**ECO**

The term ECO stands for Economic Co-operation Organization. It came into being when the original members of the RCD met at Islamabad in 1990, to improve the Treaty of Izmir. The RCD was reborn and converted into ECO. Now the political and economic pattern of the former RCD countries that is Pakistan, Iran and Turkey have been completely changed. Moreover in many ways the ECO nations were different. The three member states of the ECO have expressed their earnest desire to make the ECO a reliable economic platform for the prosperity and the economic growth of the people of their respective countries. The countries have also expressed their determination to achieve the objectives of the organization in the well-defined manners.

Now after the approval and finalization of the ECO its organizational structure take place. The organizational structure contains the Council of Ministers, Council of Deputies, Technical Committees, Specialized agencies and ECO Secretariat. Besides the ECO founding members that is Pakistan, Iran and Turkey delegates from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kirghizstan, Turkistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were invited on 28 Nov, 1992 in a two days session held by the foreign Ministers of the original ECO states, the purpose of the session was to expand the ECO and to develop a broader economic and trade region in Asia. With the addition of the new member states, the membership of the ECO raised to nine with the population of three hundred million people. The ECO members have the advantage of rich resources, cultural similarity and territorial contiguity and due to these advantages. These states would be able to give benefits to the whole region.

The Heads of states of the nine countries identified certain areas and projects on which their mutual efforts and struggle needed to be concentrated. The communication infrastructure like roads, airlines, telecommunications, shipping and more importantly highways play a vital role to promote trade and travel among the member states.

The establishment of ECO is the highly remarkable event, not in the history of Pakistan but also for the entire Central Asia. The ECO not only cover one aspect of human activity but also pay great attention to all the dimensions related to human developments such as polity, economy and defense. Though the ECO states have faced a lot of problems and issues but the most serious one is the problem of ethnicity. In Pakistan, the rise of ethnic politics has badly affected the economic development as well as also discouraged government efforts to ameliorate economic condition of the people. It will be essential for the governments of the ECO states to make a strong strategy in order to control the issue of ethnicity which is emerging in their respective countries. It is unrealistic to assume that among the ECO states, any state can deal with the ethnic and ideological issue without the help of other states.

Since the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, there has been a long history of cultural and political affinity between Pakistan and the Central Asian Republic. In 1991, Pakistan’s Economy Affairs Minister visited the CAR for developing diplomatic relationship, Pakistan was of the opinion that it could make link with the CARs in order to give assistance to Industries like Banking,, Management as well as market for raw material. Pakistan also signed an agreement with the CARs of joint ventures in Culture, Education and Economy but unfortunately lack of transport and poor communications system created hindrance in Pakistan’s ambitions of developing closer ties with Central Asia. The problem was further increased with the internal turmoil in Afghanistan. In the economic field, the CAR’s has opened a number of opportunities in Pakistan, so Pakistan should provide a road network for intra-regional trade in northern areas of Pakistan. Pakistan can provide port facilities at Karachi and Bin Qasim. Pakistan can also export electric goods like air conditioners, washing machines, plastic goods and some food items, Pakistan can also carry their cargo in transit to other parts of the world due to its geographical condition.

Nevertheless Pakistan government and businessmen will have to pay attention to improve relations with CARs as India and Russia have also started maneuvering for developing their interest in Central Asia. Besides other problems, the unstable and problematic situation in Afghanistan created biggest hurdle for Pakistan to develop its practical links with the Central Asian States. The mutual understanding and co-operation between Pakistan and the CARs would be over, if the Afghanistan problem is not solved quickly.