is with great pleasure that I extend warm felicitations to the peoples and governments of fellow ECO member states on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of ECO's expansion.

As an expression of our common ties that span centuries, ECO has made notable progress in fields ranging from cultural cooperation to science and technology, from agriculture to environment and from finance and economy to trade and transport. I am confident that the Organization will further consolidate its achievements and help regional economic integration.

On this Day, we renew our pledge to make this region a vibrant economy dedicated to the betterment of our peoples.

I wish ECO complete success in the years ahead and re-affirm Pakistan's abiding commitment to the principles and objectives of ECO.

Message from H. E. Mr. Gurbanguly BERDIMUHAMEDOW, the President of Turkmenistan



I would like to convey you my warmest felicitation on the occasion of the ECO Day.

Being committed to the goals and objectives set for the Economic Cooperation Organization, Turkmenistan will be making efforts for the future broadening of overall cooperation among the ECO Member States aimed at effective regional development and prosperity of our nations in the region.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to wish you sound health, prosperity, wealth and progress in your activity at your high and responsible post of the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Message from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan



H. E. Mr. Rashid Meredov

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the expansion of the Economic Cooperation Organization.

I'm convinced that the Economic Cooperation Organization which gained the high priority in the world community will further be assisting the development of cooperation among ECO Member States in the spirit of friendship, mutual benefit and prosperity.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to wish you sound health, inexhaustible energy and more and more achievements in your activity.

Truly yours,

Message from H. E. Dr. Rangeen Dadfar Spanta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



I have great pleasure to convey my warmest felicitations to you and your honored colleagues

on the occasion of the ECO Day, the 28 of November.

In fact this auspicious day reminding a positive turning point which closed the states and nations of the ECO region to each other. I am sure that under your wise leadership and guidance the ECO had good achievements such as; implementation of its aims, expansion of its relations with the other organizations and important international institutions as well as for further globalization of economy and removing of the existed challenges during the last year.

On behalf of myself and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I give confidence to you and for the member states that, with the transferring of the periodical responsibility of chairmanship the ECO to Afghanistan, took place during the 17th COM in Herat of Afghanistan, we will pay more efforts for the full implementation of the ECO main goals and objectives.

At the end I hope your good health and your more successes in this regard.

Message from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran



H. E. Mr. Manouchehr Mottaki

In the Name of God

I would like to congratulate Your Excellency and staff of the esteemed Secretariat on the auspicious occasion of the ECO Day, November 28, in commemoration of joining new members to Economic Cooperation Organization and increasing its members to 10 countries.

Fortunately, since Your Excellency has been posted as the ECO Secretary General we have been witnessing more consolidation at the Secretariat and more attachment of the member states to the Organization's programs and projects as well as operationalization of the most important projects in which Your Excellency has an important role.

Islamic Republic of Iran as the host of the ECO Secretariat and one of its founder reaffirms once again its commitment to support the Secretary General and further strengthening of the Secretariat in order to materialize objectives of the Organization.

I wish you health, prosperity and success.

Message from the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



H.E. Mr. Khurshid M. Kasuri

It is a matter of great pleasure to extend sincere felicitations to member states on the 15th Anniversary of ECO's expansion.

We commemorate this Day to renew our commitment to the organization and its objectives. ECO remains our best hope for pooling our collective resources for the common benefit of our peoples. Cooperation in key sectors and entry into force of ECO Trade Agreement has the potential to transform ECO into an integrated market that in turn will give impetus to economic growth.

I wish the ECO Secretariat and the ECO community of nations every success in pursuit of the shared vision of peace and prosperity for our region.

The Secretary General sent messages of felicitations on the ECO Day to Foreign Ministers of all Member States. One such message, addressed to the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey, is reproduced below:

Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the ECO Day, the 28th of November, I wish to convey my warmest felicitations to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of the Republic of Turkey. The Economic Cooperation Organization celebrates

its expansion this day fifteen years ago from a trilateral organization to one with 10 member states. It has since made steady progress in diverse fields.

Turkey is a founding member of the ECO. It plays a very constructive role in this organization. Turkey has contributed most positively to carrying forward ECO's aims and objectives. We are grateful to Your Excellency for your participation, despite other pressing commitments, in the 17th COM meeting held in Herat, 20th October, 2007. Your valued statement and perceptive observations enriched the deliberations of this highest decision-making forum of the ECO.

I wish you, Excellency, health and happiness and the brotherly people of the Republic of Turkey continued progress and prosperity.

Message from the President, ECO Trade & Development Bank, Istanbul-Turkey



Mr. Murat Ulus

I have the pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of ECO's expansion, celebrated as the ECO Day.

Availing myself of this auspicious occasion, I would also like to convey my most cordial felicitations to the peoples and the respective Government of fellow ECO member states that have binded together with a common history, faith and culture to resolve sustainable regional economic development.

It is gratifying that with the successful transformation of ECO from a trilateral organization into a more dynamic and powerful multidimensional regional organization is moving steadily towards materialization of its

noble goals envisaged in the Treaty of Izmir and ECO Vision-2015. In view of its advantageous geographical location which bridges East-West trade and also its rich natural and human resources as well as its prestigious international standing, ECO is now at the decade of implementation of agreements and promotion of efficient and effective cooperation. The time for real action loom and I firmly believe that ECO would play significant role in the regional and world economy. Particularly, at this stage of progress, the vital role of the banks and financial institutions in the region in financing and accelerating economic growth, as well as promoting privatization process and structural reforms should be highlighted. I would like to ensure that the ECOBANK would support this process.

Within this perspective as one of the regional institution of ECO our main objective is to boost the recent momentum of the ECO by financing intra-regional trade and development projects of mutual benefit and creating a much needed partnership with the financial institutions and business community within the region. We would promote the project-oriented approach with regard to regional development activities and enhance regional stakeholders' ability to translate their plans into desired common interest and results. I believe that tangible economic benefits to be brought in our operations would inspire the member states for further cooperation and joint implementation of various promising projects. It is on our course to become a success story. At this point I would like to take this opportunity to call on other respective ECO member states to consider becoming member of the Bank.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish you and your colleagues every success in realization of the aims and goals of the Organization and under your able leadership continue to exploit all its potentials. I would like to reinstate that we are actively and seriously committed to sustain this trend.



The 17th Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting held at Herat:

The ECO Council of Ministers (COM) held its 17th meeting on 20th October 2007 in Herat, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It was preceded by the Senior Officials' meeting on 17-18 October 2007.

Ministers and high ranking officials from ECO Member States, including the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan attended the meeting. The ECO Secretary General along with the relevant staff of ECO Secretariat as well as ECO Specialized Agencies and Regional Institutions also participated in the meeting. As well, representatives of international organizations, having close cooperative relations with ECO, attended the 17th COM meeting.

The COM Meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. In his inaugural address, welcoming the delegations and emphasizing the historical significance of holding the 17th COM in Herat, the President expressed the hope that ECO would be able to foster the spirit of cooperation among the member states and transform the wishes of the people of region into reality. The President also pointed to the trend of globalization and called on the member states to improve the status of this region from being the subject of this trend to one of active players by further integration of resources and opening up cultural and scientific institutions to each other. The President renewed Afghanistan's commitment to the principles of ECO Charter and said that his Government would continue supporting the aims and objectives of the organization. He appreciated the initiative of ECO to contribute to the reconstruction process of Afghanistan.

The Council of Ministers, which is the highest decision-making body of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), unanimously elected H.E. Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, as its new Chairman. In his statement, Mr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta explained his vision for the enhancement of the Organization, goals and for promotion of cooperation among the member states.

The ECO Secretary General, Khurshid Anwar, presented his report and briefed the Council on the ECO activities organized since the previous COM held in 2006. He highlighted ECO's achievements in various fields. The Secretary General expressed his thanks and appreciation to the government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for the warm hospitality extended to participants and the elaborate arrangements made for the meeting. He expressed the hope that under the Chairmanship of Afghanistan, ECO would move towards its cherished goals with greater speed and better sense of direction. .

In their statements, the heads of delegations gave their assessment of ECO activities during the past year. They reiterated their commitment to ECO's aims and objectives and dilated on measures their respective governments had taken to implement the ECO decisions and pursue its programmes. The representatives of the ECO Specialized Agencies submitted their annual reports on their current and future activities.

The participants welcomed the progress being made by ECO. They noted, in particular, the conclusion and entry into force of important agreements, establishment of specialized ECO institutions and implementation of regional projects and programmes. These included important priorities such as implementation of the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) and the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), operationalization of the ECO Container and Passenger Trains (Istanbul-Almaty) and the ECO Trade and Development Bank. They also reviewed progress on inter-connection of power systems of member states as well as on the ECO Reinsurance Company and the ECO Science Foundation. The review

covered fresh measures to speed up progress in such sectors as trade and transport, energy and environment, industry and agriculture as well as counter-narcotics and trans-national crimes.

Among other the issues considered by the Council, were the institutionalization of ECO activities through agreements and MoUs. These included the Statute of ECO Regional Institute for Standardization, Conformity Assessment, Accreditation and Metrology (RISCAM) and Road Map for its implementation, the MoU on ECO-Veterinary Commission, the MOU on Establishment of Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters, the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for ECO Businessmen and the Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI).

The Council welcomed the signing of contract for and commencement of construction work on Deh Mazang Public Park and maintenance of Kabul Zoo. It approved a few additional medium size projects in the health, education and transport sectors. In order to commemorate the 17th COM meeting, the Afghan Government named a central park in Herat as the ECO Park.

The 17th COM also reviewed and approved the reports of the meetings of the Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR), the Secretariat's Budget for 2007 and Audit Report for 2006 as well as the reports of sectoral ministerial meeting held since the 16th COM (Baku, May 2006). These were the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Environment, 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, the 1st Meeting of ECO Interior Ministers, 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Industry and 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Finance.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Herat Communiqué was unanimously adopted.

The 17th COM took place amid important developments on the regional and international planes. It provided a useful opportunity for the Foreign Ministers of neighbouring regional states to hold bilateral meetings. The 18th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers will be held in Islamabad. It would be followed by the 10th ECO Summit in 2008.

Herat Communiqué

(Adopted by the 17th COM Meeting – 20th October 2007)

The 17th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in Herat, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, on 20th October 2007. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and attended by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan as well as the ECO Secretary General. The representatives of international and regional organizations also participated in the meeting.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Hamid Karzai, in his key-note address to the 17th Meeting of the Council of Ministers, welcoming the delegations and emphasizing the historical significance of holding the 17th COM in Herat, hoped that ECO would be able to foster the spirit of cooperation among the member states and transform the wishes of the people of region into reality. The President also pointed to the trend of globalization and called on the member states to improve the status of this region from being the subject of this trend to one of its players by further integration of resources and opening up cultural and scientific institutions to each other. The President renewed Afghanistan's commitment to the principles of ECO Charter and said that his Government would continue supporting the aims and objectives of the organization. He appreciated the initiative of ECO to contribute in the reconstruction process of Afghanistan.

1. Reviewing with satisfaction the progress made since the Baku COM held in May 2006, the Council:-

- (i) Welcomed progress towards conclusion and implementation of important ECO agreements,

including the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA), ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA), the Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment (APPI), the Articles of the Agreement for the Establishment of ECO Re-insurance Company, the Additional Protocol to the Charter of the ECO Science Foundation and the updated Statute of ECO College of Insurance.

- (ii) Expressed satisfaction over the increased frequency of sectoral meetings and, to further encourage this trend, sought greater participation of Member States and their cooperation to implement its decisions.
- (iii) Welcomed the efforts for operationalization of the ECO Science Foundation, establishment of ECO Regional Centre for Risk Management of Natural Disaster as well as the establishment of other ECO institutions.
- (iv) Commended the efforts made for the operationalization of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and expressed its satisfaction that the Bank would commence operations by the end of 2007. The Council also noted with satisfaction the efforts made towards establishment of the ECO Reinsurance Company and called on all Member States to join both Institutions.
- (v) Welcomed the efforts for the implementation of the ECO Projects and Programmes, especially revitalization of the Container and Passenger Trains from Istanbul to Almaty, commencement of Afghan Reconstruction Projects, extension of the Plan of Action for cooperation in the field of Environment up to 2010, publication of the ECO Annual Economic Report as also progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

2. Reaffirmed its commitment to establish a free trade area in the ECO region by 2015 as a priority task, encouraged Member States to speed up implementation of the ECOTA and, noting with satisfaction the participation of the private sector in ECO programmes and activities, called for ECO-CCI to be reactivated by establishing a permanent secretariat and developing an action plan to make it more dynamic in strengthening trade relations among Member States.
3. Took note of the Inception Report prepared by NESPAK on the feasibility study on interconnection of power systems and encouraged member states to provide necessary data without further delay and the consulting company to finalize the feasibility study as early as possible.
4. Decided to extend the Programme of Action for ECO Decade of Transport and Communications (1998-2007) until the new programme is finalized and, stressing the importance of transport and communications and of effective measures for speedy implementation of the TTFA, called for removing all obstacles to the smooth running of the Container and Passenger Trains on the Trans-Asian Railway Mainline.
5. Appreciated the support and financial assistance of the Islamic Development Bank to ECO programmes/projects, and the technical support of FAO in preparing a Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) for the ECO region and thanked the Republic of Turkey for its readiness to host the Donor's Conference on 7-8 May, 2008.
6. Reaffirmed its commitment to jointly work for human resource development, social development, health and poverty alleviation as well as disaster mitigation and management.
7. Recognizing that narcotics, terrorism and transnational organized crimes are a threat to regional/national security, stability and economic growth of Member States, the Council called for accelerating joint efforts in this regard and appreciated the holding of the 1st ECO Interior Ministers meeting in Tehran and the offer of Turkmenistan to host the 2nd Meeting of the ECO Ministers for Interior in early 2008. The Council further proposed that Member States consider the possibility of transforming DCCU into a Regional Center for Drug Control and Organized Crime, and finalize issues relating to establishment of ECOPOL in the next meeting of the ECO Interior Ministers.
8. Noted with appreciation the financial contributions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey to the ECO Special Fund for the Reconstruction of Afghanistan and appealed to other Member States to make similar contributions and assist Afghanistan in capacity building where ever needed.
9. Welcomed the commencement of the construction of Deh Mazang Public Park and maintenance of Kabul Zoo, and asked for support to more of such projects to be undertaken with financing from the ECO Special Fund for Reconstruction of Afghanistan.
10. Appreciated the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to name a Central Park in Herat as "ECO Park" to commemorate the 17th meeting of the Council of Ministers held in the historic city of Herat.
11. Recognized the importance of cooperation in the fields of culture and tourism including ecotourism and cultural tourism and recommended that member states step up efforts to expand cooperation in these fields.
12. Appreciated the active and invaluable efforts of H.E. Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, for the promotion of regional cooperation during his chairmanship of the ECO Council of Ministers, and felicitated H.E. Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, on assuming the Chairmanship of the Council. The Council assured him of full support and wished him complete success.
13. Expressed profound thanks and gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Government officials of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for their support and

contributions to the 17th COM meeting held in Herat. The Council also thanked the ECO Secretary General and his staff for their efforts to make a success of the meeting.



The 2nd Trade Officers Working Group (TOWG) Meeting: (22 November 2007)

The sessions of the meeting included the following-

- a. Presentation on ECOTA by the ECO Secretariat
- b. Analysis of regional trade
- c. Business opportunities in the Member States
- d. Compilation of the TOWG Newsletter (Issue No. 2)

FIRST SESSION

ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA)

Presentation by Director Trade & Investment

The main points of the presentation on ECOTA included the following:

- ECOTA developed as a result of the Protocol on Preferential Tariff Arrangement signed by the ECO Member States on 23 May 1991. Under this arrangement, the signatories had agreed to reduce tariffs by 10% on commodities contained in their respective lists.
- The negotiations on finalizing a Preferential Trade Agreement began to offer substantial benefits of market access to Member States. It was visualized that implementation of ECOTA would entail significant benefits leading to opening up of trade and facilitating greater flow of investment.
- ECOTA Framework Agreement comprised 39 Articles. Details of various important Articles of the ECOTA Framework Agreement were shared with the participants.

Participants were informed that so far, ECOTA has been signed by five Member States, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Turkey and ratified by four signatory Member States except Iran. As Iran had also conveyed to ratify it very soon, ECOTA was expected to complete the requisite number of ratifications and would soon be enforced.

Third Ministerial Meeting on Commerce/Foreign Trade (Istanbul, July 7, 2005) signed a Protocol for the annexure of ECOTA on; (i) Rules of Origin, (ii) Anti-Dumping Measures, (iii) State Aid, (iv) Intellectual Property Rights. The said Protocol was signed by four signatory members to ECOTA, i.e. Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey.

The 98th Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) has designated the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as coordinator country for ECOTA. The coordinating country prepared a draft Action Plan which was circulated to Member States in April 2006. The Action Plan specified programmes and activities to operationalize ECOTA and suggests a strategy for non-signatory Member States to become a Party or re-align some of their tariff and non-tariff structures in the framework of ECOTA.

Moreover, guidance and best practices assisted by workshops/seminars for smooth implementation of ECOTA were being prepared. A Workshop on Potential Benefits of ECOTA had been planned to be organized in Tajikistan on December 5-6, 2007 at Dushanbe, as advised by 17th RPC. The Secretariat planned a series of similar workshops in other Member States.

The Secretariat had prepared a list of pending actions/administrative measures to be taken by the Contracting Parties for timely implementation of the agreement. The same had been circulated to Member States and a deadline for August 31, 2007 was set for requisite response.

A Cooperation Council was to be established as per Article 29 to coordinate, liaison, monitor, administer and supervise the operation and

implementation of ECOTA. Accordingly, a draft Rules of Procedures for the Cooperation Council, prepared by the Islamic Republic of Iran was circulated to Member States in April 2004.

Fast Track Approach:

The 2nd High Level Expert Group (HLEG) meeting on Trade, Investment, and Other Related Matters (Islamabad, March 17-19, 2005) finalized the draft text of the Protocol on Fast Track Approach to ECOTA.

The Protocol was presented to the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Commerce/Foreign Trade (July 7, 2005) held in Istanbul, Turkey, to be signed but due to some principles/reservations emerged during the Meeting, it was not signed.

According to the recommendations of 17th RPC, the three Member States would have an exclusive meeting shortly to resolve their differences and sign the said Protocol. The three founding member states had been urged to finalize the Principles of Optional Protocol on Fast Track Approach.

SECOND SESSION

The 2nd ECO Business Forum and Buyers / Sellers Meeting on Construction Materials October 24-25, 2007, Istanbul, Turkey

The 2nd ECO Business Forum/Buyers Sellers Meeting on Construction Materials held on October 24-25, 2007 in Istanbul, Turkey was attended by the delegation from Government, Trade Support Organizations and Companies in the field of Construction Materials from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, State Planning Organization (SPO) of the Republic of Turkey, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ITO), International Trade Centre (ITC) and ECO Secretariat.

The Business Forum was inaugurated by Dr. Ahmet TIKTIK, Undersecretary of the SPO.

The representatives of Export Promotion Centre of the Republic of Turkey (IGEME) and Istanbul Chamber of Commerce made presentations highlighting Demand/Supply surveys carried out by these organizations on the Construction and Building Materials. The ITC Representative outlined the broad parameters adopted for conducting surveys/studies at the international level. Experts made Presentation on the General Trends and Challenges in the Construction Materials Sector.

The delegate from Pakistan proposed that under the 2nd Phase of ECO-ITC Project, the component relating to the Auto Part Industry and 3rd Business Forum would be undertaken by his country in the first half of 2008. The delegate of Afghanistan informed that a specialized Fair on Construction Material and Energy related Machinery and Equipments was to be held in Kabul during March/April 2008. An invitation for participation by the Construction Materials Sector of ECO Countries was extended during Business Forum Meeting.

The recommendations formulated by the Business Leaders focused on:

1. Early implementation of ECO Initiatives/Projects i.e. ECOTA, TTFA, Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Businessmen and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters;
2. Institutionalizing the Business Forum;
3. Re-activate and build the capacity of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI);
4. Role of ECO Trade and Development Bank for enhancement of private sector cooperation and opening of bank branches in each other countries;
5. Facilitation of Transport and Transit Trade in the ECO region;
6. Visa Facilitation for Businessmen;
7. Proposed Studies on construction sectors;

8. Exchange of Information;
9. Technical Assistance to be sought from the international organizations i.e. WTO, UNCTAD, WCO, ITC and SPECA.

The ECO Buyers / Sellers Meeting on Construction Materials

The ECO Buyers/Sellers Meeting on Construction Materials held on October 25, 2007 – Istanbul, Turkey, was attended by over 50 companies working in the field of constructions materials representing Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Meeting was coordinated and facilitated by SPO, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ITO) and ECO Secretariat.

The participants discussed prospects of import, export, investment and joint ventures of selected construction materials i.e. marble and granite, iron and steel, glass, aluminum, plastic, paints, varnishes, chemicals, sanitary ware and cement. The businessmen were able to negotiate business deals and agreed to represent each other in their countries. The participants exchanged information through their catalogues, brochures and publicity material. The Turkish firms also invited businessmen to visit their manufacturing units.

Workshop on Potential Benefits of ECOTA (5-6 December 2007 - Dushanbe, Tajikistan)

The participants were informed that Republic of Tajikistan was hosting a 2-day Workshop on Potential Benefits of ECOTA scheduled from 5-6 December 2007 at Dushanbe.

The Workshop would highlight salient features of the ECO Trade Agreement. The major focus of the Workshop would be the potential benefits in terms of expansion in trade and investment activities in the region as well as the strengthening of integration process of the economies both at regional and international level. Economic indicators, trends in trade and investment, future prospects, market potential of

tradable goods and opportunities for the private sector would also be focused during various sessions of the Workshop.

ECO-UNIDO Joint Project on Trade Capacity Building of ECO Member States

The TOWG was informed that the ECO-UNIDO Joint Project on Trade Capacity Building of ECO Member States - Survey on Barriers to Trade will be launched during November and December 2007. The activities carried out under the Project included the completion of a Survey followed by an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) held in the ECO Secretariat, Tehran on 18-19 December, 2007.

To carry out the Survey, two sets of questionnaire were developed which related to the Ministry of Commerce / Foreign Trade and the Ministry of Industries and standardization authorities. The joint survey teams during their visits to Member States would discuss following proposals:

- Action on the questionnaire and presentations to be made by the nominated focal points during the EGMs.
- Possibilities of holding similar EGMs by the Member States
- Positions on the pending issues relating to ECOTA
- Input and active participation in the upcoming projects, meetings, studies and other programmes to be coordinated by Trade and Investment Directorate of ECO

THIRD SESSION

Trade Review

Trade Officers of Iran and Turkey provided trade figures of their respective countries with other ECO Member States.

Iran's Trade (Exports & Imports) with ECO Countries in 2006

Value in million US\$

Name of Country	Export	Import	Trade Balance
Afghanistan	503.4	7.0	496.3
Azerbaijan	333.8	218.9	114.9
Kazakhstan	71.2	283.0	-211.8
Kyrgyzstan	44.5	14.2	30.3
Pakistan	295.6	157.6	137.9
Tajikistan	128.4	6.6	121.8
Turkey	320.0	804.2	-484.1
Turkmenistan	151.4	297.5	-146.1
Uzbekistan	70.4	166.9	-96.4
Total	1,919.1	1,956.3	-37.2

Turkey's Trade (Exports & Imports) with ECO Countries

Value in million US\$

Country	2003		2004		2005		2006	
	Export	Import	Export	Import	Export	Import	Export	Import
Azerbaijan	315.5	122.6	403.9	135.5	528.1	272.3	695.3	340.5
Kazakhstan	234	266.6	355.6	442.2	460	558.9	696.8	993.7
Turkmenistan	170.3	123.7	214.8	175.8	180.6	160.7	281.3	189.9
Uzbekistan	138.4	99.5	145.2	178.7	151.1	261.5	176	415.8
Tajikistan	29.5	57	41.6	62.8	46.7	47.3	71.8	118.4
Kyrgyzstan	40.8	10.9	74.7	13.4	89.5	14.1	132.2	27.5
Iran	533.8	1,860.7	813	1,962.0	912.9	3,469.7	1,066.9	5,626.7
Afghanistan	36.5	2.7	70.9	6.8	113.4	8.3	91.1	9.6
Pakistan	70.4	192	86.4	240.7	187.6	315.5	129.6	379.6
Total	1,569.2	2,735.7	2,206.1	3,217.9	2,669.9	5,108.3	3,341	8,101.7

Business organizations, firms recommended by the Trade Officers of Pakistan and Turkey for introduction and publicity in other ECO Member States. A list of Trade Films to be held in Turkey was also included in the Newsletter circulated to all the Member States.

The 3rd TOWG Meeting (14 January 2008)

It was decided by the participants that the 3rd TOWG Meeting will be held on 14 January 2008. The sessions of the meeting will include the following:

(i) Presentation by ECO on:

- ***Agreement on Establishment of ECO Smuggling and Customs Offences Data Bank***

(ii) Bilateral Agreements between the ECO Member States

(iii) Trade Review

(iv) Trade Opportunities

(v) Discussion on Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs)

(vi) Preparation of 3rd Newsletter

Workshop on Potential Benefits of ECOTA 5-6 December 2007- Dushanbe, Tajikistan:

In accordance with the decision of the 16th Meeting of the Regional Planning Council (February 2006, Tehran), the Republic of Tajikistan announced to organize the two day Workshop in Dushanbe on 5-6 December 2007.

The Workshop was attended by the representatives of Economic Ministries/Departments, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tajikistan, delegates from ECO countries, ECO officials and Trade officers of the embassies of ECO Member States.

Her Excellency Madam Kislyakova Larisa Pavlovna, the Deputy Minister of Economy and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan addressing the Opening Session, underlined the significance of ECO for Tajikistan. She regarded ECO as an important forum in terms of economic reforms of

the Government of Tajikistan which can eventually lead the national economy to regional and world integration.

The Minister in her statement touched upon various ECO initiatives that are of real benefit for the economic development of Tajikistan and other regional countries. She particularly mentioned the need for tangible progress in the fields of transit trade, banking, visa procedures, energy cooperation and free movement of goods and labour across the regional borders. She dwelt at length on the liberal economic policies followed by her Government which are directed at deepening of integration process, opening up of trade and expansion of cooperation with the regional countries.

The Minister, while referring to ECO agreements ratified by Tajikistan expressed the hope that this effective strategy will contribute towards development of regional trade, transit and transport cooperation. The ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) providing for gradual reduction of tariffs and removal of Non Tariff Barriers (NTBs) should be signed and ratified by all the Member States to enhance regional cooperation in trade. She emphasized the need to speed up action on liberalizing trade policies, harmonization and simplification of customs procedures, application of standards and reducing bottlenecks hindering regional trade.

The Director (Trade and Investment) ECO Secretariat thanked the host authorities for taking the lead in organizing the first Workshop on Potential Benefits of ECOTA in Dushanbe. He mentioned that ECO attaches highest priority to the development of regional trade and investment. In his statement, the Director provided regional trade and investment scenario as well as the current initiatives and project aiming for increased cooperation at public and private sector levels.

Following presentations were made by the officials of ECO and the Government of Tajikistan during different sessions:

1. Overview of ECO Objectives - Focus on Trade and Investment,

2. Salient Features of ECO Trade Agreement(ECOTA),
3. Regional Economic Indicators – Trends in Trade and Investment
4. Potential Benefits of ECOTA,
5. Benefits of ECOTA and Pakistan's Market Access Initiatives
6. Features of Trade Policy and Export Development of Tajikistan.
7. Country Presentation on Iran's Trade Performance.
8. Functioning of the Central Bank of Tajikistan-Activities for the financial sector.
9. Objectives, Functions of the State Committee on Investment and Management of State Property of Republic of Tajikistan
10. Strategy to increase the import-export potential of Tajikistan.
11. Promotion/Attraction of Investment of Foreign Companies in Trade Development
12. Agriculture Sector Development and Potential.

Participants of the Workshop, after having an interactive session, formulated recommendations for future course of action. It was a unanimous view that ECOTA, being a comprehensive document will greatly contribute in promotion of regional trade and investment. The commitments made by the ECO Member States at the highest political level need to be translated into action and its implementation may be announced at the earliest. The Workshop recommendations forwarded to Member States for necessary action are appended below:-

1. To propose to the Government of Tajikistan to take coordinating role in the field of investment promotion within ECO frameworks.
2. ECO Secretariat shall initiate development of modalities and Plan of

Events for acceleration of the process of coming into force and realization of ECOTA.

3. Early accession of the Republic of Tajikistan to ECO Trade and Development Bank to utilize the Bank's resources for enhancement of customs' terminals in borders and other infrastructures facilitating trade.
4. To strength participation of banks and lending agencies for payment of custom fees for transit of goods.
5. To address the issue of providing methodological assistance to ECO Member States in customs administration.
6. To establish a Working Group for finalization of tariff and non-tariff barriers' issues, preparation of common list of sensitive goods for ECO Member States.
7. To consider the establishment of ECO Commission on Export Promotion.
8. Establish Association of ECO Exporters and Investors.
9. To recommend closer cooperation between Chambers of Commerce and Industry of ECO Member States.
10. To organize necessary events to persuade non signatory ECO Member States to join ECOTA and also to expedite signing of TTFA, Agreement on Customs Cooperation, Protocol on Phytosanitary Measures, and Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for ECO Member States' Businessmen.
11. To involve financial and lending agencies of ECO in realization of initiatives within ECO frameworks.
12. Research economic and investment potentials of ECO Member States.
13. Develop exchange mechanism for statistical information between ECO Member States according to an agreed format.

14. ECO Secretariat shall find solution for frequent update of information on ECO website and to provide availability of materials in Russian Language.

(Details of the Workshop Sessions may be seen at ECO Website www.ecosecretariat.org)

ECO-UNIDO Project on Trade Capacity Building for ECO Member Countries – Survey on Barriers to Trade:

In line with the declared policy of ECO to develop and strengthen contact with international organization, a Project proposal on Trade Capacity Building of ECO countries was finalized with UNIDO. After having discussed all aspects during several meetings held between the two organizations, a proposal to share the costs was submitted to CPR. The 125th Meeting of CPR accorded approval to implement the project.

Both organizations agreed to undertake following activities under the Project:-

1. ECO-UNIDO Joint Survey on Standards and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).
2. Expert Group Meeting "Trade Capacity Building for ECO Member Countries"

The joint survey on standards and NTBs was carried out by ECO-UNIDO Joint teams in accordance with two sets of questionnaires on Standards and NTBs. The survey teams during their meetings with the Ministry of Commerce and Organizations dealing with standards have discussed country positions on the following issues:

- o Action on the questionnaire and presentations to be made by the nominated focal points during the EGMs.
- o Possibilities of holding similar EGMs by the Member States
- o Positions on the pending issues relating to ECOTA
- o Input and active participation in the upcoming projects, meetings, studies and other programmes to be coordinated

by Trade and Investment Directorate of ECO.

The EGM was held on 18-19 December 2007 in the ECO Secretariat, Tehran and the results of the survey and other constraints to trade with particular attention to standards / quality / NTB's and how best to confront these constraints were considered. After two days of thorough deliberations, the EGM formulated its recommendations.

Important recommendation of EGM included continuation of ECO UNIDO activities for strengthening of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ) infrastructure of Member States, expanding assistance in identifying and analyzing NTBs/PTBs, accessing WTO, institutional support for meeting Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) / Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary (SPS) measures. Working Group has also been proposed to make further progress on developing a data base. Proposal was also made for organizing specialized events / fairs to promote technology transfer and investment.



Ambassador Hassan Taherian joins ECO Secretariat:

Ambassador Hassan Taherian joined the ECO Secretariat as Deputy Secretary General on the 1st of January 2008 in place of Dr. Sohrab Shahabi. Amb. Taherian holds Masters Degree in Economics from the University of Houston, USA. He is a career diplomat, held important positions in Iran and abroad including two assignments as Ambassador of Iran to D.P.R. Korea and Ireland. He also served in Iranian Embassies in Seoul (South Korea) and Tokyo (Japan). His last assignment was Adviser to the Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Affairs.





“Natural Disasters in the ECO region”

By: Davoud Rezaee, Programme Officer

This article attempts to examine the most commonly occurring natural disasters in the ECO region. It is followed by the results of a short survey on selected natural disasters in Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Introduction:

Natural Disasters are an unavoidable part of the life. Natural Disasters can be classified on basis of origin into three broad categories: Hydro meteorological, Geological and Biological. These 3 categories include a wide range of disasters such as Floods, Storms, Drought, Earthquakes, Landslides, Outbreaks of epidemic diseases, plant or animal contagion etc.

Natural disasters are increasing in terms of frequency, complexity, scope and destructive capacity. Even at the beginning of the third millennium a world without hazards and disasters is, unfortunately, unthinkable and unachievable. The risk of natural disasters is increasing as a result of population growth, urbanization, alteration of the natural environment, substandard construction, inadequate infrastructure maintenance as well as poverty exacerbation in numerous communities.

There is an inverse relationship between development and the extent of devastation caused by natural disasters. Poor and developing countries suffer the greatest damage in terms of loss of life as well as in social and economic terms due lack of resources, infrastructures and protective systems for disaster preparedness and prevention.¹

Most Common Natural Disasters in ECO Region:

1. Droughts

Droughts are complex phenomena that affect more people than any other natural hazard and have adverse economic, social, and environmental impacts in both developing and developed countries. In recent decades droughts have occurred more frequently and for prolonged periods causing massive problems of food insecurity, environmental degradation, migration, crop and livestock losses resulting in huge economic and ecological losses as well.

Droughts are one of most common natural disasters that afflict the ECO region. The region underwent a severe drought from 1998-2003 and affected more than 100 million people throughout the region.

2. Floods

Floods are another common natural disaster that frequently afflict the countries of the ECO region. Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Tajikistan are the most flood prone countries of the region. 243 floods were recorded during the last half century in the ECO region.

3. Earthquakes

ECO countries are located in one of the seismically active areas of the world. Earthquakes kill more people than any other natural disaster. A large number of earthquakes have hit the region in recent years. Recent earthquakes in Istanbul, Bam, Zarand and most devastating one that shook Pakistan and parts of Afghanistan on 8th October 2005 are clear examples of the severity of the problem and the need for strengthened cooperation in the field of disaster preparedness and to cope with the aftermath.

Based on data bases on natural disasters, six of the Most Deadly 100 Natural Disasters of the 20th Century, occurred in ECO countries specifically in Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, all of them being earthquakes and resulting in a total

¹ http://www.unesco.org/science/disaster/about_disaster.shtml

of 183000² casualties. However, the devastating earthquakes that hit Iran (2003 & 2006), Turkey (2003) and Pakistan (2005) have increased this figure substantially.

The following table shows frequency of different natural disasters in ECO region during the last fifty years.

Most common Natural Disasters in ECO countries from 1954 to 2007 ³

Country	Draught	Earthquake	Flood	Slides
Afghanistan	2	27	53	10
Azerbaijan	-	3	5	1
Iran	2	89	64	4
Kazakh	-	1	4	1
Kyrgyz	-	4	2	7
Pakistan	1	22	59	16
Tajikistan	-	5	19	10
Turkey	-	71	35	8
Turkmenistan (1993-2000)	-	1	1	-
Uzbekistan (1992-2005)	-	1	1	2
Total	5	224	243	59

The table reveals that earthquakes and floods are the most frequent natural disasters occurring in the region. However it is worth mentioning that droughts affect more people than any other natural disaster.

A short survey of selected Natural Disasters in the ECO region; Case Study in Iran; Pakistan and Turkey

The following tables and charts indicate the most devastating natural disasters (in terms of casualties caused) that have occurred in Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. Charts showing the percentage of people killed and affected by different types of calamities till 2007 in each

². Source:

<http://www.disastercenter.com/disaster/TOPI00K.html>

³. Source: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, www.em-dat.net

country are also given. Damages in monetary terms are also indicated.

Iran:

Top 10 Natural Disasters in Iran

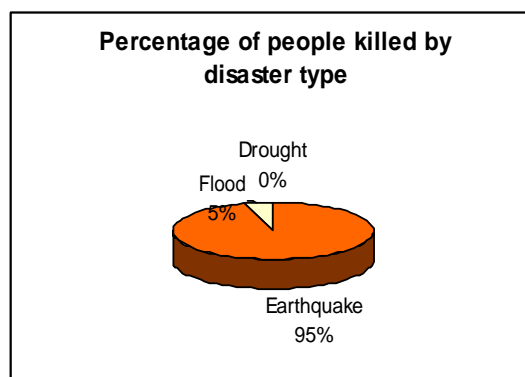
Number of people killed

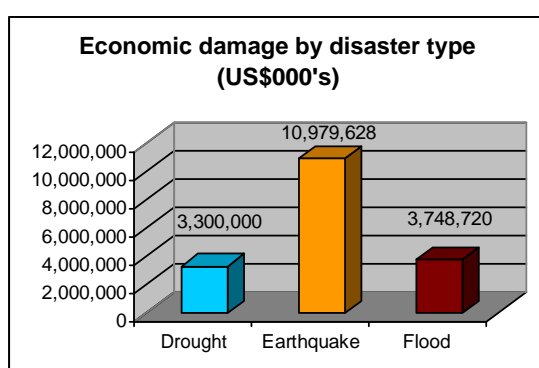
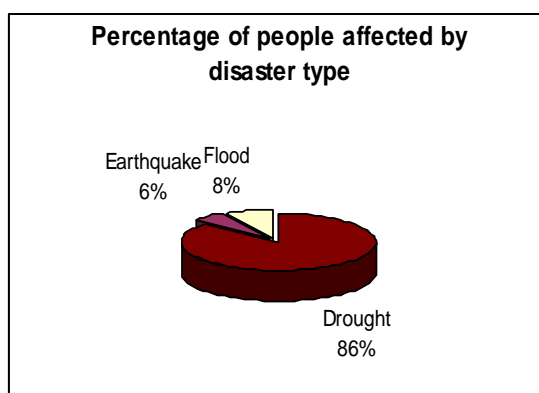
Disaster	Date	Killed
Earthquake	1-Jun-1990	40,000
Earthquake	26-Dec-2003	26,796
Earthquake	16-Sep-1978	25,000
Earthquake	Sep-1962	12,000
Earthquake	31-Aug-1968	10,000
Earthquake	10-Apr-1972	5,057
Earthquake	23-Jan-1909	5,000
Earthquake	1-May-1929	3,300
Earthquake	13-Dec-1957	3,000
Earthquake	6-May-1930	2,500

Number of people affected

Disaster	Date	Affected
Drought	Apr-1999	37,000,000
Flood	10-Aug-2001	1,200,200
Flood	Jul-1980	950,000
Earthquake	21-Jun-1990	710,000
Drought	Jan 1964	625,000
Flood	3-Feb-1993	484,728
Earthquake	7-Apr-1977	400,000
Earthquake	26-Dec-2003	267,628
Flood	12-Aug-2002	200,000
Earthquake	30-Mar-2006	161,418

Natural Disaster in Iran from 1909-2007





Source: "EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, www.em-dat.net - Université catholique de Louvain - Brussels – Belgium

As the charts show, during the last one century earthquakes killed far more people than any other disaster in Iran - 95% of the deaths from disasters were caused by earthquakes. It also caused more economic damage than any other natural disaster. Drought did not kill directly, but did affect vast majority of people - more than 80% of those affected by disasters.

Pakistan:

Top 10 Natural Disasters in Pakistan

Number of people killed

Disaster	Date	Killed
Earthquake	8-Oct-2005	73,338
Earthquake	31-May-1935	60,000
Wind Storm	15-Dec-1965	10,000
Earthquake	28-Dec-1974	4,700
Earthquake	27-Nov-1945	4,000
Flood	1950	2,900

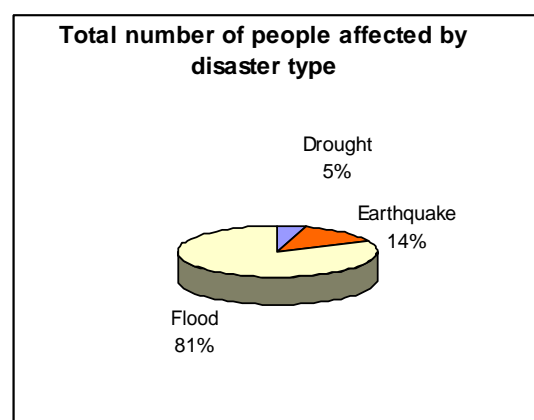
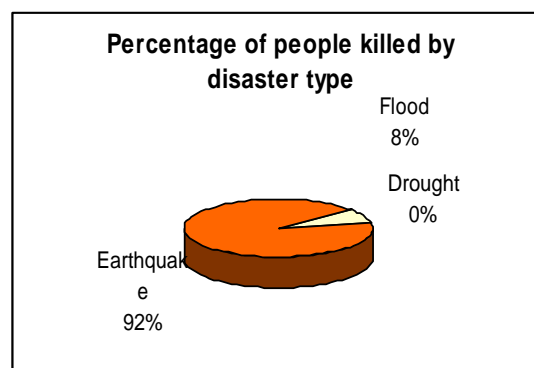
Flood	Sep-1992	1,334
Flood	3-Mar-1998	1,000
Flood	Jun-1977	848
Wind Storm	14-Nov-1993	609

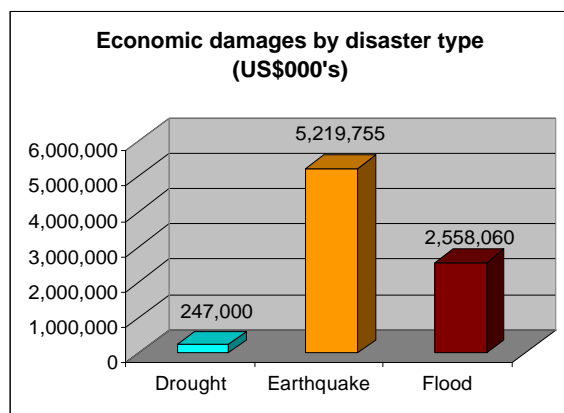
Number of people affected

Disaster	Date	Affected
Flood	Sep-1992	12,324,024
Flood	9 Feb-2005	7,000,450
Flood	30-Jul-1992	6,184,418
Flood	2-Aug-1976	5,566,000
earthquake	8-Oct-2005	5,128,000
Flood	Aug-1973	4,800,000
Flood	Jul-1978	2,246,000
Drought	Nov-1999	2,200,000
Wind Storm	26-Jan-2007	1,650,000
Flood	24-Aug-1996	1,300,000

Source: OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database / Oct-5-2007 - Data version: v03.07

Natural Disasters in Pakistan until 2007





As the charts show, considering the number of people killed and damages in economic terms, earthquakes have proven to be the most devastating form of natural disaster for Pakistan. However, more people have been affected by Floods in this country.

Turkey:

Top 10 Natural Disasters in Turkey

Number of people killed

Disaster	Date	Killed
Earthquake	26-Dec-1939	32,962
Earthquake	17-Aug-1999	17,127
Earthquake	29-Apr-1903	6,000
Earthquake	26-Nov-1942	4,000
Earthquake	1-Feb-1944	3,959
Earthquake	24-Nov-1976	3,840
Earthquake	20-Dec-1942	3,000
Earthquake	26-Nov-1943	2,824
Earthquake	19-Aug-1966	2,394
Earthquake	6-Sep-1975	2,385

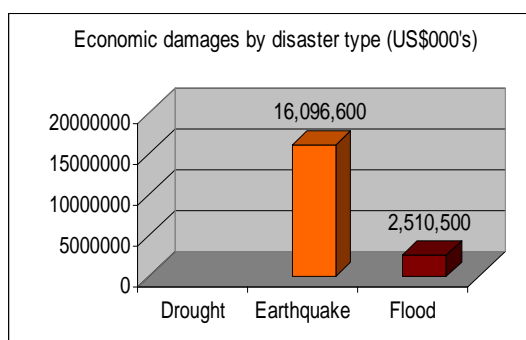
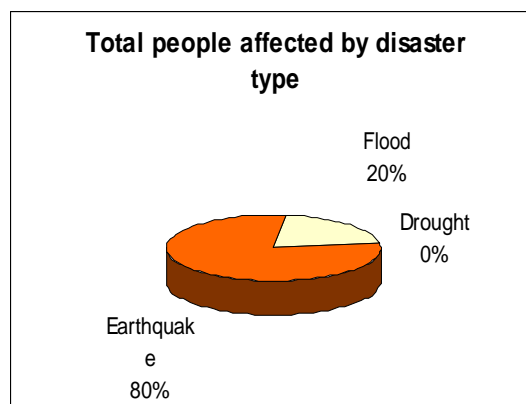
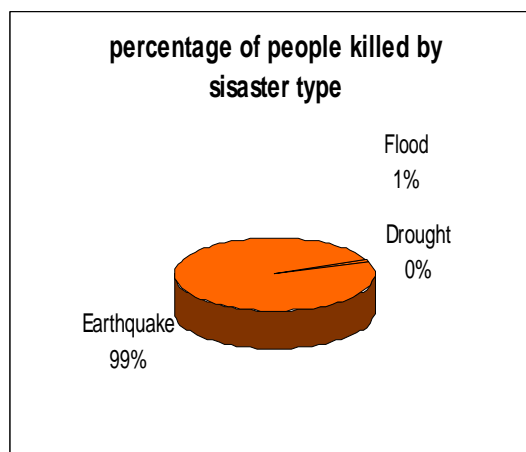
Number of people affected

Disaster	Date	Affected
Earthquake	28-Jan-1998	1,589,600
Earthquake	17-Aug-1999	1,358,953
Flood	20-May-1998	1,240,047
Earthquake	30-Oct-1983	834,137
Earthquake	18-Sep-1984	375,038
Earthquake	18-Oct-1984	375,035
Earthquake	13-Mar-1992	348,850

Earthquake	22-Jul-1967	326,073
Flood	4-Nov-1995	306,617
Earthquake	1-May-2003	290,520

Source: OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database / Oct-05-07

Natural Disaster in Turkey from 1903-2007



As indicated in the charts, for Turkey whereas droughts have not been a serious problem at all, earthquakes have proven to be the most devastating form of natural disaster during recent years, both in terms of casualties and people affected as well as in monetary terms.



The 2nd ECO High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Human Resource Development and Millennium Development:

Second ECO High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Human Resource Development and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be held on 11-12 February 2008 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

During this meeting representatives of member states will deliver presentation giving details of their national activities with regard to Human Resources Development and MDGs Achievements. It is expected that the country reports will cover the status of Human Resources Development in the concerned country; availability of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and its main elements and prospect of MDG's implementation and main challenges.

However, participants will provide their needs and capabilities in this regard and give their proposal/comments for identifying priority areas for regional cooperation and prioritizing the MDGs, based on the situation of MDGs attainment in the region.

First ECO High Level Experts Group (HLEG) Meeting on Human Resource Development and Millennium Development Goals was held on 19-20 December 2006 in Ankara, Turkey.

The 18th meeting of ECO's Regional Planning Council (RPC):

The 18th meeting of ECO's Regional Planning Council (RPC) is scheduled to be held in Islamabad on March 3-6, 2008. The meeting, held annually, focuses on the policies and programmes of the organization, and evolves the calendar of events for the coming year. New plans and programmes are drawn up in accordance with the principles and objectives of regional cooperation as laid down in the Treaty of Izmir, as well as policy guidelines and directives of the COM. At the forthcoming RPC meeting, seven committees on priority areas of cooperation and service directorates will hold discussion on various activities of the Organization.

The four-day deliberations of the RPC and its Working Committees would cover important issues in such fields as trade and investment, transport and communications, energy and minerals, agriculture and environment, industry and tourism. The participants would also discuss ECO's Specialized Agencies and relations with regional and international organizations.

The Regional Planning Council plays an important role in carrying out the activities of the ECO. It has technical committees to assist it in its task. The plans and programmes framed by RPC will be submitted to the 18th Council of Ministers which will be held in autumn of 2008 in Pakistan.





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