

**Speech of Gismat Gozelov, Deputy Secretary General of the Turkic Council at the
opening ceremony of photo exhibition
(9 March 2012, Tehran)**

Dear Deputy Secretary General of ECO, Deputy Secretary General of TURKSOY, President of ECO Cultural Institute, Ambassadors and participants,

First of all, on behalf of the Turkic Council, let me express my gratitude to the ECO, TURKSOY, ECO Cultural Institute and the Embassy of Turkey in Iran for the initiative and organization of this photo exhibition in this beautiful city of Tehran.

Let me take this opportunity to give you some brief information about the organization that I represent. The Turkic Council was established by the Nakhchivan Agreement which was signed in 2009. It is an intergovernmental organization. The aim is to promote cooperation amongst Turkic Speaking States. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey are four founding Member States. Cooperation under the Turkic Council is based on the particular solidarity stemming from the unity of common history, culture, identity and language of Turkic speaking peoples.

The Preamble of the Nakhchivan Agreement reaffirms the common will of its member States to adhere to the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and encapsulates the objective of Turkic Council as further deepening the comprehensive cooperation among Turkic speaking states, as well as making joint contribution to peace and stability in its region and the world.

The Principal organs of the Turkic Council are the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Council of Elders, the Senior Officials Committee and the Secretariat. The Secretariat started to operate in 2010, with its permanent seat in Istanbul.

The First Summit of the Turkic Council was held on 20-21 October 2011, in Almaty, Kazakhstan. It had the special feature of being the First Summit organized under the organizational framework of the Turkic Council. The topic of the Summit was “Economic Cooperation”. The second Summit will be held in Bishkek with the topic of “Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation”.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am happy to indicate that ECO was the first regional organization we sought partnership with. Last year, the ECO Council of Permanent Representatives approved an interim Turkic Council’s observer status to the ECO in order to be finally approved at the next meeting of the Council of Ministers.

We see this exhibition as a meaningful start for the cooperation between organizations. The photos which are provided by TURKSOY reflect the history, life and development of the Member States and Turkic Communities, as well as the activities of the Turkic Council and TURKSOY. I hope the exhibition will be a good opportunity for the Iranian society to be familiar with the Turkic Speaking States and communities.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that the Turkic Council is keen to deepen its cooperation with the ECO and reiterate our readiness for mutually beneficial collaboration in various fields.

Once more, let me express my gratitude for the hospitality. Thanks for your attention.

Dear Secretary General of ECO His Excellency Mohamed Yahya Maroofi, Deputy Secretary General of TURKSOY, President of ECO Cultural Institute His Excellency Dr. Hojatollah Ayyoubi, Ambassadors and participants,