

Preservation, Manuscripts and Rare Books Committee

First Online Meeting

12 February 2026 – 15:00 PM (Online)

The first meeting of the Preservation, Manuscripts and Rare Books Committee was held online on 12 February 2026 at 15:00 PM, in accordance with the decisions adopted at the **7th Conference of Directors of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Member States' National Libraries**.

1. Participation

List of Committee Members in Attendance:

Azerbaijan - Abdullayeva Gulsaida - Head of Department, Rare Book and Library Museum
Iran - Mr. Houman Yousefdehi – Director - Office for Manuscripts and Rare Books
Kazakhstan - Abikova Gulshat Masalimovna - Head of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Service - National Library of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Uzbekistan - Obodboy Klichbayev - The Head of the Manuscripts and Rare Books Department - National Library of Uzbekistan

The representatives of the National Library of the Republic of Tajikistan were unable to attend the meeting.

2025-27 Secretary:

Republic of Türkiye – Merve Yavuzdemir – Head of the Foreign Relations Department, Directorate General for Libraries and Publications
Republic of Türkiye – Orhan Açıkgöz – Culture and Tourism Expert, Directorate General for Libraries and Publications
Republic of Türkiye – Serap Fidancı – Librarian, Directorate General for Libraries and Publications

Observers:

ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) – Yağmur Ezrak
ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) – Dr. Zahra Aslani

2. Opening and Introductions

The meeting commenced with opening remarks. Participants briefly introduced themselves and outlined their respective responsibilities in the field of digital library services.

3. Committee Mandate and Working Framework

The Committee Members is recalled its mandate as established during the 7th Conference. In this context, the Members reaffirmed that the Committee is expected to:

- Meet twice a year (online format),
- Prepare progress reports for the Chair,
- Identify concrete areas of cooperation,
- Contribute to the development of a Regional Roadmap toward 2027.

The Members underlined their shared commitment to strengthening regional cooperation in digital transformation, digitization practices, and information technologies within national libraries.

4. Working Modalities and Communication Channels

The Committee Members discussed practical coordination mechanisms.

It was agreed that:

- A WhatsApp group will be established to facilitate rapid coordination and sharing of updates among members;
- Official documents, reports, and formal communications will continue to be conducted via email.

5. Planning the Next Meeting

The Committee Members agreed that, for the next session, each Member State will prepare a 15-minute presentation covering:

- National library priorities in the Committee's thematic field,
- Ongoing projects and digital initiatives,
- Areas where expertise can be shared,
- Areas where cooperation or support is sought.

Regarding scheduling, Members exchanged views on the preferred month, weekday, and time slot. June was proposed as a possible month. Tuesday or Wednesday was suggested as a regular meeting day. Considering time zone differences, it was proposed that the next meeting may be scheduled two hours earlier than the present session.

The exact date and time will be confirmed upon further consultation among Members.

6. Announcement

The Committee Members was informed about the **III. International Library and Technology Festival**, to be held on 2–4 April 2026 at Rami Library, Istanbul, under the theme “Healing Library.” <https://www.kutuphaneveteknoloji.com/>

7. Closing

The meeting concluded with appreciation for the active participation and constructive contributions of all Members. The importance of sustained engagement and practical outcomes was emphasized to ensure that the Committee functions as an effective platform for strengthening regional cooperation in the fields of preservation, conservation of manuscripts and rare books, and the safeguarding of documentary heritage.

