

STATEMENT
of the Ambassador at large of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan
Bahodur Abdulloev
at the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers

Islamabad, 15-17 May, 2007

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen**

Let me first of all cordially congratulate His Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mr. Khurshid Kasuri with the appointment of Chairmen of the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers and express gratitude to the Government of Pakistan for hospitality and excellent arrangement of our Meeting.

I also wish to thank the OIC Secretariat headed by the Secretary General Professor Dr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu for valuable contribution in preparing the Session.

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Today the role of the Organization of Islamic Countries in protecting the interests of Muslim people and nations has greatly increased. The reforms planned within the OIC would further strengthen the Organization. Implementation of decisions adopted during the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, full-fledged realization of the OIC Ten Year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century, as well as Recommendations of the group of eminent people can have a positive impact on the process of further improving the Organization.

Mutual understanding and the development of constructive dialog between the different cultures and civilization, long-standing political, economic and humanitarian ties among nations are vital at this stage of the mankind history. In this context, we consider our Organizations, as one of the most important international mechanisms which can promote progress and prosperity of our countries and create all necessary conditions for it. We are convinced that, our relations with the OIC member-states will assist in providing the confidence area and friendly cooperation.

It gives me a great pleasure to mark that taking into consideration the increasing role of the Organization and its member-states in the system of modern economic and international relations, the Parliament of Tajikistan in 2006 decided to join the Parliamentary Union of the OIC member-states.

Dear colleagues,

Today's world is characterizing by deepening the processes of globalization and regionalization in the economy, from the other side by expanding the scales of poverty, which serves as a main reason for social intensity in the society. In this conditions as the most important directions of our joint actions we see in establishing effective and productive cooperation in preventing the main threats – terrorism, extremism, arms and drug smuggling, transnational crime, as well as environmental and technogeneuous catastrophes. The prevention of such negative tendencies as clash of civilizations also should consist one of our main tasks.

Contribution of Tajikistan in combating the international terrorism, constructive and coherent efforts of the country in establishing global antinarcotics coalition, the initiative within the UN on the implementation of the Decade of Actions "Water for Life" Programme for the years 2005-2015, supported by more than 140 countries of the world are good examples of our practical participation in solving the actual global problems.

Tajikistan expresses serious concern with the spread of Islamophobia phenomenon as one of the forms of racism. Appealing to the appearances of a number of caricatures and satirical images of the Prophet Muhammad in the media of some of Western countries, we state that this abusive act violates the human morality and ethics norms and may not serve to the interests of developing friendly relations between different nations and civilizations. Unfortunately, Islam often conjures in the western minds images of authoritarian government, subjugation of women, cruel punishments and violence in the popular Western mind.

Such perceptions are based on a lack of accurate information on the real values of Islam and distortion of its actual entities. We consider that open dialogue needed by governments in both the West and in the Muslim world to bridge the

Dear colleagues,

Tajikistan sincerely concerns with the tragic processes taking place in the Persian Gulf. In this case, we are pleading for the resolution of Iranian problem only by peaceful means in the framework of international law. Moreover, we acknowledge the right of Iran in using atom in peace purposes.

In the Middle East settlement the Government and people of Tajikistan affiliate itself with the decisions and recommendations, adopted within the UN. Thereupon, Tajikistan expresses hope for the continuation of the negotiations under the framework of the admitted international mechanisms.

Dear colleagues,

We consider OIC as one of the important partners, which can assist in social-economic reforms, foreign investment attraction into the priority spheres of the member-states national economies, social development, and seek to develop long-lasting and sustainable relations with the Organization as a whole and its member-states in particular. The Government of my country welcomes the decision of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on gratuitous allocation of 1 (one) billion US dollars to the Poverty Alleviation Fund, as well as appeal by the 22nd Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Trade Cooperation, held in Istanbul, 21-24 November 2006 to all member-states and Islamic financial institutions to increase the financial and technical assistance to Tajikistan in overcoming social-economic problems, combating contagious diseases, in the context of principles and objectives of the OIC Charter and member-states commitments to consolidate peace and security.

Unfortunately, we have to state once again, that present level of economic cooperation between our countries still does not corresponds to the long-lasting interests and opportunities we possess. A number of existing problems belongs to the majority of the countries. First of all, lack of investment, small scales of trade and transit financing, foreign debts, access to the world markets, slow rates of poverty alleviation, inadequate development of human resources.

We support the appeal to accelerate joint efforts for the implementation of

Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century. It's also important to boost investment activity for the realization of economic projects in the developing Muslim countries, improving the living standards and solving the social problems.

It's a great pleasure to mention that during the last years the Republic of Tajikistan with the financial assistance of the Islamic Development Bank implemented a number of projects in the field of state sector, which have important priority for the country. Islamic Development Bank allocates resources to the fields of Health, Transport, Education, Power Engineering and Water Supply.

Today extended and constructive regional economic cooperation gained vital significance. Therefore, it's in the interests of all countries the construction of infrastructure, first of all transportation lines of electricity, modern highways, hydroelectric stations, manufacturing enterprises, establishment of investment and financial institutions. For instance, construction of hydroelectric stations in Tajikistan, which posses huge hydro-energy resources in the region. The possibility of investing from 5 to 7 billion US dollars and using of this potential could meet the energy demands of Pakistan, Afghanistan and other Southern and Central Asian countries in cheap electricity.

Dear Chairman,

Currently Central Asia as a whole and Tajikistan in particular are in poor conditions. This refers to some objective factors, including the geopolitical characteristics of the region. First of all lock-in of the transportation area with limited access to the world markets, incompatibility and uncompetitiveness of the produced products, population growth and availability of significant labour resources and migration of population. In solving the aforesaid problems Tajikistan relies on multi-sided cooperation of both OIC and its member states.

Due to lack of rich hydrocarbon resources, geographically remote distances and intercontinental lock-in, Tajikistan has no opportunity to develop rapidly. In this conditions Tajikistan has to look for its own way to overcome the current situation, based on the realization of projects in developing "underground" resources, one of which is water-energy potential of the country. In this connection

region, based on the necessity to provide the balance of both national and overall regional interests.

Tajikistan with 93% mountainous areas has no other alternatives, except developing its economy through using hydro-energy resources of the rivers. Tajikistan possesses almost 60% of the regional water resources. Despite of this 70% of the population has electricity only a few hours during the winter season, moreover, the situation is deteriorating with the lack of natural gas.

Taking into consideration the above stated, I hope that boundaries of the future economic cooperation of Tajikistan will get clearer outlines in the framework of the Organization and its member-states.

The development of our relations with Afghanistan proceeded in a very difficult for this country political condition. Despite of this, our intention in strengthening the cooperation with Afghanistan in the field of security, revival of its economic infrastructures, as well as social and cultural structures, especially, implementation of economic programs needed real support from the Organization and the member-states.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The latest developments demonstrated once again that, the time has come for OIC conversion into the effective and reliable international mechanism for the coordination of our efforts. We consider the implementation of principles of the coherent and balanced international strategy, by taking into account the interests of all OIC member-states and coordination with global demands as our priority tasks.

In conclusion, let me express confidence that as a largest and authoritative Organization of the Muslim world, OIC will further take necessary efforts for strengthening peace, security and prosperity in the region.

Thank you for your attention.