

## **CHARTER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (PAECO)**

Whereas the Speakers and the members of Parliaments of the ECO Member countries;

Conscious of their common social, economic and political interests, aspirations and the ties of history and friendship that bind their peoples;

Desirous of forming an organization to strengthen and foster friendly ties, understanding, co-operation and joint action to promote their common values, interests and opportunities;

Recognizing that the ECO Member Countries have created a framework for the Parliaments to co-operate among themselves to achieve the ideals of the Izmir Treaty (The Charter of ECO);

Affirming their acceptance of the spirit, purposes and principles of the ECO Charter and of supporting the work of the ECO and promoting knowledge of its principles and activities;

Conscious of the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in fostering democracy, peace and development in our region;

Recalling the decisions of successive ECO Summits on people to people co- operation leading to finalization of guide-lines for extending recognition to ECO Member countries' Parliaments;

Convinced that such recognition would result in increased involvement of the people of ECO Member countries;

DO HEREBY unanimously agree to establish an Assembly to be known as Parliamentary Assembly of Economic Cooperation Organization Countries "PAECO" [hereinafter referred to as the "Assembly" with the following Objectives and Institutional Arrangements:

### **ARTICLE-1 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Assembly shall be to:

- (a) strengthen people to people contacts with a view to achieving mutual understanding, trust and friendship among the peoples of the ECO Member countries;

- (b) promote contact, co-ordinate and exchange experiences among Parliaments and Parliamentarians of the ECO Member countries;
- (c) provide a forum for exchange of ideas and information on parliamentary practices and procedures and for making suggestions;
- (d) support the work of ECO and promote knowledge of its principles and activities among Parliamentarians of ECO Member countries;
- (e) co-operate in international forums in matters of common values, interests and opportunities;
- (f) enhance parliamentary interaction through strengthening Parliamentary Friendship Groups in the parliaments of the members of PAECO; and
- (g) Promote exchange of visits of Parliamentary committees, officers between and among parliaments of the members of PAECO.

## **ARTICLE-2 COMPOSITION**

- (a) All the ECO Parliaments shall be entitled to the membership of Parliamentary Assembly of ECO countries (PAECO).
- (b) The Assembly shall be composed of the Speakers/Presiding Officers and Parliamentarians representing the national Parliaments of ECO Member countries.
- (c) One Branch of the Assembly shall be formed in each Parliament. The Speaker/Presiding Officer of the Parliament shall be the President of the Branch and the Secretary or any other officer, so designated by the Speaker shall be the Secretary of that Branch.
- (d) Observer status shall be granted to any other Parliament or Organization with approval of the General Conference.
- (e) Special guests shall attend the Plenary upon the invitation of the President of the Assembly with the consensus of the Member Parliaments.
- (f) Every Branch shall adhere to the objectives of the Assembly.
- (g) Each Branch shall have its own rules which shall conform to the rules of the Assembly.

### **ARTICLE-3 ASSEMBLY**

The Assembly shall comprise:

- (a) General Conference;
- (b) Executive Council;
- (c) Secretariat

### **ARTICLE-4 GENERAL CONFERENCE**

- (a) The General Conference shall discuss and approve all matters falling within the objectives of the Assembly as are proposed to it by the Executive Council.
- (b) Each delegation to the General Conference shall be composed of up to 5 Members of Parliament including the Speaker, and Secretary of the Branch, provided that each delegation shall include at least one woman Parliamentarian.
- (c) The Conference shall meet once a year in one of the Member countries, preferably by rotation in alphabetical order.
- (d) The women delegates to the General Conference shall hold their separate meeting on the sidelines of the General Conference to discuss and propose women-related issues for consideration of the General Conference.
- (e) The Speaker of the host country shall be the President of the General Conference and the Secretary of the Parliament of that country shall be the Secretary of the General Conference.
- (f) The Speaker of the country hosting the next Conference shall be the Vice- President of the General Conference.
- (g) The term of office of the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary of the General Conference shall be from the commencement of one Conference to the commencement of next Conference.
- (h) The General Conference shall establish Committees to examine important issues.

**ARTICLE-5**  
**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

- (a) There shall be an Executive Council of the Assembly comprising the Speakers/Presiding Officers of the ECO countries' parliaments. The Executive Council will meet prior to the General Conference.
- (b) The Speaker/Presiding Officer of the host country shall be the Chairman of the Council and shall hold office from commencement of one Conference to the commencement of next Conference.

The Executive Council shall decide:

- (i) program and budget of the Assembly;
- (ii) agenda for discussion in the Executive Council, General Conference, and for any other conferences/meetings;
- (iii) all matters concerning the organization and conduct of the Executive Council, General Conference and other conferences/meetings;
- (iv) frame rules of the Assembly; fix the date and venue of conferences/meetings;

**ARTICLE-6**  
**SECRETARIAT**

- (a) There shall be a Secretariat of the Assembly headed by the Secretary, who shall be responsible for the work of the Secretariat.
- (b) The permanent Secretariat of PAECO shall be in Islamabad, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Secretariat will extend support to the country hosting the next General Conference.
- (c) The Secretary of the PAECO Secretariat shall be appointed by rotation. The mode of election/appointment of the Secretary of PAECO Secretariat shall be decided by the Executive Council in its first meeting. Till that time, the Secretary National Assembly of Pakistan shall be the Secretary of the PAECO Secretariat.
- (d) The Secretary shall inter alia:
  - (i) Prepare drafts of plan, program and budget for the Assembly;

- (ii) Prepare and circulate to all Branches records of the proceedings of the Executive Council, General Conference and other conferences/meetings,
- (iii) Publish periodically an Assembly News Bulletin and also issue publications dealing with the subjects of interest to the Assembly;

**ARTICLE-7  
GENERAL FUND**

- (a) There shall be established General Fund for the PAECO Secretariat with voluntary contributions from the member countries and other institutions and organizations in the manner to be decided by the Executive Council.
- (b) Expenses on local hospitality, logistic support and internal travel shall be borne by the host country. Expenditure on international travel shall be borne by the respective visiting delegations.

**ARTICLE-8  
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

The official language of the Assembly shall be English. Arrangements may be made by the host country for unofficial Russian interpretation.

**ARTICLE-9  
Entry into Force**

The Charter shall enter into force immediately after four Member States sign the Charter and notify the ECO Secretariat that the required internal legal procedures have been fulfilled.

**ARTICLE-10  
AMENDMENS**

Amendments to the Charter and Rules shall be proposed by the Executive Council by consensus for final approval by the General Conference.

**ARTICLE-11  
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- (a) Decisions at all levels shall be taken on the basis of consensus.
- (b) Bilateral and contentious issues shall be excluded from the deliberations.

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