

Previous Conferences

1st Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries, 20 November 2007, Tehran, Iran

At the Conference, decisions have been taken regarding the conduct of secretariat and draft studies by Iran, the preparation of a list of existing manuscripts, the organization of training programs, the establishment of a website, the sharing of archival and library experiences, the organization of joint exhibitions, the signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of document security, the organization of joint master's degree programs, and the resolution of alphabetical issues among countries.

2nd Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries, 21 April 2009, Baku, Azerbaijan

The necessary arrangements regarding the conference charter have been completed, and the said text has been finalized by being signed in Baku. At the meeting, which was held with the participation of representatives of all member states except Afghanistan, decisions have been taken on the designation of the member states to be responsible for the eight expert committees included in the charter, and on the designation of the Head of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Conference.

3rd Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries, 14–16 October 2010, Ankara, Türkiye

At the third conference held in Ankara under the hosting of the National Library of Türkiye, participation was provided by representatives of all member states except Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. At the conference, the annual contribution shares of member states for conference activities were discussed (Charter, Article 13); it was decided that the catalogues of manuscripts belonging to member states would be sent to the National Libraries of Iran and Türkiye to be translated into Persian, Russian, and Turkish, and that these catalogues would be made accessible on the conference website. In addition, consensus was reached on the submission of one hundred digital copies of manuscripts by member states for publication on the website, the sharing of national library publications through the secretariat, and the conduct of joint studies aimed at standardization among national libraries of member states. Decisions have been taken regarding the translation of conference papers into English, Russian, Persian, and Turkish, the nomination of culturally prominent figures of member states to UNESCO, and joint participation in IFLA meetings. The National Libraries of Türkiye and Iran have announced that they would cooperate with the National Library of Afghanistan, and it has been planned that the restoration and preservation processes of Afghan manuscripts would be carried out through capacity development programs for preservation experts and grant mechanisms to be provided to member states.

4th Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries, 27–29 November 2017, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

At the third meeting held in Türkiye, it was decided that the fourth meeting of the conference would be held in Tajikistan on 6–9 December 2011; however, the meeting was held between 27–29 November 2017. Directors of national libraries from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Tajikistan, Türkiye, and Kyrgyzstan participated in the meeting, while participation was not provided by representatives from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan. Representatives of the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) and officials from member state institutions were also present at the conference. The reasons for the inability to implement decisions taken at previous conferences were evaluated, and it was stated that the main problem was that the decisions had been determined without taking into account the existing capacities of member states' national libraries.

Among the important outputs of the Conference, the launch of the joint website (www.econl.org) has taken place. The sharing of information on national libraries, digital collections, manuscripts, and conference documents has been aimed through the website. In addition, it was decided that a liaison person would be designated from each member state national library to maintain continuous communication with the secretariat, that training and workshop activities would be conducted, that digital copies of manuscripts would be shared, and that active participation in regional and international meetings would be ensured.

In the final declaration adopted at the end of the conference, a joint decision was taken to strengthen cultural cooperation, to increase information and resource sharing, and to benefit from UNESCO's capacity in the field of information and communication technologies in this process. The final declaration was signed by the directors of national libraries of member states.

5th Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries, 15 June 2021, Tehran, Iran (Online)

Following a four-year interval, the conference was held online on 15 June 2021 under the hosting of the ECO Cultural Institute and the National Library and Archives of Iran, taking into account the Covid-19 pandemic and global conditions. At the conference, common problems of national libraries of member states were addressed, and it was aimed to share experiences gained during the Covid-19 period together with new cooperation opportunities that would strengthen cultural interaction at the regional level. Within this scope, it was stated that the development of cultural interaction and knowledge is possible through the sharing of resources and materials, and it was decided that manuscripts would be shared through digital platforms allocated to member states. In addition, it was stated that interlibrary cooperation within the framework of ECO would create inclusive opportunities for all individuals and would contribute to regional stability and peace. At the meeting, during a period marked by war and conflicts, the importance of avoiding violence through dialogue in the fields of culture and books was emphasized, and consensus was reached on documenting activities carried out by national libraries during the Covid-19 period and sharing experiences. It was also decided that each member state would assign a representative to ensure communication with the secretariat and that joint cultural heritage would be strengthened.

**6th Conference of Directors of ECO Member States' National Libraries,
20 September 2023, Baku, Azerbaijan**

At the sixth conference held in Azerbaijan, issues such as the establishment of a joint database to strengthen cooperation among national libraries of ECO member states, the establishment of book corners within national libraries to promote publications belonging to member states, the development of collections through book exchange, and the enhancement of professional knowledge and experience sharing through staff exchange programs were addressed, and views were exchanged on the development of cooperation in these areas.