



FINAL REPORT

**TRADE FACILITATION
COMMITTEE MEETING**

ECO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Nov 6, 2012
Ankara-Turkey



**Final Report of the
Trade Facilitation Committee Meeting of
ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO CCI)
Nov 6, 2012, Ankara-Turkey**

1. The Fourth meeting of the Trade Facilitation Committee of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, hosted by Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) was held on Nov 6 -2012 in Ankara- Turkey. The representatives of the Trade Facilitation Committee from Chambers of Commerce and Industry of I R Afghanistan, I R Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan ,Turkey as well as delegates from the ECO Secretariat participated in the meeting (List at Annex I).

Agenda Item No – 1: Inauguration of the meeting

The meeting was inaugurated with the welcome remarks of head of ECOCCI trade facilitation committee; Mr Amjad Rafi,

Agenda Item No – 2: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The draft agenda of the meeting was adopted by the Meeting. Amendments, if any, may be included:

- 1- Inauguration of the Meeting
- 2- Adoption of the Agenda
- 3- Appointment of the Drafting Committee
- 4- Statement by the Chairman of Trade Facilitation Committee
- 5- Activity Report by Secretary General, ECO CCI
- 6- Remarks by heads of delegations
- 7- Briefing the Committee by the ECO Secretariat especially on the ECOTA implementation.
- 8- Presentation on the Exhibition System in Turkey by TOBB.
- 9- Points by delegate(s) from Afghanistan on latest status of the ECO Business Forum and Buyers Sellers Meeting on pharmaceutical/construction/textile and plastic materials to be held in 2012 in Kabul, Afghanistan.
- 10- Any Other Business
- 11- Date and Venue of the next Meeting
- 12- Adoption of the Report
- 13- Vote of Thanks

Agenda Item No – 3: Appointment of the Drafting Committee

4. A Drafting Committee consisting of the Members of the Trade Facilitation Committee was formed to prepare the Draft Report of the Meeting.

Agenda Item No – 4: Statement of Chairman

2. Mr Amjad Rafi, chairman of the Trade Facilitation Committee delivered his opening statement.

In his remarks he underlined the low share of intra ECO trade in the overall trade of member countries and called for following up the current activities for promotion of intra ECO transactions.

He pointed out that many products can be traded from within the region by measures such as early implementation of preferential trade agreements (ECOTA) and there is an urgent need for VISA STICKER Issuance for facilitation of travelling.

He also urged Ratification of annexure by Tajikistan in order that ECOTA starts functioning.

Agenda Item No – 5: Activity Report by Secretary General, ECO CCI

6. The ECO CCI Secretary General presented the ECO CCI Activity Report since the 3rd Trade Facilitation Committee Meeting. (Annex II)

Agenda Item No-6: Remarks by heads of delegations

7. Heads of delegations made their remarks under this agenda item

Hence below decisions were taken by the Trade Facilitation Committee as a result of above remarks:

- Capacity building and development of Central Asian chambers of commerce shall be taken into consideration by member chambers
- Provision of free exhibition area to ECO member countries should be conducted on bilateral and multilateral basis in collaboration of the relevant authorities of member countries
- Continuous holding of the ECO Trade Fair should be followed by relevant authorities in member countries
- Annual/biannual regular holding of the ECO Business Forum/Buyers- Sellers Meetings shall be conducted through collaboration of the ECO CCI, ECO Secretariat and relevant authorities in member states.
- ECO Trade and Development (ECO TDB)Bank was called to further develop its activities through increase of its capital, expansion of its activities to trade operations (L/C opening), collaboration of the private sector banks of the region in ETDB's portfolio and increasing the number of member countries to the benefit of the private sector of the region .

ECOTDB be also requested to look in to the possibility of financing the ITI Train operation.

- The governments of member countries are called to take measures such as border management, practice of single window operations at borders of member countries. adopting the harmonized system of HS customs formalities including ASYCUDA, exchange of trade information, shortening of the freight forwarding periods ,enhancing of trainings for the border agents and establishment of free trade zones in member countries.
- TOBB proposed to share its experience on modernization of the border gates.
- In order for publishing the Sector Specific Trade Directory of ECO member countries through booklet/website of the ECO CCI , the member countries shall

provide their list of companies involved in Construction Materials, Pharmaceuticals, Auto parts and textiles for this purpose to the ECO CCI Secretariat subject to the approval of the 17th Executive Committee Meeting.

- Coordinate efforts and resource/skill sharing of other regional organizations such as OIC/CAREC/SPECA/SAARC in terms of Trade Facilitation was encouraged by the members of committee
- The ECO member countries are called within a period of not more than 3 months to make a list of their obligations approved during ECO Council of Ministers/RPC/Summit in the field of trade facilitation to be followed up by ECOCCI Secretariat.

Agenda Item No-7 : Briefing the Committee by the ECO Secretariat

8. The ECO Secretariat Representative briefed the committee about the 3rd meeting of ECOTA cooperation council in Ankara and the 12th council of minister meeting in Baku in 15 October where it was called upon the contracting parties of ECOTA to complete all legal and procedural requirements for implementation of agreement with effect from January 1, 2013.

The ECO Secretariat representative briefed the committee on the latest implementations made by them regarding the decisions of the previous meeting.(Annex III)

He made points about the importance of ECO Trade Agreement and its components in which the member states (Except Afghanistan) are required to reduce the tariffs of 80% listed goods to a maximum of 15% in a period of 8 years.

He informed that due to decisions of the 3rd Meeting of ECOTA Cooperation Council in Ankara and the Meeting of the Council of Ministers, as of Oct 14,2012 all the lists shall be provided by all member countries and the agreement will be implemented from Jan 2013.

Agenda Item No-8:Presentation on the Exhibition System in Turkey by the TOBB:

9. Under this item the delegate from the Union of the Turkish Chamber and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey Mrs Selen Turkoglu made a presentation on the Exhibition System in Turkey. (Annex IV)

In her presentation she underlined the function of TOBB in holding the annual fairs and exhibitions by issuing certificate of competence to requesting companies.

Agenda Item No-9 : Points by delegate(s) from Afghanistan on latest status of the ECO Business Forum and Buyers Sellers Meeting on pharmaceutical/construction/textile and plastic materials to be held in 2012 in Kabul, Afghanistan.

10 .Under this agenda item delegate(s) from Afghanistan raised their points on latest status of the ECO Business Forum and Buyers Sellers Meeting on pharmaceutical/construction/textile and plastic materials to be held in 2012 in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan CCI was requested to communicate the new date of the Fourth ECO Business Forum (EBF) in Kabul at the earliest as the budget will expire in December 2012.

Agenda Item No- 10: Any Other Business

11. Delegate from Tajikistan outlined the general trading trend of his country which trades 42% of its total foreign trade with ECO member countries.

He further explained the capacities of ECO region in intra ECO trade and encouraged other member countries to follow the path of Tajikistan in order to raise the level of intra ECO trade and investment. He further informed the session that due to a new law in Tajikistan, the importation tariffs cannot exceed 15%.

Agenda Item No – 11: Date and Venue of the next Meeting

12. Date and venue of the 5th Meeting of Trade Facilitation Committee of ECO CCI was left to the decision of the 12th General Assembly and 17th Executive Committee Meetings of the ECO CCI.

Agenda Item No – 12: Adoption of the Report

13. The Meeting unanimously adopted the Draft Report of 4th Trade Facilitation Committee Meeting of ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECO CCI) and decided to present the Report to the 17th Executive Committee of ECO CCI.

Agenda Item No – 13: Vote of Thanks

14. The participating Heads of delegations/members offered their thanks to the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) for the excellent arrangements made to hold this important meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to the participants during their stay in Ankara. The participants may also appreciate the contribution of the ECO Secretariat for providing the necessary assistance and support.