

PRESS RELEASE

The Republic of Azerbaijan Became the 4th Member of the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB)

The ETDB as a regional Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) started its operations in the last quarter of 2008 with the membership of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. In this short yet continuous business span, the Bank has been able to achieve considerable milestones. It has established sound operating structure and as well as supporting realization of development projects, development of SMEs, expansion of intra-regional trade and accelerating sustainable economic development of ECO member states. It also acts as an important institutional vehicle for mobilizing funds in international capital markets for the region's development needs. The Bank has been posting a positive net income without having any non-performing loan in its well diversified portfolio. Overall, the Bank is forging ahead to stretch its operations confidently in the coming years.

Within this perspective, one of the strategies of the Bank is to increase its membership base. According to its establishment agreement, membership to the Bank is open to all ECO Member States. The Bank pursues a comprehensive program to encourage other ECO member states to become a member of the Bank and directly benefit from its activities. Consequently, Azerbaijan signed the Articles of Agreement establishing the Bank on 28 September 2012 and the esteemed Milli Mejlis of the Azerbaijan has ratified the subject agreement. Accordingly, after completing the other membership procedures Azerbaijan has become the fourth member of the ETDB. The membership of Azerbaijan will strengthen the endeavors of the Bank to become a premier development institution of the region. The Bank will soon assume potential operations and contribute to the sustainable economic development of Azerbaijan.

On the other hand, Afghanistan, which has signed the Articles of Agreement establishing the Bank, is in the process to finalize the membership procedures including ratification/acceptance of the subject agreement and will become a member of the Bank soon. The Bank is working in close contact with other five ECO member states to accelerate the process of their membership. The most compelling comparative advantage of the Bank is clearly its regional ownership. Combined with its strong local presence and expertise on development challenges of the region, the Bank gives utmost effort to deliver funds for priority development needs of member states on competitive terms with minimum delays. The targeted operations of the Bank play an important role in reducing the risk perceptions about the member states individually and about the region as a whole while boosting the confidence of investors. To this end, it is the genuine desire of the Bank to see all ECO member countries as the members of the Bank and expand its facilities which would be beneficial for their economic developments. Therefore, with strong support of regional countries, the Bank looks forward to play more positive and effective role in the years beyond.