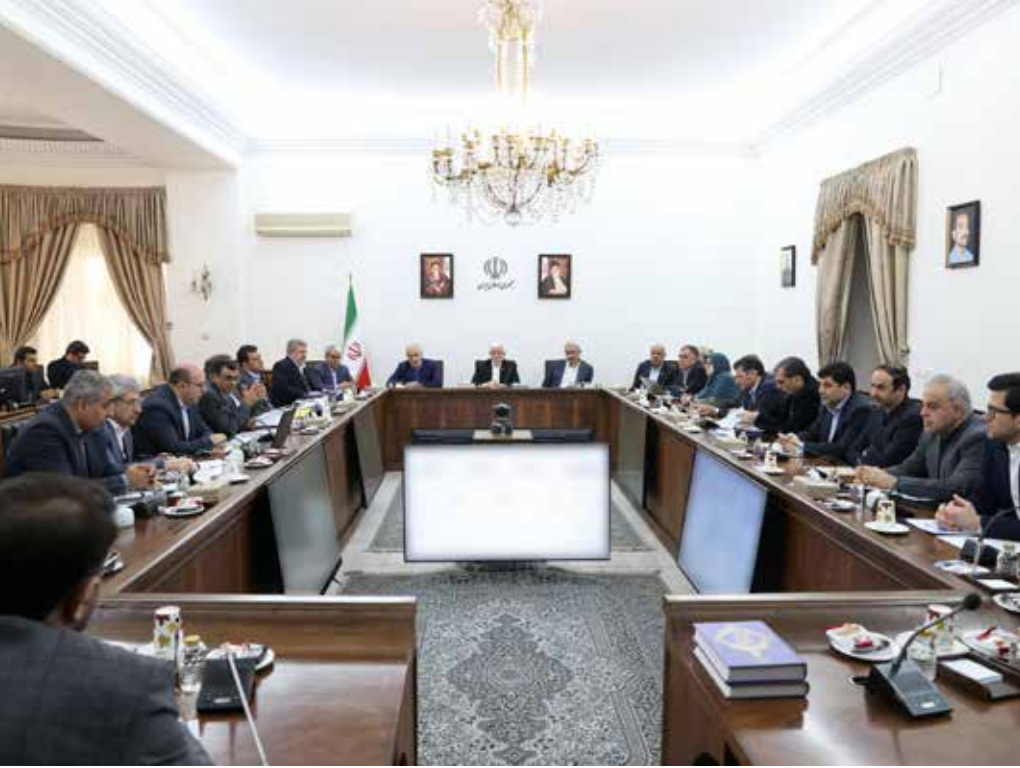


# Veep says gov't backs capacity enhancement of renewable power plants



### Economy Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref expressed on Monday the government's support for a rise in the production of electricity from renewable power plants across the country via cooperation between the private and public sectors. Aref made the statement in a meeting with members of Economy Council in Tehran as he underlined the need for the preparation of a comprehensive plan aimed at increasing the national power generation capacity. "A good action has been taken to generate more than 3,000 megawatts of electricity from renewable power plants," the first vice president said. "The government supports in-



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (back c) addresses a meeting with members of Economy Council in Tehran on December 1, 2025.  
● [fvpresident.ir](http://fvpresident.ir)

creasing the capacity of renewable power plants. Good and valuable measures have been taken in this regard, and now the public and private sectors are fully prepared to increase electricity generation capacity from renewable power plants. However, a comprehensive plan is also needed so that we do not have a power deficit next summer." According to a report presented at the Monday meeting of Economy Council, a total of 3,165 megawatts of renewable power plant capacity have been established up until December 1st, and 528 sites with a capacity of 7,850 megawatts are under construction. Such issues as the method of financing for increasing the capacity of renewable power plants were also discussed at the meeting.

### 445 MW of solar power plants come online

Aref's announcement coincided with the commissioning of 445 MW of solar power plants and the executive operations of 177 MW of new projects in more than 90 regions across the country via video link with the presence of Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi.

As reported by IRNA, with the power plant projects inaugurated on Monday, Iran's renewable power plant capacity exceeded 3,100 megawatts of renewables, which is unprecedented in the history of the country's solar energy development. The construction of every 100 megawatts of solar power plants annually saves 56 million cubic meters of natural gas, prevents the emission of 138 thousand tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, and saves 44 thousand cubic meters of water. Monday's major inauguration is regarded as an important step in strengthening the national power grid stability, reducing shortages, and moving towards a green and sustainable future.

## TPO highlights Iran's extensive capacities for D-8 trade development

### Economy Desk

The head of the Africa office of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) stressed on Monday the importance of Iran's presence at the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, saying the Islamic Republic, as one of the founding members of D-8, enjoys extensive capacities for active participation in the development of intra-group trade. Addressing a meeting of D-8 senior trade officials in Cairo, Mohammad Reza Safari underlined that Iran's excellent geopolitical position as a cross-roads connecting East and West, and North and South, provides a unique opportunity for expanding trade corridors, multimodal transport, and facilitating transit of goods among D-8 members. "Iran's reliable port, rail, and road infrastructures,

especially the southern ports in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, can be an effective link in the regional and global supply chain," he added. The TPO official stressed that Iran's industrial and technological capabilities in such fields as petrochemicals, steel, energy, nanotechnology, pharmaceutical industries, and medical equipment can create valuable opportunities for industrial cooperation and joint production. Safari said Iran's extensive market and skilled workforce can also provide opportunities for joint investment and the creation of regional industrial clusters for D-8 members. The official also underscored the necessity of defining initiatives and joint projects for moving D-8 group collaborations from agreements to implementation.

Proposing several key axes, Safari said, "First, establish a D-8 preferential trade network and complete technical processes to reduce tariffs and facilitate trade documents, especially for goods with a competitive advantage in each country, launch joint transportation corridors, and integrate transit regulations, especially connecting member ports through regular maritime lines and developing rail transport among the group's countries." He added in the second proposed axis that a financial settlement system among members should be launched using local currencies or multilateral barter mechanisms to reduce transaction costs and increase resilience against international fluctuations. "Now, more than ever, cooperation among D-8 member countries can become a driving force for shaping regional value chains and increasing our



A view of the meeting of D-8 senior trade officials in Cairo, Egypt, on December 1, 2025.  
● [IRNA](http://irna.ir)

countries' share of global trade," Safari concluded. "We believe that by relying on shared political will, diverse economic capacities, and rich human capital, this group can become a successful model of South-South cooperation in today's world."

## First Iranian train with domestically manufactured wagons departs for Uzbekistan



### Economy Desk

The director general of foreign trade of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways announced on Monday the departure of a first Iranian train with indigenously manufactured wagons from Sarakhs in Khorasan Razavi Province to Bukhara in Uzbekistan. "This important achievement was realized through the extensive railway diplomacy adopted since the beginning of the current government, and in this regard, today the first train with 40 Iranian wagons departed from Sarakhs border to Bukhara station in Uzbekistan," Shahrar Naqizadeh said in an exclusive interview with IRNA. Stressing that Iranian fleets in the past were not allowed to operate in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and shipments from our

country were allowed to pass with wagons from Commonwealth countries, he said Iran Railways is witnessing after extensive efforts and follow-ups the dispatch of trains with Iranian wagons in such countries. "This train is carrying iron and sponge iron products and is currently traveling towards Bukhara after passing through Turkmenistan," Naqizadeh added. Last week in Istanbul, an important six-party railway agreement was signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran, China, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, aiming to develop commodity exchanges from China to Europe via Tehran. The East-West railway corridor has managed to reduce the transit time for goods by about one-third compared to the sea route.

## Iran-Pakistan security ...

From Pakistan's perspective, the confidence and experience built bilaterally can usefully inform ECO-level cooperation, but in a gradual and technical manner. Islamabad would be receptive to thematic working groups under ECO, for instance on border management, counter-narcotics, cyber issues, maritime safety and disaster response. This would remain consistent with ECO's mandate and the diverse partnerships of its members.

### Given Pakistan's defense ties with both Iran and Saudi Arabia, can ECO serve as a neutral platform to bring members who are sometimes on opposite sides of regional equations closer together on security issues?

Pakistan's security and defence relationships with both Iran and Saudi Arabia are anchored in a consistent policy of avoiding involvement in intra-Muslim disputes and encouraging dialogue and de-escalation. While Persian Gulf Arab states are not members of ECO, developments in the ECO region inevitably interact with Persian Gulf security through energy flows, trade routes and investment corridors. In this sense, Pakistan sees ECO as part of a wider stabilising architecture in its neighbourhood. A more integrated ECO space that is focused on trade, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges can help reduce polarisation and offer all partners, including Persian Gulf states, more reliable economic and logistical options.

Araghchi described ECO as potentially one of the most dynamic emerging regions of the Global South. What concrete role can Pakistan play with its unique links to Iran, China, and Persian Gulf states in making this vision a reality? Pakistan is geographically central to ECO's connectivity ambitions. It links the Arabian Sea and the approaches to the Persian Gulf with Central Asia, western China and, through Turkey, Europe. This gives Pakistan a natural role as one of the key implementing states of ECO's vision. Concretely, Pakistan can help in several ways. It can work to align ECO's priority projects with corridors already under development, particularly the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. That would allow exporters and investors from Iran, Central Asia and Turkey to tap into Chinese and global markets via Pakistan's ports. Pakistan can also build on the practical steps already taken with Iran, such as opening border markets and improving road links, and encouraging their expansion under ECO branding. This would showcase ECO's ability to deliver visible benefits on the ground.

In addition, Islamabad can use its diplomatic channels with Persian Gulf partners to attract more investment into ECO-based logistics, warehousing, energy and industrial projects, positioning ECO as a land bridge between the Persian Gulf and Eurasia. Finally, Pakistan can be an advocate within ECO for regulatory harmonisation, modern transit agreements, digital customs, e-commerce facilitation and mutual recognition of standards, which are relatively low-cost measures but can significantly boost intra-ECO trade and investment.

### As Iran seeks greater "eastern strategic depth," how big a connector and facilitator can Pakistan become for energy, infrastructure, and transport projects across the ECO region?

Iran's search for greater "eastern strategic depth" coincides with Pakistan's own shift towards a geo-economic outlook. Both countries support connectivity projects that link Persian Gulf energy and industrial output with South Asia, Central Asia and western China. Pakistan can play a meaningful connecting role in three areas. In energy, Pakistan and Iran already cooperate on cross-border electricity, and there is long-standing discussion around gas pipeline options. In infrastructure and transport, Pakistan can help tie Iranian

ports and special economic zones to CPEC routes and to Central Asian Road and rail networks, improving access in both directions. Recent joint steps to address logistics bottlenecks and facilitate border trade are encouraging signals. Lastly, Pakistan's experience in areas such as digitalisation of customs, the use of the TIR system and public-private partnership models can be shared within ECO to support the financing and operation of large projects. In all these sectors, Pakistan favours inclusive frameworks that are open to participation by interested extra-regional partners under transparent and rules-based conditions.

### What are the main political or structural factors that still prevent Iran-Pakistan security cooperation from becoming institutionalized at the ECO level and how can they be overcome?

Several political and structural factors shape how far Iran-Pakistan security cooperation can be undertaken within the ECO framework. Some are external. The international sanctions environment around Iran makes financial and technological cooperation more complex, even when the focus is on training or capacity-building. The wider regional setting is also delicate. Parts of the ECO region, particularly around Afghanistan, continue to face instability. This

naturally encourages some member states to move with caution on any initiative that might be read as different. There are also internal considerations. ECO was originally created as an economic and development organisation. Its institutions and resources reflect that mandate. At the same time, member states have different external partnerships and varying levels of mutual confidence. This can slow consensus on more ambitious ideas in the security domain. From Pakistan's perspective, the way forward is to proceed in a measured, transparent and clearly defined manner. A practical first step is to concentrate on areas that are widely viewed as non-controversial and mutually beneficial. Examples include border management, disaster relief, counter-narcotics, cyber hygiene and the protection of trade corridors. All such efforts would need to remain fully consistent with international law and relevant UN decisions, and coordinated with other regional organisations to avoid duplication. If ECO can show steady progress in these technical areas, it will help build trust among members. Over time, this can create more space for Iran-Pakistan cooperation, within ECO, to be seen as a supportive contribution to regional stability and resilience rather than as a move against any other state.